

# VOLUNTEER IN KENYA

Volunteering is a unique way to discover a country, its culture and people. To sign up you must be at least 18 years old, independent, outgoing and genuinely interested in volunteering. There are participants from many countries.

## Country

The East African country of Kenya borders Somalia to the east. To the southeast is an approximately 530 km long coastline on the Indian Ocean. Kenya borders Tanzania to the southwest, Uganda to the west and Sudan and Ethiopia to the north. The land rises from the lowlands on the coast of the Indian Ocean to highlands and mountains in the central area. The Great Rift Valley, west of the capital Nairobi, runs north-south through the country. In central Kenya mountains tower up to 3000 meters over the savannah and down to Lake Victoria, lying at 1200 meters.

Africa's second highest mountain is Mount Kenya, an old volcano in Mount Kenya National Park, 180 km north of Nairobi. Mount Kenya's highest point is almost 5200 meters.

Nairobi is the centre of Kenya's extensive bus network, with destinations throughout the country.

Walking around Nairobi is relatively straightforward, as the city centre is small and accessible, but ask the coordinator about unsafe areas that you should avoid when walking. Taxis are widely available and convenient.

## Population

The population of Kenya is just over 36 million, with over 3 million living in the capital of Nairobi. There are more than 40 ethnic groups in Kenya. The largest group is the Kikuyu with 24%. Most Kenyans are Christian; 45% belong to a Protestant church and 33% are Catholics. 10% of Kenyans are Moslem and 2% follow traditional African religions. Swahili and English are the official languages of Kenya. The average yearly income per capita is 360 US dollars.

The landscape and climate varies widely. The low-lying coastal areas are tropical but the land becomes ever drier as you move north and northwest.

The rainy season is from April to June and from October to the beginning of December. The coastal area is hot and humid all year, but feels comfortable due to the refreshing breeze from the ocean.

## Program and start dates

The program starts every first and third Monday in the month, with arrival and pickup Sunday before at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, 15 km from Nairobi. Volunteers are driven directly to their host families. Part of the first week will be orientation.

## Work area

You will work in the Kibera slum, 5 km northwest of central Nairobi and home to one third of the capital's population. 'Kibera' is a Nubian word for 'forest.' The original settlers were Sudanese soldiers who settled there after fighting for the British in the First World War. Over a million people live at close quarters in tin shanties. There are very few toilets in Kibera and no garbage collection, so the slum looks like a huge garbage dump and in the rainy season like an open sewer.

Many houses lack clean water so families must buy water from a pump in the city. Lack of hygiene is the cause of serious illnesses, such as dysentery. The great majority of Kibera's inhabitants live on less than \$1 per day. The rent for a room in Kibera is about \$12 per month.

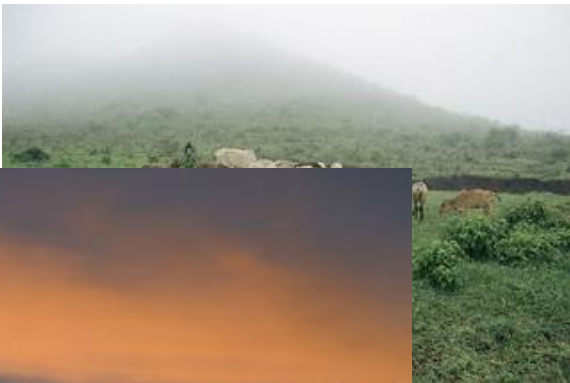
## Board and accommodation

Volunteers live with local host families. You may have to share a room with another volunteer. Families speak English quite well. All houses have water, electricity and a toilet. You will be served three meals a day. Kenyan food includes ugali - a kind of porridge made from corn meal; chapatti - bread similar to a tortilla made from wheat flour; irio - porridge of corn, beans, greens, potatoes and rice.

## Teaching

Soweto Academy' supports over 200 AIDS orphans and some bright children from poor backgrounds. When Soweto Academy was founded in 1988 the classrooms were simple shacks. Several years later the school's founder, pastor Okumu, went to the USA and took up collections in churches. Now there is a school building with 13 proper classrooms, 4 common bedrooms, 2 for boys and 2 for girls, an administration building and a church. The school has recently begun to admit teenage girls who would otherwise be forced into marriage or possibly prostitution and give them the chance to get an education. The school has also acquired a new schoolbus to bring in children from outlying areas.

The school property includes a cow barn and a pigsty. Wishes for the future include a library, a modern kitchen and a physics lab.



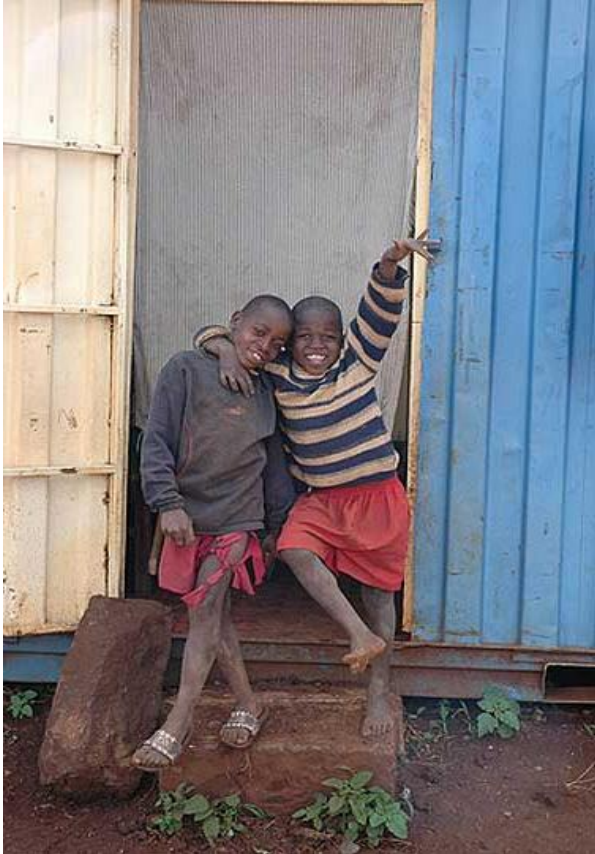
Climate



Q, P.O.BOX 275, Arusha, Tanzania.

[info@maasailandexplorer.com](mailto:info@maasailandexplorer.com) Web; [www.maasailandexplorer.com](http://www.maasailandexplorer.com) ;

ake a Difference



Soweto Academy aims to give all the children good computer skills and was the first to introduce computer instruction in Kibera's grade schools. Computers are donated by the World Bank.

Students who no longer take school subjects are taught arts and crafts, welding and how to grow vegetables. If their products are sold the money is used on the children. The school has achieved several awards, for example, "best Swahili pupil" and "best girl's soccer team". Most of the children can understand English fairly well. You will teach classes of 20 – 35 students, 20 – 30 hours per weeks. The school's teachers will help you to plan your teaching. Besides the formal subjects, you are welcome to teach other subjects you are good at, including sports activities and freetime play.

#### Examples of tasks

- ✚ Teaching English.
- ✚ Administrative tasks.
- ✚ Participate in school activities.
- ✚ Any other tasks suggested by the teachers.

#### Orphanage care program

Most orphanages are in the Kibera and Kawangware slums of Nairobi. These homes provide orphaned, poor and disadvantaged children with shelter, clothing, food, medical care and education. The children live at the centers in small rooms of corrugated metal. You will become part of the children's daily life.

#### Examples of tasks

- ✚ Help in the kitchen
- ✚ Wake the children in the morning and send them off to school
- ✚ Help children with personal hygiene.
- ✚ Take part in activities with the children

- ✚ Teach English and arrange creative activities
- You will work 20 – 30 hours per week.

#### MEDICAL/ HIV/AIDS PROGRAM

Every year AIDS takes the lives of thousands of Kenyan children and adults. An estimated 900,000 Kenyans are infected with HIV/AIDS. There is a great need for information projects about HIV/AIDS to increase awareness in the local communities and change attitudes. Organizations offering help to HIV positive children and their families operate in several Nairobi slum areas. They counsel and test the local population, give antiretroviral medical treatment, educate caregivers, establish nutrition programs and fundraise. Their goal is to reduce the number of HIV/AIDS cases and improve quality of life for about 3000 HIV positive children and about 15,000 family members. Experience has shown that help and counseling at home has a positive effect and is cheaper than hospital care.

#### Examples of tasks

- ✚ Home visits.
  - ✚ Distribute food to patients.
  - ✚ Counsel patients and their families.
  - ✚ Teach hygiene and nutrition.
  - ✚ Prevention counseling about infection.
- Volunteers with medical experience can work at the HIV clinic.

#### Examples of tasks

- ✚ Distribute medicine.
  - ✚ Dress injuries.
  - ✚ Laboratory work.
  - ✚ Other odd tasks at the clinic.
  - ✚ CD4 counts.
- Working hours are 20 - 30 per week.

#### For longer stays ask us

[info@maasailandexplorer.com](mailto:info@maasailandexplorer.com) for fees.

#### Included in the fee

- ✚ Airport pickup and transport to accommodation.
- ✚ Board and accommodation during the entire program (3 meals per day).
- ✚ Help and guidance from the local coordinator during the entire program.
- ✚ Pre-departure handbook.

#### Not included

- ✚ Travel to/from Kenya.
- ✚ Visa fees.
- ✚ Insurance.
- ✚ Pocket money.
- ✚ Any entrance fee during sightseeing and trips.



### Before you leave

Volunteering in a social project demands maturity, flexibility and independence. It is emotionally very demanding to work with poor people, but it also gives you the opportunity to try something unique and, not least, an unforgettable experience. Living and working in Kenya is a huge challenge. It may seem overwhelming at first to adapt to a completely different way of life in strange surroundings. Things do not function the way they do where you come from and people do not react as you expect. The climate, food and atmosphere are all different. During work, you will confront a harsh social reality and experience things that most tourists cannot even imagine. Do not expect to find a finished program, all ready when you start working. If you have decided to work with children in an orphanage or school, it helps if you already know how to occupy children – with handicrafts, sports, games, storybooks and music. Use your imagination and be creative.

Maasai Land Explorer always strives to give the best service, also in Kenya, but European standards are not to be expected. The work is not organized by a weekly plan or schedule.

### Enrolment

You enrol by sending the enclosed enrolment form to; [info@maasailandexplorer.com](mailto:info@maasailandexplorer.com) here you can check which program you prefer and how long you wish to participate.

Please add a letter of motivation in English with a picture, in which you explain why you wish to work as a volunteer and describe yourself. The local coordinator will do his best to respect your first priority, but we may not guarantee that all your wishes can be fulfilled. Upon receipt of your enrolment form we will send confirmation and more useful details.

### Please note

You are not allowed to drink alcohol during the program period and it is forbidden to smoke during class.

We cannot guarantee that you can change your voluntary work placement after arrival.

### Payment conditions

#### Enrolment

Upon enrolment, a deposit of half of your program fees is required. The remaining amount is to be paid 6 weeks before departure. If you enrol 6 weeks or less before departure, the total amount will be due at once.

#### Cancellation

If you cancel your program before you have received information about your volunteer work, the total amount of the program will be refunded except for the deposit. After arrival in Kenya, no refunds are made.

#### Participation

If you do not show up in class, at work or other activities, you will not be entitled to refunds.

#### Cancellation insurance

We advise you to take out cancellation insurance covering the amount it is required to pay. Cancellation insurance covers, illness, also in your closest family, etc.

#### Claims

Potential claims during your stay must be discussed with your local coordinator.

**Price adjustments**

Maasai Land Explorer reserves the right to adjust fees in the event of a serious change in exchange rates.

**Responsibility**

Maasai Land Explorer is a representative for a local organisation and therefore cannot be held responsible for possible changes made by our partners after editing this information.

**General information****Visa**

A visa is needed. You can apply at the Kenyan embassy/consulate in your home country. Visas are no longer issued at the airport. Since a voluntary work visa does not exist, you must apply for a **single entry/tourist** visa. It takes about 5 working days to obtain it. Find the Kenyan embassy in your country on this page and download the application form:

<http://www.embassyworld.com/dev/result.php?guest=105&host=%25&count=0&menu=1>

**Vaccines**

It is generally advised to get vaccines for tetanus, typhoid, polio, hepatitis A, yellow fever, and cholera as well as malaria pills. Contact your physician or insurance company for exact information.

**Insurance**

European insurances do not cover you outside Europe. Travel insurance is compulsory.

**Airfare**

Travel expenses are not included in the program fees.