



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

GUIDANCE

# International Learning Opportunities programme

The International Learning Opportunities programme (ILO) provides a unique opportunity to spend 8 weeks in Lesotho, Namibia, Somaliland or Uganda.

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# Contents

[Introduction](#)

---

[Who is it for?](#)

---

[Projects](#)

---

[Application process](#)

---

[Benefits](#)

---

[Costs](#)

---

[Contact](#)

---

## Introduction

You'll be working on projects which help to deliver the UN Sustainable Development Goals. You'll also be developing your leadership skills.

The ILO programme is designed to stretch participants. It is an immersive experience which will take you out of your comfort zone. You will be challenged to work creatively and grow your personal resilience. The skills and understanding that the programme provides can be invaluable. Invaluable to you as a participant, to your organisation and to Wales.

Since 2007 nearly 200 participants have experienced living and working in an African country. Participants have returned with new found insights into adapting and working with limited resources. This has strengthened their skills as a leader

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– to improve what is delivered for the people of Wales in challenging times.

## Who is it for?

The ILO programme is aimed at experienced managers and leaders who live or work in Wales. Potential participants must be fully committed and able to undertake a placement.

Key skills include:

- ability to work with others
- ability to manage and motivate a diverse group of people
- strong listening and communication skills
- ability to influence people without line management
- strategic thinking
- problem solving

Taking part in the ILO programme should be part of your continued personal and professional development. Your line manager and organisation must be fully supportive of your application.

## Projects

We source a wide range of projects with a diverse group of established partners in 4 very different countries: Uganda Lesotho, Namibia, and Somaliland.

In the Mbale region of Uganda our partners tend to be smaller non-governmental organisations (NGOs). They are struggling with policy development, staff management and development, service delivery and fundraising. Uganda is also home to the Mbale Tree Planting project funded by the Welsh Government. We often use ILO placements to assist with the delivery of this innovative project.

In Lesotho our partners at Dolen, the Wales Lesotho Link have found placements with a wide variety of NGOs and medical facilities.

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In Namibia our placements are facilitated by the Phoenix Project. The project links Cardiff University and the University of Namibia to support their long term aims.

In Somaliland we intend to offer a limited number of bespoke placements in the first instance as this is a new partner country.

The 4 countries are very different from each other and offer different experiences. Our experienced team can help match applicants skills with the right projects. They will take account of health or other issues get the best match between participant and project.

The Wales and Africa team hold a number of placement opportunities and job descriptions. They can also devise bespoke placements for applicants with particular skills or experience.

## Application process

We have a rolling programme for applications and can send people at anytime.

To apply send:

- your CV
- a note from your line manager agreeing to release you for an 8 week placement
- a letter of application

to [walesandafrica@gov.wales](mailto:walesandafrica@gov.wales)

Your letter should cover the following:

- Why did you choose to apply for the ILO programme?
- What experience and skills do you have to bring to the programme?
- What are your key strengths?
- What do you feel you can offer the programme and our African partners?
- How will participating in the programme meet your current development

needs?

- How will you apply the learning in your current role, and back into your organisation?
- Any other information you would like to share with us.

The Wales and Africa team will review your application and invite those successful to an informal interview. If successful, you will be matched to an available project. This will be followed by a training day and then a pre-departure briefing before you start the placement.

## Benefits

The benefits of the ILO programme reach further than you might think – for you, our African partners, your organisation and for Wales.

Managers have found that participants return to work with greater motivation. They have a renewed commitment and bring new perspectives to their work.

Many people return to work with:

- enhanced soft skills, increased self confidence and adaptability
- a more innovative approach to problem solving
- new found perspectives and resilience
- an increased ability to work collaboratively

## Costs

Wales and Africa covers the costs of transport, accommodation, vaccinations and insurance. Your employer is expected to continue to pay your salary.

## Still not sure?

An example of the type of roles available in these partner countries can be viewed on Hub Cymru Africa's webpages: [International Learning Opportunities \(ILO\) Programme](#) on Hub Cymru Africa

Please contact the Wales and Africa team on 03000 251670 or at [walesandafrika@gov.wales](mailto:walesandafrika@gov.wales) with any questions.

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