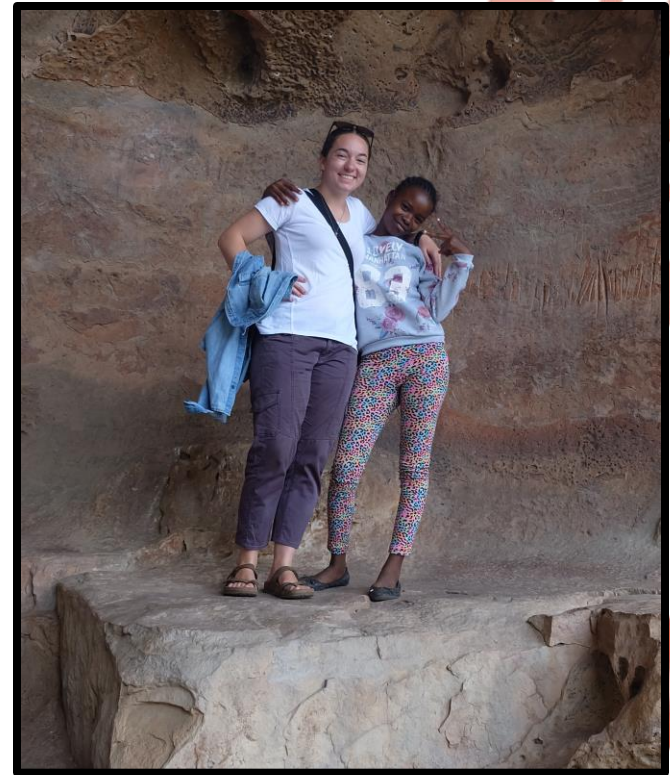
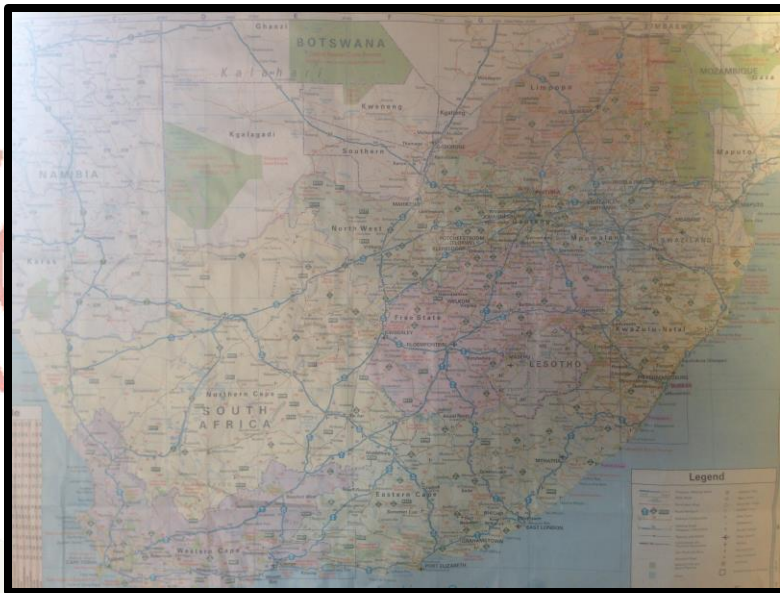


Name: Michelle
Dolinar

Local Name: Zwonaka
Machete



Country: South Africa

Sector: Education



Country Information

What is the country population?

52.98 million people

What is the climate and geography like?

The climate is hot and dry in the winter and wet and hot in the summer. However, we are currently in a drought and it hasn't rained much this year.

What is the population of your site?

I don't have an exact number, but maybe around 10,000 in the greater Masisi Area.

Describe your living arrangements.

I live in a small white house, which is separate from my families house but on the same compound. My house has one room, one power outlet and one lightbulb. I don't have running water, but there is a tap in my yard.



Culture

What do people wear?

They wear lots of the same stuff we wear in America. The traditional clothing is made of a brightly striped fabric

What is the food like?

Delicious! We eat vuswa and chicken a lot, and we also eat termites and Mashonzha (Mopani Worms)

What is the main religion?

In Limpopo Province, ZCC (Zionist Christian Church)

What holidays do people celebrate?

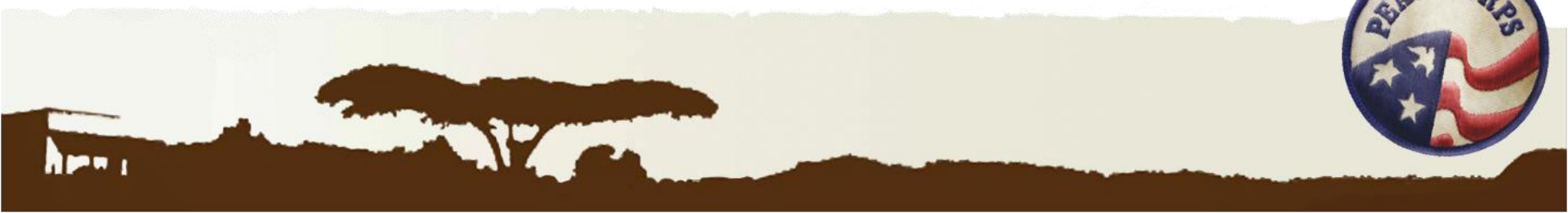
Many of the Christian holidays like Christmas and Easter.

Are there any interesting customs or traditions?

The boys go through initiation ceremonies where they spend days in the bush learning to be a man.

How does transportation work?

I have to take a public taxi through dirt roads in the bush for 3 hours whenever I need to go to town. The taxi picks me up at home at 4 am!



Work

What is your primary project?

School and Community Resource Volunteer – I teach English at my primary school to grades 6 & 7

What are your secondary projects?

I am running a library, remedial reading groups and I hope to coach volleyball very soon

What has been your biggest success?

Getting my remedial reading groups started after school and helping my learners to read in English.

What has been your biggest setback?

The noise level in my classroom, and the lack of expectations placed upon the learners. It is very hard to teach when no one can hear you over screaming children.



Fun Facts

What is your favorite moment in your service so far?

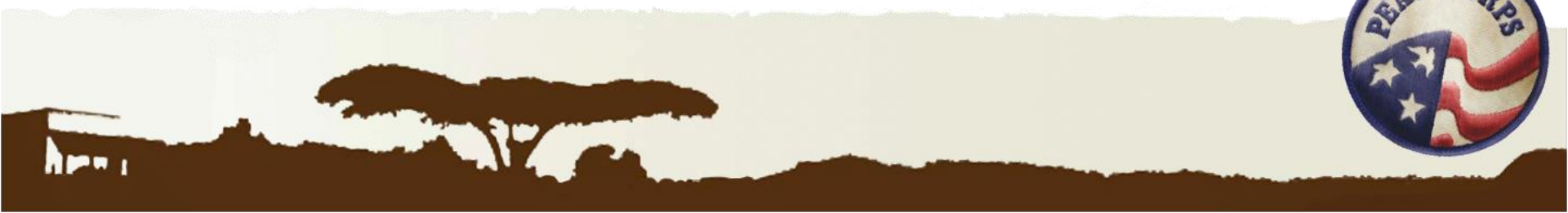
My favorite moment is doing facials with my host sisters and having photo shoots.

What is the strangest thing that has happened to you as a Volunteer?

I was on vacation and a complete stranger came up to me on the beach and started splashing me with water. As I ran away, her friend took photos and said that they were for her instagram feed!

What is your favorite part of being a Peace Corps Volunteer?

I love waking up everyday not knowing what is going to happen! Each day something new happens and I learn more about my community and about myself.



Fun Facts

What is your favorite word or phrase in the local language?

Naledzi is my favorite word and it means star and my favorite phrase is U khou penga, which means you are crazy!

What are things that you've found that are done better in your host country than America?

LAUNDRY! These people are amazing at hand washing. Also, cell phone service is super cheap!

What aspects of your host country do you wish you could bring back to America?

I want to bring back the generosity and overall acceptance I've received here. Also, Ubuntu (the idea that it takes a village and that we are all connected) would do America wonders!

