

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

This handbook is intended to give potential volunteers a taste of what they can expect while working with Porridge and Rice in Kenya, and practical advice on how to get the most from the experience.



Figure 1 Jake, a PaR volunteer, assists with serving lunch at Excel Emmanuel school



Figure 2 PaR volunteers, Vish, Seb and Ned, feeding vervet monkeys at City Park in Nairobi

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1 Introduction

The education charity Porridge and Rice (PaR) welcomes volunteers of all ages, backgrounds and skill levels throughout the calendar year. All that is required of volunteers is a desire to make a difference.

PaR can accommodate anyone, from students doing their A levels or on a gap year, university students doing an elective, professionals taking a career break, or a person simply wanting to make a difference. Our minimum unaccompanied age requirement is 16, but beyond that, we do not discriminate on age.

A wide range of activities need to be completed to carry out the work of PaR, from painting blackboards to office-based administration. If you are looking for something specific to meet the requirements of an elective, PaR can design a programme to suit your university or college's requirements.



Figure 3 Jude, a volunteer, teaching computer skills to Excel School staff

2 Options

Porridge and Rice offers opportunities for people to volunteer in Kenya including electives, work experience, and internships across a wide range of disciplines from teaching to engineering. The charity can only consider candidates who are 16 years and over, unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. The charity can design programmes to meet different interests, skills and course requirements.

2.1 Electives

Porridge and Rice has experience putting together programmes that meet the requirements for course electives. Interested students should contact the charity to discuss their course requirements. A member of the PaR team will work with the student and the course supervisor (if necessary) to shape a programme that meets the specific needs of the course. Electives are self-funded and unpaid.



Figure 4 Emma, a trainee nurse, doing her elective in her BSc with Porridge and Rice in Nairobi

2.2 Internships

The work of the charity provides hands-on opportunities for pupils, undergraduates, post graduates and professionals to develop their skills in a wide range of fields including but NOT limited to nursing, medicine, engineering, teaching, finance, psychology, accounting, nutrition, administration, construction, speech therapy, sport coaching, and childcare.

An internship with Porridge and Rice is an excellent way of building a CV while making a real difference to the lives of people living in the Nairobi slums. An internship can be any length of time from two weeks to a year. The charity will happily provide a formal reference for all internees and act as a referee for job or study applications.

Internships with Porridge and Rice are unpaid. The costs of projects are funded by the charity.

2.3 Work Experience

The programmes of Porridge and Rice provide opportunities for work experience required for university applications including medicine, nursing, education and several other disciplines. The charity has experience supporting students to meet compulsory university requirements and students wishing to enhance their university application.

2.4 Volunteering

PaR welcomes people who simply want to make a difference to those who are less fortunate than themselves. No specific skills are required, just willingness to engage with enthusiasm. The seven programmes of the charity include tasks suited for everyone from the keen teenager to the experienced professional.



Figure 5 Volunteers, Luan and Vish, making new blackboards for PaR school Excel Emmanuel

2.5 Registration Fee

Porridge and Rice does not make money from any volunteers, where general, elective, work experience, and internship volunteers. All bookings made by Porridge and Rice are charged at cost, usually paid directly.

A lot of work goes into organising and managing general, elective, work experience, and internship volunteers, work done by people who do not charge for their time or effort. In recognition of the time and effort they do, all volunteers are required to pay a £200 registration to the charity. This money is used by the charity as part of general funds to support its work, and not to pay people for the work involved with volunteers.

3 Flights

Several airlines fly from London to Nairobi, both directly or indirectly. The price of flights depends on a number of factors including the time of the year, the day of the week, and how early the flight is booked. Economy flights range from £400 to £1000. Summer is more expensive than other times of the year. It is always worth shopping around.

Volunteers can book their own flight or, if they wish to travel with other volunteers, nominate PaR to book flights for them. PaR usually uses Turkish Airlines, flying via Istanbul, as they are very competitive and can be bought through The Giving Machine which results in a small donation to the charity. PaR will shop for the best deal, and dates will be chosen to keep flight costs down.

Volunteers travelling via Istanbul must pack an overnight/stop-over bag for the 24-hour stop-over, as the main luggage will be checked through to Kenya. Include items like a change of underwear and a small towel with small toiletries (remember the 100ml limit per item, and a clear plastic bag per person for liquids). If time permits, the group may take the opportunity to see the sights of Istanbul.



Figure 6 Jude, Vish, Emma and Jake arrive at Nairobi airport to volunteer with PaR

4 Dates

Volunteers can travel to Kenya at any time of year to volunteer and for any length of time.

PaR organises group trips three times a year, usually January/February, July/August, and October/November. Exact dates are decided closer to the time to take advantage of the best flight prices and accommodate Kenyan school term dates.

Volunteers can travel on their own or in groups. Most volunteers prefer to travel with a group.

Volunteers can volunteer for any length of time in Kenya. The most popular length of time is 4 weeks which allows volunteers to work with the charity and do some sight seeing.



Figure 7 Luan and Kuljit, volunteers, join the pupils of Excel Emmanuel at Lake Elementeita

5 Accommodation

PaR groups stay at Wildebeest Eco Lodge because it is close to PaR partner schools, safe and secure, and reasonably priced. The facilities are excellent, a good breakfast is included in the price, wifi is free, there are plenty of charging points for phones and laptops, and washing of clothes can be done at a fair price. The showers, heated by solar panels, are wonderfully hot.

Wildebeest Eco Lodge has a small licensed restaurant and bar which serves simple food and sells drinks. There is a large raised deck, a communal room with a large screen TV, a pool table, a swimming pool, and a table tennis room.

Wildebeest Eco Lodge offers a range of accommodation from dormitories to single rooms. We book volunteers into dormitories by default. Volunteers can choose any type of room, provided they are willing to pay the extra cost. There are lockers in each room for keeping valuable items like passports and laptops. Volunteers need to bring their own padlock to secure the locker.

Wildebeest Eco Lodge is within walking distance (2.7km/approx. 30 min) of The Galleria, a shopping mall with a range of shops from a supermarket to a chemist, some fast food restaurants, and several ATMs.

The Eco Wildebeest website is <http://wildebeestecocamp/>.

Volunteers are free to choose their own accommodation, however we encourage people to stay with the group as it makes co-ordination easier and builds team spirit. Even when people travel on their own, we encourage folk to stay at Eco Widebeest because we know the staff and the venue.



Figure 8 Volunteers having breakfast on the deck at Eco Wildebeest



Figure 9 The grounds of Eco Wildebeest Lodge

6 Tasks

Volunteers can participate in a wide range of tasks including teaching Maths, English and health classes, preparing and serving food, and painting classrooms. Volunteers are allocated tasks based on their skills, age, and length of stay. Volunteers are welcome to discuss their preferences with PaR, which will be accommodated whenever possible.

PaR will allocate volunteers with professional training to try to take maximum advantage of their skills. In addition, students choosing to volunteer with PaR as an elective will be matched to tasks that meet their university requirements. For example, medics, nurses or trainee nurses can help with growth monitoring, deworming, or health lessons.

The work done by PaR is organised into seven programmes which are (1) Education and Sponsorship, (2) Extracurricular Activities, (3) Facilities and Furniture, (4) Feeding and Nutrition, (5) Gender and Rights, (6) Health and Hygiene, and (7) Sustainability and Accountability.

The tasks done by volunteers are determined by the needs of the PaR school community. PaR tasks make a real difference to the school and its community. Volunteers need to be flexible as PaR may need to make changes to the work planned for volunteers to cater for changing needs.

The PaR Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Porridgeandrice/>) contains a comprehensive collection of photographs of the work done by PaR and PaR volunteers. Please visit, like and share it to show your support.



Figure 10 Volunteers Vish, Taylor, Ned, Kuljit, Leonie, and Luan, ready for a day at PaR schools



Figure 11 Volunteers Vish, Ramy, and Ned mix concrete for the kitchen floor at Lizpal School



Figure 12 Volunteer Rachel, a medical student, teaches an English lesson



Figure 13 Volunteer Luan helps to paint Lizpal School



Figure 14 Volunteers Carolina and Vincent help sort donated books for Porridge and Rice schools

6.1 Feeding and Nutrition

When a school joins the charity, Porridge and Rice leads with setting up a feeding programme as a hungry child cannot concentrate in class and a deficiency of many vitamins and essential nutrients can impair cognitive development. The Feeding and Nutrition programme provides nutritionally balanced meals to all students at PaR community schools each school day to alleviate hunger and tackle the most serious nutrient deficiencies that beset children in the Nairobi slums.

The charity takes its name from its feeding programme, with children receiving porridge for breakfast and rice with stew followed by fruit for lunch. The porridge is an African porridge known as sour Uji, a mixture of ground sorghum wheat and millet - it is served hot with sugar. The stew includes Nyayo beans, Kale and locally grown seasonal vegetables. Fruit served after lunch varies based on what is in season in Kenya, ranging from mangoes to avocados.

PaR launched the first feeding programme In March 2014 at Excel Emmanuel Community School for 250 pupils and their teachers. In January 2015, PaR expanded its feeding programme to another school, Lizpal, with 400 pupils.

By July 2015, pupil numbers at the 2 partner schools had grown considerably, when PaR launched its 3rd feeding programme breakfast at Heri Junior with 561 pupils, taking the total number of children fed by PaR each school day to over 1750. In the autumn of the same year, two more schools were added taking the number of pupils to over 2000 by the end of the 2015.

The aim is to continue to increase the number of children fed each school day by partnering with at least one additional school each year, providing the charity can raise the necessary funds.



Figure 15 Helen, a volunteer from the UK, serves Uji for breakfast at Excel Emmanuel School

PaR meals address the three serious nutritional shortages identified by the World Health Organisation, WHO, namely Vitamin A, Iron, and Iodine -

- Vitamin A - each child receives sweet potato with breakfast once a week to provide a week's Vitamin A as well as mangoes when they are in season.
- Iodine - small amounts of Iodised salt are added to the lunch stew to meet the Iodine requirements of pupils.
- Iron – Nyayo beans, a variety of kidney beans very high in iron and kale are added to meals to ensure that all pupils meet the iron requirements needed for good health.

PaR volunteers can help prepare and serve meals, sourcing food, and when a new school is added to the PaR team, set up the food programme. In the case of the latter, this includes purchasing the required pots and coal fire as well as sourcing local suppliers.



Figure 16 Agneta, volunteer from Denmark, serves sweet potato, rich in vitamin A, at Lizpal School

6.2 Health and Hygiene

Water in the slums costs around 4 times what it costs in nearby suburbs with most slum families not being able to buy very much at all and then only for what is considered essential. Soap and disinfectant are just as expensive, making them a luxury for people in the slums. Furthermore, few people have access to hygienic toilets and open defecation is common. This creates an environment where diseases like helminths can multiply and spread easily.

In the UK, 1 in 1000 children dies before the age of 5, and in Nairobi 85 in 1000 children dies before the age of 5. By contrast, in the Nairobi slums, 200 in 1000 children die of diarrhoea alone before the age of 5 according to the WHO. The absence of good hygiene and sanitation is costing lives because of preventable diseases like diarrhoea and worms.

PaR runs health and hygiene classes for teachers, pupils and parents, explaining the need for hand washing, face washing, and thorough cleaning with disinfectant. Volunteers have helped with these lessons, both preparing and presenting them. The lessons include games and singing to engage the children, making the lessons memorable.

PaR provides soap and water so pupils can wash their hands after going to the toilet and before meals, and to wash their faces once a day. Both are essential to breaking the transmission cycle of diseases like trachoma and helminthiasis (intestinal worms). Volunteers have helped supervise and monitor hand and face washing. They have also helped with washing and cleaning pots, bowls, and utensils demonstrating the need for thorough cleaning of all items used in the preparation and eating of food.



Figure 17 A pupil at Excel Emmanuel school washes her hands with clean water and disinfected soap

PaR provides disinfectant to clean the school toilets daily and facilities weekly. There are too few toilets and they are in poor condition. PaR works to keep them as hygienic as possible until new toilets can be built. The school facilities are cleaned by groups of parents. Disinfecting schools and toilets, and hand washing programs reduces the spread of worms and harmful pathogens that cause illnesses like diarrhoea. Volunteers have helped parents to ensure that the highest possible cleaning standards are maintained.

Worms (helminthiasis) are a major cause of poor health and even death for children in the slums, and infection is widespread. A recent CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/) report found a prevalence rate of 80% in one Nairobi slum which is extremely high, and for which the people in the slums pay a heavy price. Worms can cause significant cognitive impairment limiting potential and even death. Deworming reduces malnutrition and restores the immune system. All students at PaR schools are dewormed every 6 months with a single dose of Albendazole along with Vitamin A supplements. Volunteers have helped with the administration of deworming tablets and supplements, as well the growth monitoring (weight and height) of pupils 5 and under.



Figure 18 Teacher Grace outside new toilets funded by Sainsbury Foundation

Trachoma is an infection of the eyes, caused by a bacterium, which results in blindness after repeated re-infections. It is the world's leading cause of preventable blindness and occurs where people live in overcrowded conditions with limited access to water and health care. Trachoma spreads easily from person to person and is frequently passed from child to child and from child to mother within a family. Trachoma is passed on by contact spreading the discharge from infected eyes, or by flies that land on the face of the infected child.

Trachoma occurs worldwide and most often in poor rural communities in developing countries. Blinding trachoma is widespread in Sub-Saharan Africa. The WHO estimates that six million worldwide are blind due to trachoma and more than 150 million people need treatment.

Infection usually first occurs in childhood but people do not become blind until adulthood. The disease progresses over years as repeated infections cause scarring on the inside of the eyelid, earning it the name of the “quiet disease”. The eyelashes eventually turn in. This causes rubbing on

the cornea at the front of the eye. The cornea becomes scarred leading to severe vision loss and eventually blindness.

Primary interventions advocated for preventing trachoma infection include improved sanitation, reduction of fly breeding sites and increased facial cleanliness with clean water among children at risk of disease, however, good personal and environmental hygiene has been proven to be successful in combating trachoma. Encouraging the washing of children's faces, improved access to water, and proper disposal of human and animal waste has been shown to decrease the number of trachoma infections in communities.

PaR monitors the impact of interventions on the children to ensure that its work is having the intended consequence. For example, the height and weight of children are taken each month and compared to WHO figures for healthy growth, to ensure that the children are developing normally.

PaR is committed to the elimination of the NTDs (Neglected Tropical Diseases) identified by the WHO in the developing world. It is an active member of the UK Coalition against NTDs and a signatory to the London Declaration.



Figure 19 Emma, a volunteer nurse, instructs pupils on washing their hands

6.3 Education and Sponsorship

Teachers in Porridge and Rice partner schools are committed, hardworking and talented, but very few have had the necessary formal teacher training. Most have no more than a secondary school

diploma, the equivalent of GCSE. The work they do is commendable but would be greatly improved with some basic training in teaching skills.

The Education and Sponsorship program funds committed and hard-working teachers through a diploma or university degree in education at institutions recognised by teaching unions and the Ministry of Education in Kenya. Teachers are working towards a range of qualifications from a P1 certificate (a diploma in primary education) to a Bachelor in Education. PaR aims to increase the number of teachers it is supporting to obtain professional qualifications each year when it raises the funding. Mary Kinyanjui was the first person sponsored by PaR to obtain a Bachelor of Education; she graduated in 2016.

In addition, PaR runs in-house courses to improve literacy, numeracy, subject knowledge and teaching skills from writing SMART objectives (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and testable) to designing lessons plans, all to improve the quality of education that is provided to pupils in PaR schools. A more knowledgeable and skilled teacher will produce better lessons and is best placed to improve results.

Volunteers have helped prepare and run courses for teachers on content and/or teaching skills. They have also participated with literacy and numeracy improvements. Teachers benefit from outside input and appreciate assistance with improving the level of education they provide to their students.



Figure 20 Teacher Titus is enhancing his skills through formal study with sponsorship from PaR

PaR is committed to enabling equal access to education regardless of social status, income, gender or tribe for the children in the slums.

Pupils attending schools in the slums are required to pay school fees and despite these being extremely low in western terms, they are a barrier to many families because they represent a high

percentage of family income. Some parents can only afford part of the school fees, while some can afford nothing. Many will keep their children in school for as long as they can, but when they owe too much are forced to withdraw their children from school, leaving them to play on the streets.

As part of its Education and Sponsorship program, PaR pays the school fees of children whose parents are unable to do so, for whatever reason, in return for the parents working in the school at least twice a week. This way, children will stay in school, while their parents can say that they have earned their child's place in school.

Sponsored families are identified by teachers and, after careful assessment including at least one home visit, may be enrolled in the sponsorship scheme, allowing them to stay in school until they graduate or their economic circumstances improve.



Figure 21 Teacher Grace with her class doing an exercise she has put on the blackboard

6.4 Facilities and furniture

The schools in the slums are built from the same flimsy and temporary material as homes, and are generally in no better condition. Walls are corrugated iron sheets on wooden frames with holes cut for windows. Classrooms are small, with some holding up to 60 children. Furniture (such as blackboards, desks, and text books) is in poor condition, and roofs leak. The facilities are in very poor shape and the schools do not have the money to improve them. Most schools in the slums cannot be described as conducive to learning, and it is a credit to teachers that they educate children despite their facilities.

Slum landlords show little patience with schools that cannot pay their rent promptly, happy to lock them out or even evict them, and are reluctant to spend any money maintaining, let alone improving, facilities. They will watch as the facilities deteriorate, steadily putting rent up each year. The schools have no real choice as landlords are pretty much alike throughout the slums and demand is high. Rent consumes a large portion of the income raised by schools, seldom leaving anything for maintenance by the school.



Figure 22 New desks, purchased by PaR, being carried by pupils back to Lizpal School

The worst aspect of school facilities is almost always the toilets. In some schools, pupils use community toilets which are usually in poor condition and unhygienic because of the sheer numbers of people sharing them. Toilets are seldom more than pit latrines, providing no water for hand washing and no dignified place for menstruating girls to change or dispose of sanitary pads.

There is no system in place for the disposal and removal of refuse with informal piles collecting around the slums. Some schools burn their waste each day producing unhealthy fumes for the children allocated to the task while others simply throw them into alleys and streets adding to the litter which can be seen everywhere in the slums.

A system of drains runs between buildings and is used to get rid of everything from wash water to urine and faeces. The drains abound with maggots and water borne disease. The drains aren't owned by anyone and so are never cleared. In the rainy season, the drains flood spreading the contents around everywhere.

While community schools must be registered with the government as self-help groups, they do not get any money from the government. Schools are forced to charge school fees to cover their costs

but not all pupils can afford to pay the fees. Money is a constant problem with most schools struggling to pay rent and accumulating significant salary arrears. School maintenance is not a real option because of other financial pressures.

The PaR Facilities and Furniture programme works to improve school facilities and furniture to create an environment conducive to learning and health. For example, the children at Excel used to work by candlelight in the early morning until the sun was high enough to provide sufficient sunlight to light classrooms. PaR provided the funding for electrification of the darkest classrooms at Excel Emmanuel so that there is no need for learning by candle light anymore.

Schools have large water tank to bring down the cost of water and ensure there is a ready supply for cleaning and hand washing. New classrooms have been built, walkways have been created, and three kitchens constructed. PaR has supplied 80 new desks shared between three schools to replace broken desks and allow children to spread out not having to sit 4 to 6 to desks designed for 2.



Figure 23 Volunteers mixing concrete for the floor of the kitchen they are building

There is a huge amount of work still to be done. All classrooms need electrification, blackboards need replacing, many more desks are needed, and existing classrooms desperately need repairing. The strain on facilities is being compounded by the success of PaR programmes which are attracting more pupils.

The long term goal is to buy land and relocate the schools into permanent brick structures. Owning land will enable PaR to undertake projects like building a borehole and develop urban farming which will provide income to sustain the schools independently of PaR. Suitable land is available at a cost of £250,000 per acre.

Volunteers have been essential to the facilities programme, helping with tasks from constructing new blackboards to building a kitchen. There is so much work to be done to maintain and improve schools, that there are tasks for all levels of skills. Every group of volunteers that has visited Kenya has helped with the maintenance and repair of some aspect of schools, and this is not expected to change for the foreseeable future. It can be hard work but it is extremely rewarding because the benefits are clear.



Figure 24 Volunteers painting the doors at Lizpal School

6.5 Extracurricular

A favourite activity of the children in the slums is to wrap plastic carrier bags into a tight ball to make a crude football. Where many people live on less than £1 a day, a football which costs over £10 is an expense that cannot be justified for an item that is used purely for children's games. There is thus little opportunity for children in the slums to participate in activities like exercise and sport which require any sort of equipment.

Exercise and sport help children build healthy bodies while giving expression to some of the natural exuberance of children. In addition, exercise and games provide children with valuable opportunities to develop important skills like being a team player, communication, sharing, and cooperation. These group activities give children the chance to interact in a structured way that teachers can use to help them develop important life skills and have a lot of fun at the same time.

PaR volunteers accidentally started an inter-school sports day for all PaR schools. The event, which was intended to be a one-off, was such a success that it is now a regular event repeated by each

group of volunteers in Kenya. The sports day introduces the children of the Nairobi slums to games and races like piggy-back races, relay races and Simon says, which whilst familiar in the UK, are unknown to these children. It has become an exciting event for all the children at schools. Volunteers play an important part in organising and running the PaR inter-school sports day.



Figure 25 Inter-school Sports Day organised by PaR

PaR is working towards making sport and exercise a standard part of the school week by providing the equipment and expertise to offer PE classes, and regular games training sessions. In addition to exercises and entertaining games like “Simon says”, PaR is working towards regular skipping and football sessions for girls and boys as a first step in the plan. PaR plans to provide each school with enough footballs and equipment like goals, and skipping ropes to organise weekly exercise, games, and sport sessions for pupils.

PaR has plans to expand its extracurricular programme to include music and art. The charity needs to raise the necessary funds before this can be done as well as identifying adults from the school or wider community that are willing and able to lead these extracurricular classes.

Talent and enthusiasm is abundant but expertise is rare in the slums. Volunteers will be key to introducing additional extracurricular activities at PaR partner schools. They will need to design suitable activities and routines, and then implement them at each school. They will also need to train the adults who will continue to run and lead the activities long term. If the extracurricular programme is to succeed, then preparation and training from volunteers will have to be rigorous and thorough.

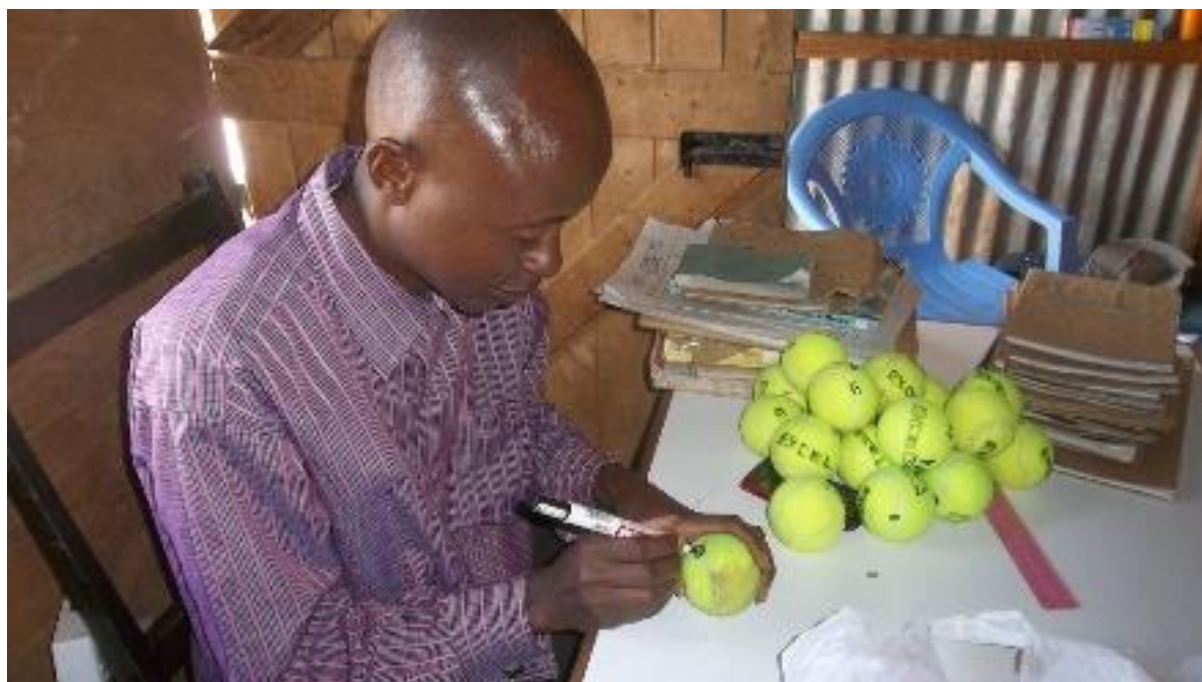


Figure 26 Donated tennis balls being labelled by Teacher Titus

6.6 Rights and Gender

Kenya is a chauvinistic country despite having a very modern, liberal constitution. Men dominate and women are regularly treated as second class citizens and are expected to do the bidding of the men in their lives.

Domestic violence is common place and socially accepted, despite being illegal. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is the standard in many parts of Kenya with about 48% of girls cut, and even though it is illegal, police turn a blind eye as it is 'a cultural practice'. Child marriage of girls as young as 8 years old is all too common, often driven by poverty, to settle debts or reduce the number of mouths to feed. There is a long list of the ways in which women suffer in a society which on paper regards them as equals but in practice treats them as inferior to men.

Porridge and Rice is opposed to discrimination against women, and works actively to end sexism and promote equality. Regular events are held at each school to celebrate the importance of women in society and to combat both FGM and child marriage. Porridge and Rice is committed to dispelling the myths that drive these practises, while making girls aware of their rights under the law and encouraging boys to understand that it is in their interest to treat women as their equals. The charity also engages with parents and relatives to make them aware of the rights of women and the benefit to everyone of a society which does not discriminate on the grounds of gender.

Porridge and Rice is not just opposed to gender discrimination but stands against all forms of prejudice, supporting the UN Declaration of Human Rights. While it is challenging, sensitive work because local beliefs and norms must be considered, the charity works to combat all forms of

discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, tribe, sexual orientation, HIV status, gender, and nationality.

The charity makes its values very clear while treating people and their traditions with respect. It aims to promote its values through engagement and collaboration rather than being judgemental outsiders trying to enforce their own values. This requires time and patience along with discussion in which the benefits of respect and tolerance for difference and human rights is explained.



Figure 27 Girls at Lizpal School

6.7 Sustainability and Accountability

Porridge and Rice has initiated several projects to produce food in Kenya.

The charity now grows sufficient sweet potato to meet the Vitamin A needs of all pupils and staff and is working on growing a local variety of Kale called Sukuma wiki which is extremely high in Iron and popular as a vegetable. In the first instance both crops are to be used as food in the feeding programme. PaR has also started growing Nyayo beans and is working to cultivate what it needs. When the charity produces more than the schools can consume, the excess will be sold to raise money to supplement school budgets.

PaR has a growing flock of Kienyeji chickens, a breed that is indigenous to Kenya. The chickens are kept for eggs and meat, which are sold to raise money for charity projects. The flock is being steadily expanded. The flock will also be used to teach students and parents how to keep poultry both for

their own consumption and to raise their own chickens. Chickens can be kept by people living in the slums, producing valuable food and income.

The charity has a herd of 16 pigs, after having started with a single pig. The goal is to breed pigs for sale to local people. The most profitable sale is pregnant females which raise good prices. Again, pupils and parents are invited to learn how to keep pigs, which require more space than chickens, but are kept successfully by many slum residents.

Volunteers participate in projects associated with sustainability projects from planting sweet potatoes to caring for chickens.



Figure 28 Volunteers are introduced to the PaR pig herd by Evanson, head teacher of Compassion

Porridge and Rice is committed to measuring the impact of its work, improving areas that are not delivering the desired results and maintaining those that are successful. Volunteers have helped to collect and process data used to monitor programmes.

There are opportunities for students to research sensitive, complex subjects that that charity wants to understand. For example, in 2017, a student from SOAS, assisted with collecting data on attitudes towards girls and education in the local community, providing the charity with information to help direct its rights and gender programme. Volunteers are often very valuable because they bring a fresh perspective to the table, making the charity think carefully about its programmes.

7 Getting Around

Wildebeest Eco Lodge is in easy reach of both Nairobi and Karen by matatu or taxi. It is at the end of a secluded road called Mokoyeti West Road off Langata Road which is a major Nairobi road.

Taxis are spacious and flexible, but expensive. Matatus and buses are the cheapest mode of transport and thus preferred by locals: a journey by taxi that costs KES3000 will cost around KES40 by matatu. They may require some getting used to but they are an effective means of transport when travelling in groups during the day.

If you choose to use taxis, make sure that it is a taxi that can be trusted to give a fair price as taxi drivers usually assume that foreigners have lots of money and inflate their prices accordingly. Porridge and Rice can provide the contact details of a reliable taxi driver and an indication of fair prices for journeys. For example, Sam, well known to Porridge and Rice, will charge around KES2500 from the airport to Wildebeest Eco Lodge, a fair price.

It is important not to carry valuables on public transport unless absolutely necessary. If it is necessary to carry valuable items, then hold them securely in something like a back pack. Pick pockets are always on the lookout for easy targets.



Figure 29 Volunteers leave Wildebeest Eco Camp for the day volunteering

Always travel with someone who is familiar with Kenya. Porridge and Rice ensures that the group always includes at least one person who has been to Kenya before and that local Kenyan staff are available to assist.

While most of the areas of Nairobi are safe during the day, this cannot be said to be true at night. If planning a night trip to a restaurant like Carnivore or the shopping centre The Junction, use a taxi and travel with others to keep the cost down. Even though matatus and buses run until 8pm, it is wise to use taxis after dark.

PaR covers the cost of travel by matatu when working for PaR. All other journeys are to be paid for by the volunteer. PaR does not pay for travel by taxi. It will arrange taxis for some journeys like collection at the airport, but the cost of these journeys is to be borne by the volunteer.

8 Sightseeing and Safari

The primary reason for inviting volunteers to work with PaR is to assist with projects that will make a real difference to the lives of people in the slums of Nairobi. That said, PaR believes that it is good for genuine volunteers to take the opportunity to see Kenya while in the country. It is a beautiful country with a great deal to offer.

PaR arranges outings on weekends for volunteers, some within easy reach of the Eco Wildebeest Lodge such as The Sheldrick Trust, Carnivore and Masaai Market, and some further afield like white water rafting on the Tana River.



Figure 30 A young elephant is fed at the The Sheldrick Wildlife Trust

The Sheldrick Wildlife Trust takes in orphaned baby elephants which they release back into the wild when they are old enough and able to care for themselves. Most of the baby elephants are orphaned because of poaching and would starve to death without The Sheldrick Trust. At the current

rate of elephant poaching, with one elephant killed every 15 minutes, a lack of action could see the loss of wild elephants in Africa by 2025.

The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust embraces all measures that compliments the conservation, preservation and protection of wildlife. These include anti-poaching, safe guarding the natural environment, enhancing community awareness, addressing animal welfare issues, providing veterinary assistance to animals in need, rescuing and hand rearing elephant and rhino orphans.

The heart of the organisation is the hugely successful elephant and rhino rescue and rehabilitation program. The Orphans' Project exists to offer hope for the future of Kenya's threatened elephant and rhino populations as they struggle against the threat of poaching for their ivory and horn, and the loss of habitat due to human population pressures and conflict, deforestation and drought.

To date the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust has successfully hand-raised over 150 infant elephants and has accomplished its long-term conservation priority by effectively reintegrating orphans back into the wild herds of Tsavo, claiming many healthy wild-born calves from former-orphaned elephants raised in their care.

The Sheldrick Wildlife Trust is open for a short period of time each day. Contact with the public is strictly limited to keep the elephants as wild as possible. Full details of the work of the trust can be seen on <http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/>.



Figure 31 Jude, a UK volunteer, feeds a giraffe at the Giraffe Centre

The African Fund for Endangered Wildlife commonly known as the Giraffe Centre breeds the endangered Rothschild Giraffe which is close to extinction in Kenya. The endangered Rothschild giraffe, *Giraffa camelopardalis rothschildi*, is found only in the grasslands of East Africa. The centre

has had huge success, resulting in the introduction of several breeding pairs of Rothschild Giraffe back into the wild in Kenyan national parks.

People can feed the giraffes from a raised observation platform and learn more about these impressive animals from the display. The centre is also home to several warthogs which roam freely with the giraffes. The work of the centre is explained in full at <http://giraffecenter.org/>



Figure 32 Shopping at the Masaai Market

The Masaai Market brings local crafters together in one location within Nairobi at different locations each day of the week. It is held each Thursday at The Junction. It is a good place to buy gifts.

Carnivore is a Nairobi restaurant which as the name suggests is famous for the meat it serves. The most popular option is the all you can eat meat menu where the waiters serve meat after meat until you can eat no more. Meats change depending on what is available but usually include turkey, chicken, lamb, pork, beef, ostrich, and crocodile in various forms from roast to meat balls. The restaurant also has a good vegetarian menu.

PaR organises white water rafting near Sagana on the Tana River approximately two hours outside of Nairobi. The trip down the river is organised by a professional company who know the area well and have a good track record of organising exciting, safe trips. The trip ends with a relaxing meal in the sun providing a good opportunity to dry out. White water rafting is an exhilarating experience, and a good day in the sun enjoying some of the beautiful Sagana scenery.



Figure 33 White water rafting on the Tana River

PaR organises affordable 3 day safaris with local businesses to major parks of Kenya like Masai Mara and Amboseli for volunteers. The charity encourages volunteers staying for at least 2 weeks, to do a 3 day safari trip while in the country.



Figure 34 An elephant crosses in front of the safari vehicle at Amboseli Safari Park



Figure 35 Giraffe roam in herds at Amboseli Safari Park

Safari trips are organised for groups of 4 to 6 people sharing accommodation to keep the price down. It is possible to book separate rooms for an additional charge if required. Safari trips usually include the cost of 3 meals but not drinks. African wildlife is so impressive, that no one should go to Africa and not see animals like elephant and giraffe in their natural habitat.



Figure 36 Zebra can be seen in large herds of many hundreds at Amboseli

Kenya has a lot more to offer the volunteer who wishes to explore the country. It is possible to see the country safely but volunteers need to understand and be sensitive to the customs and practices. It is essential to learn about the country before travelling.

PaR strongly advises that volunteers seek advice from people familiar with the country about safe travel, before venturing anywhere. PaR can provide advice and guidance for trips from Mount Longonot, an extinct volcano, to Diani beach on the South coast. It is possible to have a wonderful time seeing Kenya and be safe with planning and forethought. There is simply no need to take risks as the consequences can be serious.

9 Charity Leaders and Rules

Each group of volunteers will be led and supported by people who know Kenya, the area where Porridge and Rice works, and how Porridge and Rice works. Volunteers are expected to listen to these people at all times for their own safety and to ensure that the work of Porridge and Rice is effective.

Volunteers must not venture off on their own at any time. If they wish to go somewhere other than where the team is going, they need to consult the team leader who will arrange for them to be accompanied when possible. The team leader will check their email daily and keep a local mobile phone to ensure contact can be maintained with home if required.



Figure 37 Volunteers at Excel Emmanuel School

All volunteers will be expected to uphold the values of Porridge and Rice while part of the team. The group leaders will have the authority to reprimand anyone who does not comply, and in extreme cases to exclude them.

All volunteers must attend a pre-trip briefing. The briefing will include an introduction to Kenya, the value and work of Porridge and Rice, rules of the trip, leadership team, and proposed tasks and goals of volunteers.

Volunteers must present a passport with at least 6 months to run when booking. Volunteers are expected to sign an agreement with Porridge and Rice that will include the rules and values of the charity.

Volunteers are required to have had all their vaccinations before entering Kenya. Porridge and Rice requires that volunteers have more vaccinations than most people travelling to Kenya have because of where volunteers work.



Figure 38 Volunteers walking between Porridge and Rice Schools

10 Food and Drink

Breakfast from the standard menu at Wildebeest Eco Lodge is included in the trip price. Items not on the standard menu are not included in the price and must be paid for separately.

Lunch during the school week is served at a PaR school and like breakfast, this is included in the trip price. Hot, sweet tea is provided with lunch. Other drinks can be purchased but must be paid for separately.

On the weekend, lunch will be a range of snacks bought at the local Nakumatt, the largest supermarket in Kenya. The Porridge and Rice team leader will inform volunteers which items are included in the trip price. Volunteers may choose to purchase other items at Nakumatt or other stores but these must be paid for separately.

A buffet dinner, served Monday to Sunday at Wildebeest Eco Lodge, is included in the trip price. The Lodge has a dinner and bar menu that serves other dinner options as well as alcoholic and soft drinks. Items ordered off the Lodge menu are not included in the trip price and must be paid for separately.

Dinner at the famous Carnivore restaurant is included in the trip price on one evening. Dinner will be the standard all you can eat meat menu. Provision is made for vegetarians. Other than tea or coffee at the end of the meal, drinks are not included in the trip price.



Figure 39 Volunteers at Carnivore restaurant

Volunteers are encouraged to enjoy themselves but not in a manner that compromises the reputation or the work of the charity. Volunteers are asked to respect this principle and manage their consumption of alcohol accordingly. If they do not, Porridge and Rice reserves the right to limit when and how much a volunteer may drink.

In accordance with UK and Kenyan law, volunteers under the age of 18 must obtain permission from their parents before travelling to be allowed to drink. In addition, even when permission is granted by parents, orders must be placed by a person over 18 authorised by Porridge and Rice.

Eating out in Nairobi caters for tourists and the wealthy. The quality of food is good and prices are comparable to the UK, sometimes higher. Many familiar fast food restaurants like KFC also exist in Kenya although menu items differ a little to cater for local tastes.

Kenya grows a lot of fruit which is abundant and cheap in season. Fruit should always be peeled or washed thoroughly. Provided this is done, local fruit is completely safe and healthy to eat.

Volunteers must take care what water they drink. If water is not boiled then it should either be bottled or from a known source like Wildebeest Eco. Volunteers should only drink water they are told is safe by a Porridge and Rice team leader. Porridge and Rice provides bottled water for volunteers. Volunteers should have drinking water with them always. Sodas are safe if sealed when bought.

Volunteers are advised to bring snacks like biscuits and nuts with them. Most people enjoy having something to nibble on at times on the weekend or evenings.



Figure 40 Stopping for a well-earned coffee and cake.

11 Vaccinations and Malaria

Being a volunteer is different to being a tourist. Tourists do not spend several days working in the Nairobi slums. The medical precautions needed by the volunteer are different to those needed by a tourist.

The best protection from common diseases abroad is basic sanitation. Wash your hands with soap and water before and after going the toilet, and before and after eating – hand gel is not suitable. Drink lots of water; unless the water is known to be from a safe source, drink only bottled water.

The official NHS advice for people travelling to Kenya is based on travelling as a tourist and not as a volunteer. Some medical professionals will question the vaccinations required by Porridge and Rice. It is important to stress to them that the PaR requirements are based on the locations and conditions in which volunteers work.

For example, people throw their excrement into the drains running between the tin shanties and the drains are thus a breeding ground for the likes of cholera. By contrast, areas visited by tourist usually have Western standard sanitation.

The following vaccinations are required to travel to Kenya as a volunteer with PaR. –

- Yellow Fever
- Tetanus
- Tuberculosis
- Diphtheria
- Typhoid
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Cholera (only when there is a cholera outbreak)
- Rabies (advised but not essential due the government's vaccination programme)



Figure 41 Volunteer Sharon joins the welcome dance of the children of Lizpal school

Some of the vaccinations are free on the NHS although waiting times can be long. It makes sense to enquire with your GP as soon as possible. In addition, those that are not free are offered at different prices by different GPs and agencies so it is wise to call around and Google to find the best prices. Furthermore, remember that places like Boots do vaccinations.

While Malaria is not common in Nairobi, it has begun to increase because of drains in the slums and it abounds in areas that volunteers visit on safari. It is thus essential that volunteers take Malaria tablets. Mosquito nets are included in accommodation at Wildebeest Eco Camp so it is not necessary for volunteers to bring their own.

Unfortunately, as the malaria parasite in Kenya has become resistant to the most commonly prescribed antimalarial medication Chloroquine (Aralen), this medication cannot be used.

- Atovaquone and proguanil (Malarone)— is prescribed for the prevention of chloroquine-resistant malaria. You need to take one tablet at about the same time each day, starting one to two days before departure until seven days after your return. Malarone is a brand; the generic version of this medication is much cheaper than Malarone and as effective.
- Mefloquine (Lariam)— is a popular treatment for most regions of sub-Saharan Africa and other areas with high levels of chloroquine-resistant malaria parasites. Like chloroquine, the medication is taken once a week, from one to two weeks before departure until four weeks after your return.
- Doxycycline (Vibramycin)—is usually prescribed for people who aren't able to take chloroquine or mefloquine. Doxycycline should be taken once per day, from two days before departure to four weeks after return. It's important to protect from sun exposure while taking doxycycline because it can cause sensitivity to the sun, increasing the risk of sunburn.



Figure 42 Volunteers reach the top of Mount Kenya after several days of walking

12 Medication, Allergies and Disabilities

All medication, allergies and disabilities must be disclosed in full to Porridge and Rice in writing. The charity can accept no responsibility for any negative consequence resulting from undisclosed information. All information provided will be treated as confidential and only disclosed to people who need to know to ensure the individual's or group's safety.

All pre-existing conditions must be disclosed to the volunteer's insurance party, and covered by them. A copy of the insurance policy must be supplied to the charity. While there are good doctors and hospitals in Kenya, they are expensive, so medical insurance is compulsory. Porridge and Rice is available to discuss insurance options with volunteers.

13 Volunteer Orientation

Volunteers must familiarise themselves with the contents of this manual before leaving for Kenya. In addition, volunteers will attend an orientation session that will cover details of the work of PaR as well as what to expect in Kenya.

Volunteers are welcome to ask questions of Porridge and Rice by email on info@porridgeandrice.co.uk or by phone or Skype by arrangement.



Figure 43 Students reading books donated by UK supporters to help build a school library

14 Porridge and Rice Schools

PaR partners with five schools in the Nairobi slums which in alphabetical order are

1. Compassion CBO in Githogoro
2. Excel Emmanuel School in Ngando
3. Heri Junior School in Mithonge
4. Lizpal School in Ngando
5. Forrester in Kawangware

Porridge and Rice schools are each run by their own head and deputy head who together form the Porridge and Rice Kenyan leadership team. Schools range in size from around 200 to 600 pupils.

Volunteers will work at one or more Porridge and Rice schools depending on the work that is required.



Figure 44 Volunteer Kuljit talks to children in the school playground

Volunteers are required to respect the authority of the school leadership team when working at the school. Kenyans are extremely welcoming and will go out of their way to make volunteers feel at home.

Volunteers are welcome to interact with students and teachers at schools provided it does not interfere with school activities.

15 Passports and Visas

All volunteers are responsible for ensuring that they have a valid passport and Kenyan visa before departure to Kenya. A valid national passport must have at least two blank pages and a minimum of six months before expiry on the date of departure.

Porridge and Rice will require a scan of each volunteer's passport, and will assist with visa applications if requested. Full details for Kenyan Visas can be found online at <http://kenyahighcom.org.uk/visas-2/>



Figure 45 The children at all the schools love interacting with volunteers like Taylor

16 Insurance

All volunteers must have personal insurance. Porridge and Rice is willing to assist with decisions about insurance. All volunteers must provide Porridge and Rice with a copy of their insurance and their passports. Volunteers are advised to leave copies of both with a responsible person in their home country as well.

Porridge and Rice will do everything in its power to ensure the safety of its volunteers, however, if something does go wrong, the charity does not accept liability. It will, without question, try to resolve any problems as an act of goodwill.



Figure 46 Volunteers from the Netherlands meet the children of Porridge and Rice

17 Packing List

Volunteers are asked to carry items for the charity to Kenya. It is thus important to pack what is necessary but no more than necessary. Below is a possible packing list

- Airline ticket
- Passport
- Travel insurance documents
- Yellow fever certificate
- Backpack – to carry items to and from PaR schools in the slums, can be used for carry-on overnight bag for Istanbul.
- Overnight bag - pack an overnight bag for Istanbul as the main luggage will be checked through to Kenya. Include a change of clothing and a small towel with small toiletries as required (remember the 100ml limit per item, and a clear plastic bag per person for liquids).
- Padlock – a small padlock will fit the dormitory lockers.
- Personal toiletries i.e.
 - Soap or Shower Gel
 - Sponge/Flannel
 - Toothbrush & toothpaste
 - Shampoo/conditioner
 - Sanitary towels/tampons
- Bath Towel
- Suntan lotion – always use suntan lotion. We recommend factor 50.

- Anti-bacterial gel – should only be used where handwashing with soap and water is not possible. Remember that clean water and soap is the most effective way of removing pathogens.
- Anti-malarial tablets
- Insect repellent. Mosquito nets are not required, but repellent and sting-ease can be useful when sitting outside of an evening.
- Any other current medication
- Clothing – volunteers dress for comfort. Evenings are cold so you will need trousers and jumpers for night and light clothing for days. Do not wear valuable clothing. Only bring items that you would not mind being damaged or lost. Washing is usually done once a week.
- Shoes – comfortable shoes for walking around the slums. Roads and paths are not paved. Solid trainers will do best. Be prepared to throw shoes away at the end of the trip.
- Warm clothing – evenings and Istanbul can be cold. Days are hot.
- Hat - one will be issued to each volunteer to keep, but you may prefer to bring your own.
- Sweater – evenings in Nairobi and Istanbul can be very cold.
- Flip flops or sandals for wearing around camp
- PaR T shirt
- Camera and charger
- Reading material
- Snacks like peanuts and raisins
- Swimming towel
- Swimming costume



Figure 47 Bruno, a volunteer from Brazil, talks to the children of Forrester

18 Contact and Social Media

- Email: info@porridgeandrice.co.uk
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/Porridgeandrice/
- Website: www.porridgeandrice.co.uk
- Twitter: PaRfeeding
- Instagram: porridge_and_rice



Figure 48 The pupils of Compassion School enjoy hot uji and sweet potato for breakfast

19 Useful websites

The Porridge and Rice volunteer gallery http://www.porridgeandrice.co.uk/volunteer_index.html

The Porridge and Rice website <http://www.porridgeandrice.co.uk/>

The Porridge and Rice Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/Porridgeandrice/>

The Kenya Country Profile overview on the BBC News website provides a brief introduction to the country <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13681341>

The Foreign Office website <http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/kenya>