



Fellow Report: 3-Month

This report focuses on the specifics of your fellowship experience thus far. The following questions are meant to help you evaluate your first three months in Africa.

We will use your comments to assess partner organizations, site placements, stipends, and overall logistics. The information you include will be shared with the Board of Directors and future Fellows via PiAf’s online database. Please be professional in your responses. We may use your comments to give feedback to partner organizations as well.

We encourage you to attach relevant anecdotes, photos, or other documentation to supplement the required responses.

Deadlines for this report are as follows

If you began your fellowship in	Your report is due
June	September 30
July	October 31
August	November 30
September	December 31

Your Personal Information (*Please complete the following sections and if needed, please be sure to update your online VITALS as well*):

Organization: Maru-a-Pula School
City, Country: Gaborone, Botswana

Fellowship start date: September 7, 2014
Anticipated fellowship end date: August 17, 2015

Your Work

1. What is your job title?

Junior English, History and Geography teacher.

2. What are your primary responsibilities? Please list your job duties as you would on a résumé.

Based on the curriculum for the form class, I create lesson plans for each class (3-4 classes a term) I teach. I manage everything involved with those classes, which includes setting exams, all assignments, lectures and I am also responsible for evaluating all coursework. I also teach a homeroom class and run three after-school service programs as well as working in a girl's boarding house.

3. Did you receive any sort of orientation, handover or "onboarding" when you started your fellowship? By whom?

I had several meetings with my supervisor and was guided by the head of my teaching departments in regards to classroom management and lesson planning.

4. Describe a representative day at work.

I start the day around 5:45am as boarding house duty is at 6:30am and there is a daily staff briefing at 6:50am. After the meeting, homeroom classes begin around 7:05am and last about 20 minutes. There are 6 lessons a day and on average I teach three of the periods, but I often substitute at least four periods a week. During the periods I am not teaching, I use the time to prep for upcoming lessons. After our lunch break, the after-school programming begins at 2:15pm to 4pm. Some afternoon I hold office hours which end at 5pm.

5. Please describe in greater detail 1-2 specific projects you have undertaken or accomplishments you have made so far.

After one of the Geography teachers became ill halfway through the term, I took over the class and taught the class for the rest of the term. I wasn't familiar with the subject, so I spent a lot of time doing research on Industry and Energy to prepare lesson plans. It was challenging dealing with this extra load during my first term of teaching, but I quickly adjusted and I had plenty of support from the staff in the Geography department.

I also led the Quiz Club team, creating multiple general knowledge tests for competitions.

6. On average, how many hours per week do you work?

On a normal week I work about 55 hours a week.

7. What is your office environment like? Please comment on the size and structure of the office(s) where you do most of your work.

MaP has a wonderful office environment that consists of multiple buildings. Each department has its own office and the offices are scattered around the campus. There is a staffroom where meetings are held and it also functions as a general break area and a collaborative work space. The number of teaching staff is about 70. I generally do my work at my desk in either the History or Geography departments as well as in the library or the staffroom. In all of these spaces there is often a relaxed and cheerful atmosphere.

8. To whom do you report? (Please specify name & title of all applicable persons.)

I report to the deputy principal, as she manages all teaching staff. In regards to things concerning lesson plans and day-to-day teaching duties, I report to the head of Form 2, the head of Form 1, the head of the History department, and the head of the Geography department.

9. Do you receive adequate direction/support to perform your job? How often do you check in with your supervisor?

All of my supervisors are extremely supportive and are often available to offer guidance and advice. In the beginning of my first term I would reach out almost daily to discuss lesson plans, etc. with the head of the department. I also shadowed a few teachers in the department to pick up skills on classroom management. There are also weekly department meetings that are used to set exam dates and discuss the progress each teacher is making on teaching the course material for the term.

10. What opportunities for travel has your work included so far? Do you anticipate work-related opportunities to travel in the future? How does your organization handle the arrangements/costs/plans for your work-related travel?

There are opportunities for travel when sports and academic teams are traveling for competitions. All work-related travel is paid for by the organization and there is extra pay for travel that takes place during weekends.

11. I feel adequately prepared for my position's professional responsibilities.

a) Strongly agree b) Somewhat agree c) **Neutral** d) Somewhat disagree e) Strongly disagree

Please briefly explain your response.

Education is not a field that I had a lot of exposure to previous to this position, so I feel like I am picking up a lot of skills as I go.

12. Have you met with your supervisor to discuss outcome-level objectives (for M&E assignment) or other goals? If not, please explain why.

I have not as it's been an incredibly busy and overwhelming term for me, as I had to adjust to the work load and environment immediately after my arrival. I have spoken to my supervisor about my goals for the courses I am teaching and for developing my skills in classroom management, but I have not had the opportunity to speak at length to my supervisor about the M&E assignment.

13. Please look back at your online VITALS form to review the goals you set for yourself before orientation. Are you working towards these goals? Have you met any of them? Please explain.

Before the start of my fellowship, I experienced some anxiety at the thought of soon having to manage a room full of young adults and being responsible for their education. In committing to this fellowship, one of my major

objectives was to better understand what my professional ambitions were in regards to education. After having taught at the secondary level for a term, I have been able to conclude that I enjoy teaching, but in the future I will pursue teaching at a collegiate level. I now know with great certainty that I ultimately want to pursue a PhD and work in academia. As for my second goal of learning effective teaching methods, I've picked up numerous skills in behavior management as well as methods to facilitate classrooms and create lesson plans that accommodate students with different learning styles. I need to work more diligently at learning more about Gaborone and expanding my social circle beyond the expat community.

14. Please indicate 3-5 goals you have for the rest of your fellowship year (these can be personal or professional). You should use two of these goals for your M&E assignment (see end of report).

- Increase my involvement in community activities through civic service.
- Diversify my social circles, move outside the expat community and build strong relationships.
- Spend more time with the girls at the boarding house and be a constant source of support and mentorship for them.
- Continue to build on the skills I have acquired in teaching, facilitating and public speaking.
- Make a greater effort to travel outside of Gaborone but within Botswana more frequently.

Your Arrival in Africa

15. How did you travel to your host country? Please be specific in terms of what airline(s) you flew, what cities you flew to/from, how much your plane tickets cost, and how you found/purchased your tickets. *For example: "I purchased my ticket from the Cape to Cairo travel agency based in Washington, DC. I flew on British Airways from JFK to London, London to Johannesburg, and Johannesburg to Maputo. I have also booked a return flight for next May to return through the same cities. The round trip ticket cost \$2,277."*

I used Kayak to search for low fares, and once I found a suitable ticket I went directly to the Virgin Atlantic webpage and purchased my ticket. I flew out of San Francisco through London to Johannesburg and took South African Airways to Gaborone. The furthest out return ticket I could book was for late May taking the same route back to San Francisco. The round-trip ticket cost \$1,300.

16. Please describe your visa arrangements. Please provide as much detail as possible to assist future Fellows in the visa application process.
- i. What kind of visa/work permit do you have?
 - ii. How did you obtain it?
 - iii. Did you receive your visa/permit before heading to Africa or after arriving?
 - iv. What costs were associated with obtaining it?
 - v. Did you pay these costs or were they covered by your organization?
 - vi. Any suggestions to help future Fellows navigate this process?

As of now I am still on my tourist visa, which you get upon arrival at the airport. Maru-a-Pula has a staff member who handles all things concerned with immigration and the school pays for all costs incurred in obtaining a residency permit. The school is really efficient in handling the process, but the actual immigration bureau takes months to process the permit. During that time a temporary permit is issued. The process is simplified as the Maru-a-Pula immigration coordinator handles all the paperwork and provides transportation to and from the immigration office.

17. What vaccinations were you required to obtain prior to your departure? How much did your vaccinations cost?

I did not have to get any vaccinations as I already had all of the general vaccinations as well as Yellow Fever and Typhoid from my previous travels.

18. Comment on your arrival and first week in Africa. Any improvements that could streamline the assimilation process for future Fellows?

I had a great first week and a smooth arrival. My supervisor and two of the other Fellows at Maru-a-Pula came to pick me up from the airport. I had arrived a few days before the beginning of the term so I had some time to unpack and settle in. The other Fellows were also great about showing me around the campus and the city and helping me get everything in order.

19. PiAf's Pre-departure Orientation was sufficient in preparing me to transition into my fellowship.

a) Strongly agree b) **Agree** c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly disagree

Please briefly explain your response.

I felt very prepared to handle any of the logistics of my arrival to my fellowship post because the pre-departure orientation had been so detailed. I was not necessarily prepared for all that would be required of me in my position at Maru-a-Pula but I felt I had everything I needed.

20. Is there anything in particular that PiAf could cover at orientation that would have better prepared you for your fellowship post? Please specify.

I think it would be great if the host organization had an equally detailed orientation once on site. I felt like I was picking up a lot of things (that would have been helpful to know from the get-go) as the weeks went by because there wasn't an official job orientation.

Your Housing & Local Transportation

21. Is housing provided by and/or paid for by your organization? Yes

22. Please describe your living arrangements. Include the following details:
- i. Are you living in a house, apartment, guest room, etc.?
 - ii. Are you living alone or with roommates?
 - iii. How did you find your housing?
 - iv. How do you travel between your home and your work?

I live in on-campus housing with all of the other Fellows. The building we live in has 6 bedrooms and a common area. A makeshift kitchen was created using small portable appliances. We each have our own rooms and there is virtually no travel between home and work as our housing is about a 2-minute walk from the staffroom and the classrooms.

23. Is your local transportation adequate? Please briefly describe your options and their related costs.

The public transportation is affordable and available to most of the neighborhoods in Gaborone. I often use the kombi's for running errands around main mall. The fee for each ride in a kombi is the equivalent of \$.40. Taxis are also readily available and the fee for a ride anywhere within Gaborone is \$3. Transportation is not an issue as there are many options and all of them are relatively cheap.

Your Surroundings

24. Do you live and work in safe areas?

Yes, I feel very secure and mobile around our neighborhood and most of Gaborone. I don't have any issues walking to and from the local shopping area or eateries on my own during reasonable hours. The campus is extremely secure with many security guards on duty around the clock.

25. What has been your experience with crime so far?

None personally, but there was a break-in at one of the houses on campus recently.

26. Describe the crime and general security situation within your city/town. Could you recommend specific areas future Fellows might consider for safe housing? What about areas that should be avoided?

I'm not familiar with many of the neighborhoods in Gaborone, especially when it comes to accommodation, as the on-campus housing offered by Maru-a-Pula is what I have experienced.

27. Comment on the local languages, your proficiency in them (if any), and your subsequent ability to get by.

Language has not been an issue up to this point. Setswana and English are both national languages and most people you will come across in Gaborone will speak both fluently. The language of commerce is English, so that makes small daily tasks very simple. I did not speak Setswana and at this point I am only familiar with simple terms used for greeting.

28. Comment on appropriate clothing for work and outside of work.

I would say dress with sensibility, but otherwise there isn't a strict dress code for staff at Maru-a-Pula as it's a fairly relaxed environment. As for appropriate everyday attire, modesty is valued. It is incredibly hot in Gaborone for a better part of the year, so light materials are better.

29. How have you been spending your free time? What kinds of opportunities are available for socializing in your city/town?

There are lots of dining options and bars/lounges and nightclubs for evening entertainment. On the weekend there are craft markets and food festivals as well as organized sports like Frisbee and climbing.

30. I feel adequately prepared for my personal/social life. _____

a) Strongly agree b) Somewhat agree c) **Neutral** d) Somewhat disagree e) Strongly disagree

Please briefly explain your response.

It's been challenging to not be complacent with the social environment that already exists in that at this post there are multiple Fellows, which is both positive and negative. It's great in that it means instant friendship and familiarity, but it's also a drawback in that it's difficult not to be drawn into a very insular social circle.

Your Reflections

31. Any frustration with living arrangements or with work? Any frustrations outside of work?

It is challenging to work where you live and live where you work. Although there are advantages and conveniences, it can be suffocating and especially difficult in creating boundaries.

32. Has there been anything that you have needed but have not been able to locate or acquire?

No, everything I have needed and wanted I have found with ease.

33. How did you deal/are you dealing with “culture shock”?

As of now I haven’t experienced culture shock in traditional terms. There have been some teaching policies and practices that are different, but I would not say that those points of difference have led me to experience culture shock.

34. What about your experience thus far has been the most...

Surprising?: All that is involved in teaching, from report writing to meeting parents and setting exams.

Pleasant?: Interacting with all of the students and getting to know all of the boarders.

Frustrating?: Office politics and miscommunication or lack of communication.

35. So far, what would you consider to be your biggest success or proudest moment?

A few of my lesson plans in History and Geography were a hit with the kids. It’s fantastic when the students really respond to a lecture or classroom assignment, and when they’re really engaged and engrossed in the material. It’s a great feeling when the students are eager to participate and are having fun with the coursework.

36. What would you consider to be your greatest challenge or biggest learning opportunity so far?

I want to continue acquiring teaching techniques and learning to intervene effectively when certain students are being disruptive. There are also personality and style clashes amongst staff that are difficult to navigate at certain times, so learning to deal with those obstacles has been a challenge.

37. What are the Top 3 things you miss the most from the US? (Can be food, amenities, movies, etc. Cannot be people—although we know you miss us in the PiAf office terribly, and we thank you! We miss you, too.)

- Reliable access to the internet
- Temperate climate (it is too hot and dry in Gaborone)
- Concerts by my favorite artists

38. What are the Top 3 things about life in Africa that beat out the US?

- Informality of social interactions
- Proximity to incredible national parks
- Great fresh food

39. Please comment on your relationship with the Princeton in Africa office. Include the following details:

- i. Are you receiving sufficient support, materials, and information from us?
- ii. What could we improve?

I do not have any recommendations for improvements. I am very happy with the level of involvement the PiAf office sustains with Fellows. I know if I need anything I can reach out to the staff and they are constantly available.

Your Stipend & Budget

- 40. If you are receiving stipend monies directly from your partner organization, how are you being paid?
 - i. Biweekly, monthly, etc?
 - ii. In US dollars or in another currency?
 - iii. In cash or deposited directly into a bank account? Local account or US account?

I am paid monthly in cash in the national currency (Botswana Pula).

- 41. Have you undertaken additional work to meet expenses?

No, but I am in the process of looking for additional work.

- 42. Please provide a sample monthly budget of your average expenses (in US dollars).

Rent	\$0
Utilities	\$0
Furnishings	\$20
Phone	\$30
Internet	\$30
Transportation	\$80
Fitness	\$0
Entertainment	\$100
Food	\$150
Travel	\$0
Medications	\$0
Laundry	\$0
House cleaning	\$0
Home security	\$0
Other (specify)	\$0

Other one-time or infrequent expenses not included in your monthly budget above (e.g. visa expenses)?
N/A