Welcome to World Youth International’s Overseas Action Program in Kenya.

The Overseas Action Program is a group volunteer placement in Kenya. This program will empower you to make a difference.

We trust that your queries will be covered in this document but if you have any further questions, please email us at admin@worldyouth.org.au or call us on 08 8340 1266.

For information on fees and program dates, please visit our website at www.worldyouth.org.au.
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Kenya Country Information

Kenya is located on the East Coast of Africa with the Equator running almost straight through the middle of the country. It is a sovereign state, having achieved political independence from British rule on 12 December 1963 and become a fully-fledged Republic within the Commonwealth of Nations one year later on 12 December 1964. The country shares common borders with Somalia (north east), Ethiopia (north), Sudan (north-west), Uganda (west) and Tanzania (south). To the south east lies the Great Indian Ocean, making the country the marine gateway to East Africa.

Kenya is a land of scenic splendours, magnificent fauna and flora, enjoyable climatic conditions and rich cultural values. It is blessed with a great variety of natural wonders: from the azure blue waters of the Indian Ocean, to the sun-drenched silver sand beaches, through the wild Savanna woodlands to the deserts of Northern Province, and the Montane forests of central Kenya right across to the shores of the second largest freshwater lake in the world, Lake Victoria. Kenya also hosts the second highest snow-capped mountain in Africa, Mt. Kenya, which rises to 5,199 metres and is the only location in the world where snow can be found on the Equator.

Kenya is a multi-racial society with more than 40 indigenous tribes and other ethnic communities. While no ethnic group constitutes a majority of Kenya’s citizens, the five largest tribal groups – Kikuyu, Luo, Luhya, Kamba and Kalenjin – account for about 70 per cent of the population.

Kenya is a very conservative country with regards to socially acceptable behaviours, dress and presentation. The majority of Kenyans identify as Christian though there is also a strong Islamic following, particularly in the coastal regions. Many different denominations of Christianity exist in Kenya and people take their faith very seriously. Tribal beliefs are slowly petering out and very few traditional tribes continue to reside in the country today.

The state of health in Kenya requires significant improvement. Infectious respiratory diseases and malaria account for the majority of illnesses and deaths in the country, while tuberculosis, dysentery, and parasitic and venereal diseases are common occurrences. HIV/AIDS continues to have a devastating impact with three in five people infected with the HIV virus in many rural locations.

Many illnesses in Kenya are transmitted by insects and animals, and by the use of contaminated water for washing and drinking. The situation is compounded by a lack of understanding of sanitary principles, by malnutrition and by HIV/AIDS. Despite major achievements in the health sector, there is still a lot to be desired. Weak policies, inadequately trained health workers, weak management and poor leadership in most public health facilities are largely to blame.

Gender inequality is a stark reality in Kenya. Simply put, women are generally perceived as second-rate citizens with fewer rights and freedoms than men. The traditional belief that women exist to serve, procreate, cook and clean runs deep, even among women and the younger generations. It is not unusual to hear of, or see, women being abused by their husbands, and male infidelity is a common occurrence. Progress is slowly being made, however, as groups supporting women’s empowerment and self-sufficiency are being established around Kenya every day.
Your program fee includes:

- All accommodation
- All meals
- In-country transport
- Airport transfers
- A four-day orientation and sightseeing program held in Nairobi and Kisumu
- All costs relating to materials and local labour hire for community development projects
- Sightseeing activities throughout program
- Swahili or Luo language lessons
- A three-day Rest and Relaxation package halfway through your program
- Welcome party and farewell celebration
- 24 hour guidance and support provided by an experienced Team Leader and local staff
- Entry to the Personal Empowerment Program (a four-day program held annually in Adelaide)
- WYI polo shirt and ‘You Are Amazing’ book
- WYI Step Out membership
- Contribution towards the sustainable growth of WYI which supports our work in developing countries

Your program fee does not include:
(all costs listed are a guideline only)

Air Travel, Taxes and Travel Insurance
You are required to organise your own airfares to the nominated destination point. Travel insurance is compulsory for all programs. Contact WYI for our recommended travel agent and insurance company.

Vaccinations
As WYI is not a registered medical organisation, we can only direct you to www.tmvc.com.au (Travel Doctor) or www.drsref.com.au/travel.html for country-specific advice and general travel health tips.

Visas
You are required to enter Kenya on a tourist visa. WYI will provide you with the necessary forms and guide you through the process.

Police Check
You are required to provide a current National Police Clearance Certificate. Please visit your local police station and request the appropriate forms.

Medical Examination
With the assistance of your regular doctor, you are required to complete and submit our medical examination form prior to your departure.

Personal Items
You must supply your own clothing, travel equipment, toiletries and personal entertainment (e.g. books, iPod, magazines, etc.)

Spending Money
You will require personal spending money for souvenirs, phones and SIM cards, toiletries you may require, and any snacks or drinks outside of what WYI provides (e.g. chocolate bars, energy/alcoholic drinks, junk food, etc.)

First Aid Kit
A First Aid Kit will be supplied to your team throughout the program, however antibiotics and other medications will not be provided. We encourage you to visit a Travel Doctor or GP to fill your own First Aid Kit with personal medications to suit you.

Transport
Transport to Adelaide for the four-day Personal Empowerment Program.
WYI offers five week and ten week programs in Kenya. The following itineray is an example of a five week program. A ten week program will be almost the same but doubled to involve two projects running for five weeks each.

We require all volunteers to arrive in Nairobi one day prior to the advertised commencement date. You will be collected from the airport by the Team Leader and transferred to our local accommodation. If you are travelling overland, you can arrange a central meeting point with the Team Leader. Your accommodation and food expenses will be covered by WYI for the day prior to the program start date. Should you arrive any earlier, the Team Leader will still collect you from the airport and arrange your accommodation, but you will be required to pay for your food and accommodation during this time.

Although subject to change, below is the standard format for a five week Overseas Action Program in Kenya:

**Day 1**
Morning welcome, program introduction and sightseeing activities around Nairobi.

**Day 2**
Overland bus transfer from Nairobi to Kisumu, travelling for approximately eight hours across the Great Rift Valley.

**Day 3 - 4**
Orientation in Kisumu, including program overview, cultural discussions, health and safety briefings, team building activities, introduction to local staff and familiarisation activities around the city.

**Day 5**
Transfer to rural community village. You will have the chance to meet local community members and become familiar with your new surroundings.

**Day 6 – 18**
Commence project work in the community. As a team, you will work alongside local community members on sustainable, community-driven development projects as sourced by WYI’s in-country staff. Individually, you may choose to take on a personal project in a field which interests you. This might be at a local school or community centre, with a women’s group or youth group, or within a medical clinic (relevant qualifications essential). The Team Leader will collaborate with you to find an individual project that benefits the community and suits you.

The structure of your work days will be determined by the Team Leader according to a roster system. You will either work on the major team project or participate on a pre-arranged individual placement, and you will generally have one or two days off from work per week.

You will live in sharehouse-style accommodation within the community throughout this period.

**Day 19 - 21**
After spending around two weeks working on the project, you will take a few days off to rest up and recharge your batteries. The Team Leader will take you on a Rest and Relaxation Package, where you will visit a stunning location in Kenya, enjoy the local food and participate in fun activities. This is the perfect way to re-energise and prepare yourself for the rest of your program.

**Day 22 – 32**
You will return to the community rejuvenated and ready to complete your major group project. At the end of your placement, there will be a community celebration to acknowledge your efforts and achievements. You will continue to live in sharehouse-style accommodation within the community throughout this period.

**Day 33 - 35**
You will spend a day in Kisumu where you can contact friends and family and do last minute shopping. You will travel overland from Kisumu to Nairobi, arriving in late afternoon. Your final days of the program will be devoted to debriefing and celebrating. This is a chance for you to reflect on your group and individual achievements and prepare yourself for your return to Australia.

Once your program has completed, you might like to participate on the Optional Adventure Package as a way to celebrate and unwind with the rest of your OA group. The Optional Adventure Package in Kenya is a fantastic three-day, all-inclusive Masai Mara Game Park Safari. Should you choose to take part, you will see lions, hyenas, cheetahs, giraffes, zebras, antelopes and elephants, and even leopards (if you are lucky!) in their natural habitat.

More information about the Optional Adventure Package in Kenya can be found on the following page.

**Is there an option to stay on in Kenya after my program has completed?**
Some people are happy to participate on the OAP in Kenya and return straight home to Australia. Others choose to continue their time in the country by transferring across to our Overseas Service Program (OSP).

The OSP is an individual program which runs for one to six months and is designed to utilise and maximise your personal skills, interests and experiences. WYI can offer specialist placement options in the areas of teaching, nursing and healthcare, and general community placements in orphanage support, street children programs, health and sanitation projects, and support for community and women’s groups. You may choose one or more of these placements and create a working structure that meets your individual needs.

For more information on the Overseas Service Program, visit our website at www.worldyouth.org.au or call our office on 08 8340 1266.
Optional Adventure Package

The Optional Adventure Package at the end of your program is highly recommended and a great way to complete with your OA team. It allows you to take time out, relax and enjoy the natural beauty of Kenya after so many weeks of hard work!

In conjunction with a qualified safari agent in Kenya, WYI offers you the chance to participate on a three day, all-inclusive safari through the Masai Mara Game Reserve. Masai Mara is arguably Kenya’s most popular game sanctuary where many varieties of wildlife can be viewed. Elephants, giraffes, lions, wildebeest, hyenas, zebras, cheetahs, leopards, gazelles, impala, buffalo and more than four hundred bird species call this picturesque sanctuary home.

The OAP Team Leader will accompany you throughout the safari and ensure that all WYI safety and security measures are met. The Adventure Package is run separately from WYI Australia and is completely optional, so the cost is not included in the Overseas Action Program fee.

The Optional Adventure Package in Kenya will include:

- Return transport to Nairobi
- Masai Mara Game Park entrance fees
- Accommodation in a camping village near the game park
- Four wheel drive transport with an experienced guide
- All meals
- The chance to view a great variety of wild African animals
Previous OAP Stories

Painting of Early Childhood Development Centre, Ugunja

I began my OAP in Kenya in the rural village of Ugunja. As a group of 12 we worked together with the locals on our major project which was building a maternity clinic. We were also given the opportunity to choose an additional project to focus on individually. I, along with two other group members chose to paint the interior and exterior of the local Early Childhood Development Centre (ECD). On our arrival, the bare cement walls and barred windows resembled more of a jail block than an inviting learning environment for young children. The teachers and children were getting by without even the bare essentials of enough pencils and paper to go around, let alone any resource materials such as books or posters.

Since the children begin to learn English even at such a young age, we brightened up the cement walls by filling them with painted English words and pictures. We painted the alphabet, numbers, the Kenyan flag and map, colours, shapes, parts of the body, foods, parts of a plant, transport, family members, furniture, animals, and a world map, so that the walls now act as lasting teaching aids.

This project had immediate effects as the children began learning from the walls before we had even finished painting them. They loved peeking through the doorways and windows at every chance to delight in our progress by seeing what new colourful pictures they could see appearing on the walls. As well as the educational benefits, the classroom is now a brighter and much more inviting place for the children to learn well into the future.

Debora Miller
Past participant

Construction of eco-toilet block, Odede

From now I will forever think of my life in two parts: life before Kenya and life after Kenya. As I sit and reflect on the amazing adventure that has been my life for the past three months I am humbled and overwhelmed. I truly believe you get out of life what you put in but when it comes to Kenya I came out on top.

This summer I had the chance to lead eight incredible people - Dan, Miwa, Tiffany, Joel, Justin, Josh, Erin and Anneke - on what was the best experience of my life. Together we built eco-toilets for the Child Rescue Centre, a carpentry workshop for the Community Centre and two homes for families in need.

On top of that we raised more than $9000 and held five medical camps, delivering medical attention to more than 2,000 Kenyans. We also volunteered at a local orphanage, a special school, community centre and medical clinic, and had loads of fun at every turn.

Saying goodbye was the hardest part of the journey and not a day goes by that I don’t look back and smile at the lifelong friends I made and the difference we were able to make to the lives of the people of Kenya.

Dalice Kennedy
Team Leader OAP Kenya
Frequently Asked Questions

How old do I need to be?
You must be between 18 and 30 years of age to participate on an Overseas Action Program.

Do I need any qualifications?
Formal qualifications are not required. All training will be provided at the commencement of your program.

What is the selection criteria?
WYI looks for flexible and resilient participants to take part on these programs. They must have good communications skills and be able to live and work in a team environment.

What areas of Kenya will I travel to?
You will spend time in Nairobi, Kisumu and in small rural communities in western Kenya. Village placement locations will vary but are generally within three hours' travel from Kisumu.

What will my living arrangements be?
During the orientation period and at the end of your program, you and your team will stay in hostels in Nairobi and Kisumu. For the remainder of your program, you and your group will reside in sharehouse-style lodgings within the local community. As you will be based in rural areas of western Kenya, this accommodation will contain basic furnishings and facilities and may not have electricity or running water.

What sort of food will I be eating?
During your orientation period and at the end of your program, you will eat most meals at local cafes and restaurants in Nairobi and Kisumu.

For the remainder of the program, WYI will purchase food from supermarkets in Kisumu and stalls at local village markets. Participants will make their own breakfast and take turns preparing dinner for the rest of the team. Lunch will be supplied by local community members. Meals will be mostly vegetarian, consisting of rice, beans, fruits and vegetables.

When should I apply for a position on the OAP?
As programs fill quickly, WYI recommends that you apply at least six to nine months prior to the scheduled commencement date. Your program fee might take some time to pay off in monthly instalments, so advanced planning is strongly advised. WYI accepts applications until 60 days prior to program commencement, providing places are available on the program. If the program is full, you can be placed on a waiting list or choose to travel at a later date.

Is my program tax deductible?
All donations to WYI and most donations towards your program fee are also tax deductible.

ATO tax legislation stipulates that DGR status does not extend to our participants. Any contributions that come from you, your immediate family members, or money raised through general fundraising activities where donors receive goods or services in return for their contributions (such as trivia nights, chocolate drives, raffles or movie nights) are not tax deductible. All other contributions are tax deductible.

How many other volunteers will be in my team?
The minimum number of volunteers required to run an Overseas Action Program is six. We will accept a maximum of twelve participants in one group.

How does WYI select its OAP projects & what kind of projects will I be working on?
All projects selected by WYI are community driven and focus on sustainable development. Applications from within the community are submitted to WYI for review and appraisal. If proposals are in alignment with our development model and fall within the fields of income generation, education, environment or health care, we will proceed with the project. Project reviews are completed over the following year to ensure the ongoing success of the project.

How safe am I in Kenya? Are there risks I should be aware of?
The design of our Overseas Action Program in Kenya ensures that any risk to you is minimised. We have extensive risk management plans in place, as well as evacuation and emergency procedures. Our Team Leaders and in-country staff are fully trained in these areas, and will be responsible for you and your team's safety in the unlikely event of an emergency.

Many cities in Kenya, like Nairobi and Mombasa, are considered 'high risk' locations. We avoid these areas as much as possible and place you off the beaten track, in small villages and communities in rural western Kenya where it is much safer. Travel within northeastern Kenya is strictly forbidden.

Why choose World Youth International?
WYI has been offering volunteer placements since 1988 and is proudly a not-for-profit, non-religious and non-political Australian-based organisation. We have sent thousands of volunteers across the globe and have had no major injuries, accidents or deaths on any of our programs. WYI is an approved charity, a signatory to ACFID (Australian Council for International Development) and AusAID approved. We have flourished as an organisation through word of mouth and we rely on our volunteers to share their experiences and outcomes with their peers.

Why do you offer only a limited amount of countries to volunteer in?
At World Youth International, we focus on quality and not quantity. We ensure that our destinations provide our participants with the greatest possible volunteering experience. We have worked in countries like Nepal and Kenya since 1992 and have a large network of strategic local and international partners. This allows WYI to offer a range of placements options to you and focus more of our efforts into making your experience a success.
Application Procedure

You can reserve a position on our Overseas Action Program in Kenya by applying online now at www.worldyouth.org.au, or by downloading an application form and submitting it to our office at:

World Youth International
PO Box 25
Hindmarsh SA 5007

Our staff will process your application and contact you by phone within three days. You will be required to complete a short Online Interview Form before receiving a personalised, 45 minute information session from the Overseas Action Program Coordinator. This will be conducted by phone unless you live in Adelaide and are able to visit us in the office. The intention of the call will be to assess your suitability, establish a relationship with you, provide you with information about the program and address any of your immediate questions. Applicants will be notified of their suitability for the program at the conclusion of this call.

If you have any questions before submitting your application, please do not hesitate to contact us at the office on 08 8340 1266 or email admin@worldyouth.org.au.

Fundraising

Do you want to participate on one of our overseas volunteer programs but are restricted financially? Perhaps you should consider fundraising!

Rally your colleagues and corporate groups and encourage them to make a donation. Get a group of friends together and organise a quiz night, movie night or garage sale. Hold a sausage sizzle or host an informal tea party with a Kenyan theme. Encourage your Facebook friends to donate to your campaign via donation websites. You might be surprised by how successful your fundraising efforts could be. Some participants have managed to fundraise their entire program fee and have extra remaining to use on projects within the country!

Should you choose to fundraise, WYI will provide you with a Fundraising Kit which includes a tax deductible receipt book, fundraising ideas, terms and conditions, an authorisation card, plus handy hints and tips. The donations you receive are fully tax deductible* and can be directed towards your program fee or the sustainable development projects you and your group will work on in Kenya.

Please contact the office on (08) 8340 1266 for more information on how you could fundraise your program fee!

* A ‘donation’ requires the donor to receive nothing in return (eg. chocolate bars and raffle tickets are not tax deductible.)

Research Links

Kenya Country Information and News
www.trust.org/alertnet
www.worldbank.org
www.who.int/countries/ken/en

Kenyan High Commission
www.kenya.asn.au

First Aid and Medical Sites
www.tmvc.com.au
www.stjohn.org.au

Tourism
www.go2africa.com/kenya
www.lonelyplanet.com/kenya
www.magicalkenya.com

Travel Advice
www.smarttraveller.gov.au

World Youth International Facebook Group
www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=4753488502

World Youth International Facebook Page
http://www.facebook.com/WYIHome