



## TRIP NOTES

# Kenya Building & Teaching

Join a group of like minded volunteers to experience and contribute to daily life in a rural Kenyan village. Split your time between a building project and teaching at a local school. Working alongside local builders, staying in the community and spending time with the kids, you'll become an essential part of the community. This project will tackle needs that have been identified by your host community to ensure that your financial and physical investment is sustainable long into the future. Take part in a unique experience where you can really Make A Difference to a Kenyan community.

### **Itinerary Disclaimer**

The itinerary attached is correct at time of printing. Please note: occasionally our itineraries are updated during the year to incorporate improvements stemming from past travellers' comments and our own research. Our brochure is usually released in November each year. As such the information given in this itinerary may be slightly different to that in the brochure.

**It is VERY IMPORTANT that you print and review a final copy of your Trip Notes a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.**

### **Itinerary - Day 1 (Saturday)**

If arriving on day 1 of the itinerary a complimentary airport pickup is provided. You must provide Madventurer with flight arrival details including flight number and arrival time.

### **Starting in Nairobi, Kenya**

Your project joining point is in Nairobi, Kenya. Meet your overseas crew and your group in Nairobi. Please be at the meeting point hostel for no later than 7pm. We will have a welcome meeting with rest of group. If your flight is delayed or you are not scheduled to arrive until later that evening please do not worry as your trip leader may do the orientation meeting in the village instead.

You will spend the first night in Nairobi and we normally set off to our village in a rural part of Kenya's Rift Valley the following morning (Sunday), depending on any flight delays etc. You will be taken in the local style bus (approx. 3 hrs) and enjoy our first views of great escarpments, extinct volcanoes and beautiful Lake Naivasha. As you travel up the road look out for baboon and zebra, your first glimpse of Africa's wildlife.

Arriving in Gilgil, you will see the typical hustle and bustle of a town going about its daily business as you move onward to your village on its outskirts. Arrival at our project house will be marked by a welcome from our host family, head teacher or community representative.

Accommodation is in a shared house with your group. Your house will be close to a water source but may not have running water. You will have a shower cubicle either indoor or outdoor and you will take the traditional 'bucket shower'. Electricity may not be available but alternatives will be provided - usually paraffin lamps which create a really cozy environment in the evenings. You will be able to charge your phone at the weekend if you decide to do some independent travel.

Beds will be mattresses on the floor and bedrooms are shared with your fellow adventurers. You will have a social area such as a living room and there may be a garden to enjoy relaxing in after school. Storage will be limited and you are strongly advised not to take any valuable items with you including ipods, jewellery, expensive cameras etc. Your accommodation is selected in a secure, proximate location to the school. A local cook is provided which often will be a member of the host family within whose house you are staying.

### **Days 2-13**

Take time to soak up the scenery and meet some of the people you will be working with both in the school and the village. You will be given a chance to see the building site and see where you will be working on a new project or continuing an existing one.

Meet the school community from the teachers to the board of parents and many small faces peering curiously at you. The Kikuyu communities speak good English but also appreciate a greeting in their local language, give it a try and enjoy the reaction. Get to know your surroundings, find out where the local 'store' is and what delights they sell, be introduced to the nearest water source is and how your community makes the journey home with it. Mark the first sight of your new building or plot with a photo, as the scene will soon change.

Your usual working hours are 8am - 4pm with breaks during the day. You will have an opportunity to take a morning break for 'chai' (African tea) as well as lunch. Throughout the day we will rotate teaching as and when lessons are timetabled. When not teaching we can return to work on the building site or plan our next lessons. Each day we have the opportunity to explore the community after school and take part and organise activities with the community. We can visit Gilgil for a look around the nearby shops, wander the plains and find your own plateau to enjoy the view over the valley. There are many opportunities that await you in your village. You can help set up nutrition programmes or support recycling or energy saving projects. Take the chance to visit the local clinic and learn about medical care. The key is get to know your village and how they need your support.

We also can look for opportunities to play sport with youth groups – football and volleyball are always winners. Each project reaches a 2 week milestone so your contributions will be recognised at the end of every milestone.

### ***Day 14 Nairobi – end of a two week project***

*You will be returned to Nairobi for no later than 7pm.*

#### **Days 14-27**

Relationships in your community will be developing so that you can take on more responsibility in your work. Researching your village's particular challenges may lead to exciting side projects.

Tackling side projects such as educational murals or organising sports coaching sessions or competitions will inspire your community to work with you and achieve their goals that also become yours. You will be able to learn more about the different Kenyan tribes from the Kikuyu to Maasai. Take time try out cooking chapattis, a favourite staple of the Kenyan diet or sample the local beer from the traditional cow horn cup.

Your building will be changing radically from when you first began - make sure you photograph every stage so you can look back and appreciate the hard work that you've all put in.

Appreciate every day with your new friends in the community - the time will fly but the memories will last forever.

### ***Day 28 Nairobi – end of a four week project***

*You will be returned to Nairobi for no later than 7pm.*

#### **Days 28-41**

In your final weeks on the project your ideas will have been implemented in the building project and classroom and a good knowledge of the local culture gained. Give this time your all and see the results of your hard work on the building site and in the school. You will be leaving behind a sustainable project for the community and local children who will have benefited from your classroom work. If there is time, you might get to go on a hike around the area with the villagers who know it best. Visit the families of those you have worked alongside and share a meal. There will be plenty of opportunities for exchange of songs and stories and don't forget contact numbers with your fellow travellers and friends from the village. Watch the last sunrise in your village to mark a unique experience that will never fade from memory and is only the beginning of your bonds with your home away from home.

#### **Day 42**

You will be returned to Nairobi for no later than 7pm. Accommodation for this night is not included in this itinerary.

**We recommend you consider booking at least 1 extra night's accommodation after this trip to see all the sights of Nairobi.**

## Arrival & other Complications

We don't expect any problems (and nor should you!) but if for any reason you are unable to commence your group trip as scheduled, please contact the Madventurer HQ on 0845 121 1996.

If you arrive on the first day of the project (Saturday) you will get collected for free from the airport in Nairobi. It may take you up to an hour to clear immigration, change your cash at the forex counter, collect your bags from the conveyor belt, and clear customs. Once you are outside in the busy pick up area your crew will meet you but if you have not made contact with our crew within 30 minutes, stay in the pick up area inside the barriers and please give the crew a ring on their emergency contact number, which you should take from [www.madventurer.net](http://www.madventurer.net) before you travel.

Please do not leave the airport without talking to our crew first. Crew will be wearing a Mad t-shirt or carrying a Madventurer sign and be wary of any porters who will say that they may be from Madventurer to carry your bags as they will want paying.

No refund is available on missed transfers or portions of your trip owing to a different flight arrival or delayed flight arrival. Any additional cost incurred in order to meet up with your group is at your own expense.

### **Pre-trip accommodation - If you arrive early**

If you arrive early and would like to chill out before the start of your project then we recommend staying at the Karen Camp Hostel [www.karencamp.com](http://www.karencamp.com)

All pre-trip accommodation/transport needs to be budgeted for separately.

If you book pre-trip accommodation please remember to take down the hotels / hostels contact details and booking information (including airport pick-up details) before you set off. If you have any problems give them a ring directly. Please also take our overseas crew's number and give them a call if you have any emergencies.

Check at Karen Camp's notice board behind the bar for a message from your Leader about what time you will be picked up on day 1.

**Before 7pm on day 1 and after 7pm on the last day of your project, which is either day 14, 28 or 42 (depending on your project length) Madventurer and our crew are not responsible for you and will not always be available for assistance.**

## Joining Point Hostel

**Karen Camp  
Marula Lane, off Karen Road  
Nairobi  
Kenya  
Tel: +254 (0) 20883475 or +254 (0) 736216822**

If arriving on day 1 of the itinerary a complimentary airport pickup is provided. You must provide Madventurer with flight arrival details including flight number and arrival time.

If you wish to have an airport pick up before day 1 then there is a cost of £20.00 which needs to be paid before you arrive – you can book this directly with Karen Camp via email – [booking@karencamp.com](mailto:booking@karencamp.com)

If you choose to arrive a day or two early (prior to arrival day of this itinerary) and do not wish to pay for a pick up then we recommend this hotel. Check hotel reception for a message from your Leader about what time you will be picked up on day 1.

### **Finishing Point Instructions - Nairobi**

#### **Karen Camp**

Marula Lane, off Karen Road

Nairobi

Kenya

Tel: +254 (0) 20883475 or +254 (0) 736216822

### **Finishing Point Instructions**

We will return you to Nairobi the finishing point, on the last day of your project no later than 7:00pm. **From here you will need to make your own way back to the airport.** We find that volunteers will share a taxi to the airport, go on to do some independent travel, join an organised overland adventure, or stay in Nairobi for an extra night or the weekend. We recommend booking 1 night's extra accommodation at the end of your trip if you wish to see the sights of Karen / Nairobi before you leave.

**All projects finish on a Friday and accommodation for this night is not included.**

We recommend you book your flight departing Nairobi after 10.00pm on the Friday, no earlier to allow for any traffic delays. You may wish to leave for onward travel from this point, share a meal with your group or stay in Karen / Nairobi. If you need accommodation for the last night in Karen / Nairobi (Friday) it's very important that you let our crew know as soon as possible and well in advance of your departure date so they can help to advice on hostels/backpackers/hotels.

### **Post-trip accommodation – *if you want to say longer***

If you would like to spend the weekend/week in or around Nairobi before you fly home then we recommend you use Karen Camp as a base for your travels. Most of our venturers will arrange post-trip accommodation in country in order to share rooms or airport transfers. Our overseas crew can help to organise this.

There are many attractions around Karen such as the Daphne Sheldrick Elephant Conservation Centre, the Karen Blixen Museum (which the film 'Out of Africa' was based around) and the Giraffe Centre.

## Group Size

Min 4, Max 16 - We need a min of 4 volunteers for our departure dates to be guaranteed!

## Accommodation

Accommodation does vary from project to project, but typically venturers and crew live together in a house (or a neighbouring house) in the village. Rooms are shared, and you are likely to be sleeping on a mattress on a concrete floor. The majority of houses will not have running water, so be prepared to have to carry water from an outside tank to wash – the great African bucket shower!

Electricity supply is available on some of the projects, but not all of them, which would mean that you will take the Sun's lead and learn early mornings and early bedtimes. If you have electricity on your project it may be intermittent and subject to frequent fluctuations.

Private multi-share house:   2 week project = 13 nights  
  4 week project = 27 nights  
  6 week project = 41 nights

## Food

**All meals are included at the project site** - We usually employ a local cook during the working week to provide meals, which will be mainly traditional dishes. The staple food in Kenya is carbohydrate based: rice, beans, maize meal and chapati's can be expected, occasionally with simply prepared meat and mostly with some locally available vegetables. You will be encouraged to help with cooking so that everyone is involved in getting stuck-in to the running of the project. If you do independent travel at the weekends you will need to budget separately for food. If you stay around the project site on a weekend then we will make sure the pantry is full. Please help our crew by ensuring that if there are any food items that we are running low on that they are notified in time for the weekly shop at the market, which you may enjoy visiting with the cook.

## Activities Included

This is a list of included activities on this trip. If you choose not to participate in the included activities on this itinerary, the cost will not be refunded.

Every Community project is slightly different depending on the needs of each community/village. Our key focus is youth development and the provision and improvement of health, education and sanitation facilities. In the past Madventurer has helped to build sanitation blocks, school rooms, pipes for fresh water pumps, basic housing maintenance (sinks), water storage tanks, community centres and clinics.

### Building:

Undertaking labouring work usually broken into 3 phases you will assist and learn from skilled local tradesman. The building project will be run by a local foreman. You will take part in the following activities depending on what phase of the project you are working on.

Phase 1 - Digging, brick laying, concrete mixing, carrying water  
Phase 2 - Brick laying and basic carpentry, passing/carrying materials  
Phase 3 – Plastering, sanding, painting, cleaning/brushing

Not every building is the same so you may get to do more than just the activities listed above. The breakdown above is based on a 2 room classroom block. Depending on the aim of the Project building activities will vary.

Teaching:

Liaising with teachers and your leader you will conduct classes individually or in pairs in English, Math's, Sports, Creative Arts and other subjects, depending on the schools timetable. Additional activities include a range of sports depending on the needs of the school, timetables and resources. A lot of the village schools we work in teach on a black board with chalk, and share text books.

**The amount of teaching you get involved in will depend on your departure date, school timetables & holiday and time set aside for exam revision or public holidays.**

### **Optional Activities**

All optional activities are entirely your choice and are not included in price of this trip. Your weekends are free so you can choose to do some independent travel with your group, or chill out and relax in the village. Your leader can help to recommend points of interest and places to stay though they may not travel with you on this excursion. This is your time to relax in the village, enjoy the independence of discovering your host country's attractions or catch up on emails in the nearest town. You will need to be back at your host village no later than 5pm on the Sunday evening. **All independent travel away from the project site needs to be budgeted for separately including transport/food/accommodation.**

### **Culture Shock**

Expect to rough it every now and again, whether it's very simple and basic group-share accommodation at a homestay, a packed public bus where you are forced to stand, a cold shower or an encounter with a squat toilet.

### **Visas**

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as much as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself.

Kenyan visas are required by most nationalities. Visas are available at point of entry (i.e. airports and land borders) to most nationalities, although we do recommend you obtain your visas prior to departure. Some nationalities require visas to be purchased in advance – so you **MUST** check before departure. If you plan to purchase your visas on arrival, you will need new, clean American dollars cash and the cost is around US\$25 for each visa. All nationalities should check with the Kenyan Embassies for more information.

## The 'Type' of Visa you need is a Tourist Visa

Madventurer is an ethical travel company and not an NGO so as you are undertaking a relatively short travel experience with us it is classed as a "Holiday" or "Tourism" on the visa form so please tick either of these boxes.

Note: When people are going to work for an NGO, typically for longer periods in organisations to do things like voluntary relief work, then a work permit needs to be applied for but this is not relevant for our community projects. This is what we have been advised on, however, if you mention that you are doing 'voluntary work' then they may charge you for a more expensive visa and also ask you to fill in lengthy forms which we can hold no responsibility for.

You must be in possession of a full **passport** (not temporary), **valid for at least six months after the project or adventure**. If this is not the case, or if there is too much of a difference between your appearance now and your appearance on your passport photo, then you should apply for a new passport and allow plenty of time for the processing of your application.

This visa info is correct at the time of writing however, visa requirements can change and you should check with the relevant visa office before departure.

**It is common for most of our volunteers to get their tourist visa when they arrive** at Nairobi airport and the visa allows you to stay in Kenya for up to **90 Days**. Currently, the Kenyan Government are trying to encourage more people to visit Kenya and the normal \$50 fee payable at the Customs kiosk when you land has been reduced to \$25 but do make sure you have at least \$50 available in case this goes back up.

On the **arrival and customs forms** it will also ask you where you are **staying in Kenya** – your first night will be spent at Karen Camp so make sure you have the following details to hand when you fly:

Karen Camp  
Marula Lane, off Karen Road  
Nairobi  
Kenya  
Tel: +254 (0) 20883475 or +254 (0) 736216822

Last but not least, please **take a pen** with you when you fly as there are none in the arrivals hall and it is not uncommon to see 10 people sharing one pen!

## Flights and Travel Insurance

If you are unsure of arrival or departure dates and times to book your flights it's very important that you check with us first before making any confirmed plans, as amendments with airlines have to be paid for. Please do not arrive after the start date as our community projects are in rural locations (up to 5 hour drive outside the capital) and you can not miss this transfer.

**Please note that under our terms and conditions we will not cancel a Trip less than 60 days before departure except for unforeseen circumstances outside of the Company's control. This means that you should not be booking any non-**

**refundable flights more than 60 days ahead of departure in case we do not have sufficient numbers (usually a minimum of 4) to run the trip. We recommend refundable flights.**

## **Travel Insurance**

**Travel insurance is compulsory for all our trips.** We require that, at a minimum, you are covered for medical expenses including emergency repatriation. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects.

When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance and the insurance company's 24 hour emergency contact number has been provided to our Mad HQ in the UK via a pre-departure form.

If you have credit card insurance we will require details of the participating insurer/underwriter, the level of coverage, policy number and emergency contact telephone number rather than the Bank's name and credit card details. Please contact your bank for these details prior to arriving in-country.

## **Valuable or sentimental items**

You are strongly advised not to take items of a valuable or personal nature like ipods, expensive jewellery/clothing etc.

If you do decide to take digital cameras or phones please make sure these are covered in your personal travel insurance policy. Every policy will differ slightly so it's best to enquire about personal item cover in the event of the loss or theft of an item given the different types of accommodation and transport you may experience in your trip overseas.

## **Health**

All travellers need to be in good physical health in order to participate fully in the group travel experience. If, in the opinion of our group leader, any traveller is unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group, we reserve the right to exclude them from all or part of a trip without refund. We therefore ask that you read the itinerary in these trip notes thoroughly and then realistically self-assess your physical ability to complete the trip as described. Please consult with your doctor if you have any doubts.

For more general information on vaccinations and health please refer to the Inter Health link on our website, you will be given more info when you book up. For individual health advice you will need to visit your own doctor or travel nurse directly as well. They are the only one's that can recommend individual advice as they will have your medical records and details of any allergies etc.

## Physical Preparation

Previous work experience is not required for work on the building site however a general level of fitness is very important bearing in mind that some labour can be intensive in hot weather conditions. Venturers are given every opportunity to take breaks when needed and encouraged to take them regularly. Some light exercise and preparation will be beneficial but you will find your body will also adapt and strengthen the more time you spend building, we stress that you do this at your own pace. **If in doubt seek medical advice prior to travel. If you have any medical conditions that we should be aware of please ensure that you include details of this in your pre-departure form. We may also ask you for a “Fit to travel” note from your doctor to confirm your booking.**

## Money Exchange

Currency exchange rates often fluctuate. For the most up to date rates please refer to the following websites: [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com) or [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com)  
US\$ cash (notes printed after 2003) are the most readily changeable currency. Pound Sterling is also widely accepted in cash. It is unlikely that you will be able to get hold of African currencies in your home country. Local currencies can be readily obtained at international airports, city banks and most major hotels. Travellers cheques should only ever be used as a back up and not your main source of funds, if you do bring travellers cheques it is very important that you also bring the encashment receipts. You are strongly advised not to walk around with large amounts of cash.

VISA debit or Maestro cards can be used to access cash whilst in Kenya.

## Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping, participating in optional activities and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

Any tip that you wish to give your local guides or leader in recognition of excellent service is always appreciated. **However please be wary of giving anyone large amounts of cash claiming that it's for school, medical, or family emergencies.**

**We recommend between £50-£100 spending money per week**

## Departure Tax

All departure taxes should be included in your international flight ticket.

## Emergency Funds

Please make sure you have access to additional emergency funds, to be used when unforeseen incidents or circumstances outside our control (e.g. a natural disaster, or an outbreak of swine or bird flu) necessitate a change to our planned programme.

This change may have to be decided prior to departure. This is a rare occurrence but it is well worth being prepared!

The amount will depend on your length of stay and any pre or post tour travel. We also recommend using Western Union for emergency cash when you are overseas ([www.ukmoneytransfer.com](http://www.ukmoneytransfer.com)). Friends/family members can send a money transfer however it's best to contact our Mad HQ first for more details.

## **Costs**

### **What we cover**

- Airport pick-up on first day of the project (Sat)
- Transfer to and from the project site (arrival/departures)
- All accommodation, food and transport whilst on the project site

### **What we don't cover**

- Pre or post trip accommodation/transport (we can help with recommendations)
- Travel, accommodation & food at weekends if you leave the project site
- Transfer back to the airport, or last nights accommodation

## **Payment**

To get your place secured then all you need to do is an online application form from our website so we have all your contact/travel details. Then you need to pay a GBP deposit of £150 to secure your place. You can do this with a credit (3% fee) or debit card over the phone. If you are booking from outside the UK its internationally recognised card payments only please. Or pop a GBP cheque in the post made payable to 'Madventurer' with your name, contact number and project departure dates written clearly on the reverse. Full payment is due no later than 75 days before you depart. If you are booking under the 75 day bracket you will need to pay in full on booking.

## **Keeping in touch while you are away**

If you need to be contacted while travelling we recommend that you set up an email address that can be accessed on the road, rather than relying on snail mail. Email has quickly become the preferred way for our crew and travellers to stay in touch and email cafes are commonplace throughout the regions we visit.

If someone wishes to contact you in an emergency while you are on one of our trips we recommend that they contact our Mad HQ in the UK first during office hours on 0845 121 1996. Outside of office hours they can leave a clear message with their name, contact number, and reason for calling.

We don't recommend that family and friends try to contact you through hotels, as they are subject to change and the reception staff may not speak English. It's always a good idea to let loved ones know that you have arrived safely. There won't be much mobile reception in the rural villages we work in so try and call when you arrive into Nairobi and have met up with our crew.

## **Mobile Phones**

If you want to take your mobile phone for emergencies please be aware that calls made/accepted to mobiles can be very expensive, especially if friends etc don't know you are overseas. You can get your phone unlocked in the UK or in Kenya and then you can buy a Kenyan sim card. Sim cards can be bought at most local stores/markets and should make your calls a little cheaper. You will need to let family/friends know your new number. However most volunteers use email for all other non-essential communication. If you are taking your phone please make sure this is covered under your travel insurance policy.

## **Emergency Contact**

In the case of a genuine crisis or emergency, Madventurer can be reached during office hours (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) on Tel: 00 44 (0)845 121 1996. Out of office hours, emergency contact details for our crew can be found by going to: [www.madventurer.net](http://www.madventurer.net). This will take you to a list of our overseas crew emergency mobile contact details.

**Before you head off** – It's very important that before you head off to your chosen destination that you remember to take down the appropriate emergency contact number from the website. Please keep this number safe and on your person for the duration of your project. Our village locations can be quite remote so if you can't get through please **text a message** on our crew's mobile and they will get back to you as soon as they can. If you have a problem before you set off then please also leave a clear message with your name, telephone number and reason for calling on our UK Mad HQ answering machine as well.

## **Your fellow travellers**

As you travel on a group trip you will be exposed to all the pleasures and maybe some of the frustrations of travelling in a group. Your fellow travellers will probably come from all corners of the world and likely a range of age groups too. We ask you to be understanding of the various needs and preferences of your group - patience with your fellow travellers is sometimes required for the benefit of everyone's travel experience.

Remember too that you have responsibilities to the group. If you are requested to be at a place at a certain time, ensure that you don't keep the rest of the group waiting. We have found time and time again that the very best trips we operate are those where the dynamics within the group work well - this takes just a little effort on your part.

Please note that due to privacy reasons we are unable to provide you with contact details and any personal information about your fellow travellers booked on your trip prior to departure. We encourage our travellers to join the **Madventurer facebook group** and post their details if they wish to be contacted by other Madventurer travellers.

### **Group Leaders – Our ‘Crew’**

Every project has a leader or ‘crew’ as we like to call them – the person directly responsible for running the project. The aim of the crew is to take the hassle out of your experience and help you have the best time possible.

All crew are trained including first aid training. They are selected for their knowledge of the country they are working in and their ability to act as a liaison between you and your host community.

Crew are there to set things up, ensure the smooth running of the project and deal with any unexpected situations. It’s important to remember, however, that this project is a team activity, and they are team leaders. Here are a few points highlighting what to expect:

Crew are responsible for the final stages of the project implementation and know the background of the project.

Crew are there to liaise with the local community and any local partners who may be involved, to ensure the smooth running of the project. They will sometimes give specific responsibilities to group a member, which helps to keep all members of the team involved and help everyone to get the most out of the experience.

Crew are not responsible for organising weekend activities for venturers. On occasions they may decide to arrange a trip but they are under no obligation to do so. Venturers are expected to organise weekend trips themselves and they can seek advice from their leader for this as it will promote your independence as a traveller.

Your crew is trained & equipped to deal with any emergency situation which may arise.

Finally, crew are there to make sure you have a good time and get the most out of the project. If you have any ideas, please talk to your crew e.g. if you want to start extra activities or extend your coaching programmes to adults or other communities. **Very Important** - If you are unsatisfied or unhappy with anything whilst on your project then it’s very important that you speak to your overseas crew first, in order for them to help rectify the problem. Please don’t leave this until a few weeks into your project, or the end, or until you get home, as it’s very difficult for us to be able to do anything about it then. You can, of course, always contact Madventurer HQ in Newcastle by phone or email from overseas at any time if you wish to.

We endeavour to provide the services of an experienced crew leader however, due to the seasonality of travel; situations may arise where your crew is new to a particular region or is training other crew. You can expect your crew to have a general knowledge of the country visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also aim to support local project partners who have specialised knowledge of the regions we visit - and who better to hear it from than the locals themselves!

**It is important to note** - that your crew, while available 24 hours a day 7 days a week to respond to emergency situations, they do have other off-site responsibilities which means they may be away from the project site for certain periods which may include weekends.

## **Responsible travel**

We believe strongly in low impact or rather positive impact tourism. Broadly speaking this means that we try to minimise the negative aspects of tourism on the local cultures and environments that we visit and highlight the positive aspects.

## **A couple of rules**

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on our trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for madventurers. Madventurer's philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make our destinations such special places. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our group leader has the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

**Madventurer has a strict zero-tolerance policy on the use of illegal drugs. Penalties are severe if you are caught with drugs in Africa, and there is very little either Madventurer or the British High Commission can do for anyone convicted of a crime under African law.**

## **The MAD Foundation**

For more info on our registered charity the Mad Foundation (Reg No 1111805) go to: <http://www.madventurer.com/page/mad-mission> or check out our JustGiving page on <http://www.justgiving.com/madfoundation>

## **Laundry**

You can enjoy hand washing your own clothes outdoors along side other members of the village or negotiate to pay a member of the local community. You can buy washing powder locally or bring some with you if you have room.

## **What to Take**

Generally speaking, you should pack as lightly as possible. On the vast majority of our trips you are expected to carry your own luggage, and though you will not be required to walk long distances with your luggage we recommend keeping the weight under 10kg/22lb. Please check with your airline/airport for their recommendations as these can differ.

Suitcases are not recommended, most travellers carry their luggage in a backpack, although an overnight bag with a shoulder strap would suffice if you travel lightly, this

will depend on your project duration. Smaller bags with wheels are acceptable, although we recommend your bag has carry straps as well, as you may be required to negotiate bus steps and rough paths/ground.

You will also need a day pack/bag to carry water and a camera etc for day walks and day trips if you chose to do some independent travel.

### **Community Donations**

We encourage anything that can aid teaching such as pens/ exercise books/ activity books/ arts materials/ teaching aids and sports equipment. Any donations should be used as part of lessons or directed through your leader or teachers to be dispersed on need or merit and not given as a handout.

### **What to pack & checklist**

The following checklist is to be used as a guide only and is not intended to be a complete packing list. Any other items that you wish to pack are at your own discretion however you should attempt to comply with the suggested luggage weight limit.

Passport - plus a photocopy to be kept separately

Money: cash and/or Traveller's Cheques – Keep a note of the serial numbers of your Travellers cheques and also the emergency contact numbers. Keep these details separately from the cheques. Credit cards for ATM withdrawals.

Travel Insurance - Take a photocopy of your policy with you or leave a photocopy at home

Airline Tickets – Take a photocopy of your tickets

Vaccination Certificates - if applicable (photocopy)

Vouchers – occasionally vouchers are issued for certain services. If you receive a voucher please ensure you bring it with you.

Emergency contact details for our overseas crew. If you have booked pre or post tour accommodation then please ensure you bring along the hotels contact details and booking information.

1 Pair boots or strong shoes (must be worn for building work, useful for trekking)

1 pair sandals

Socks

Underwear

T-Shirts (Suitable for building work, they will get very muddy/dirty)

Long-sleeved top (for evenings when mosquitoes are out)

Lightweight trousers

Fleece/Sweater/Beanie (although it is hot during the day it does get cold in the evenings as the Rift Valley is at altitude)

Shorts (knee length)

Hat and sunglasses

Swimming gear

Lightweight rainproof jacket

Backpack (60 to 80 litre capacity should be enough to carry everything you need)

1-2 season sleeping bag

Sleeping bag liner (cotton or silk)

Sleep mat or Thermarest (optional for added comfort), Travel pillow (again optional)

Towel

Paracetamol/Ibuprofen (adhesive plasters, antiseptic wipes) plus diarrhea treatment plus rehydration sachets.

Mosquito net (impregnated with insecticide is best) wedge or box shape is best for hanging

Insect repellent (essential malaria protection, you'll use a lot)

Bite & sting relief ointment

Torch with spare batteries

Sun cream (high protection factor, the sun is strong on the equator)

Aftersun/moisturiser

Toiletries

Day bag

Camera (spare batteries and memory card)

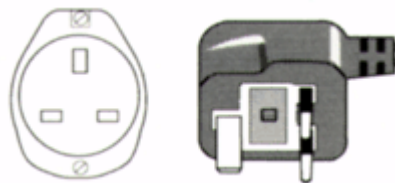
Work gloves/face mask (if you will be doing building work)

Cards, travel games, books

We recommend that you also take your own medical kit for personal use as well and if you plan on doing independent travel. This should include any medication that you know you are likely to use.

**A good travel tip - Photo copy all your important documents and keep them in a separate envelope to the originals. You can also scan these documents in and attach them to an email, then email yourself/family/friends with the info. This means you/family/friends can access the documents in an emergency.**

**You will need an adapter to fit a flat 3 pin socket (if your items are not from the UK) to charge electrical items in Kenya - please see below:**



## **Local Dress**

Women should dress modestly whilst staying in the village. T-shirts and shorts are fine, shorts that cover the knees should be worn within the community, vests that show the shoulders or stomach is not appropriate.

Smart clothes should be changed into for teaching such as a shirt with a collar for men and skirts below the knees for women.

## **Safety**

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a **(Hidden)** wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe-

keeping of your passport, air tickets, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling.

**A lock is recommended for securing your valuables inside your luggage. Given the nature of the Project locations we support, please note that we do not have safes available so you must take full responsibility for your own belongings. Make sure that you have at least one lockable compartment as part of your baggage that you can keep valuables and important documents in.**

## **Cultural Sensitivity**

Please remember that you are a guest in the local community and are representing your country as well as Madventurer. Always take time to treat people with respect and, although things may not happen as quickly and easily as they would back home, be patient and understanding. An ability to keep calm when frustrated will win you many friends in Kenya and will also improve your time on and off the project site.

Kenyans consider politeness and respect very important. If you want something from someone, you are far more likely to get it by addressing them as Sir or Madam and taking time to say a polite "Good morning" and "How are you?" before asking for it than if you are blunt or unfriendly.

Madventurer has a strict zero-tolerance policy on the use of illegal drugs. Penalties are severe if you are caught with drugs in Kenya, and there is very little either Madventurer or the British High Commission can do for anyone convicted of a crime under Kenyan law.

## **Language**

Although English is becoming better understood in many parts of Kenya, and in different areas, tribal languages are still spoken, Swahili is the national language for Kenya. Learning a few words of Swahili will make your stay in Kenya more enjoyable.

<b>English</b>	<b>Swahili</b>
Please	Tafadali
Thanks (a lot)	Asante (sana)
Greeting/how are you	Habari
Reply	Sijambo
Goodbye	Kwaheri
Medicine	Dawa
Fine	Nzuri
Very good	Nzuri sana
How much?	Shilingi Ngapi
I don't understand	Sielewi
No	Hapana
I am hungry	Nime Njar
I am thirsty	Nime Kiu

I am satisfied	Nime shiba
See you later	Tutaunana Baadaye
Excuse me	Samahani
Sorry (expression of regret)	Pole

## Country Guidebooks

*Rough Guide* [www.roughguides.com](http://www.roughguides.com) is our recommended guide book for Kenya. It is very informative, gives a good history of the country, and comes with decent maps for you to find your way around!

*Footprints* [www.footprintbooks.com](http://www.footprintbooks.com) and *Lonely Planet* [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) both produce reasonable guides to East Africa.

## Security

Kenya is a relatively stable country, and with common sense precautions you are unlikely to experience any serious problems.

Crime of any kind is rare in the villages where we work, and the local communities deal harshly with anyone who brings shame on the village as a criminal. The biggest risk is from opportunist theft, usually by children who don't know any better. The way to avoid this is by keeping any valuables out of sight and in a secure place, and making sure that children do not enter bedrooms or other parts of the house where you have possessions. To avoid risk leave all valuables at home.

It is worth splitting your money between various places and keeping a small amount of cash as a reserve in case of emergencies. Many venturer's use a body belt to contain the bulk of their money and keep daily amounts in a wallet. You can use your wallet to pay for daily items so that you don't need to expose the money belt. Please make sure that money belts/purses worn around the neck or as bum bags are not advisable, as they could make you a target for mugging.

The risk of becoming a victim of crime is greater when you travel away at weekends. Walking, especially alone, in Nairobi at night is asking for trouble! Nairobi itself has a bad reputation, and not without reason, however if necessary precautions are taken, and you remain vigilant at all times, you are still unlikely to have any problems. Please make sure you follow crew's advice.

Be wary of anyone with a hard luck story, asking for assistance, soliciting sponsorship (particularly education) or anyone offering a deal to change money at favourable rates – these are usually con artists who make more money from gullible foreigners than they would by getting a job.

**Important** - While your group leader will assist you with the available options in a given location, please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your Madventurer itinerary, and Madventurer makes no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Please also note that your group leader has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns.

You will be given a full briefing at your orientation meeting when you arrive in country on safety in country and on project. This will cover all areas from theft, taking public transport, sun/altitude exposure and safety on the building site.

1. You will have a supply of drinking water at your accommodation but please remember to fill up your personal water bottle every morning before you leave for the project site and to take enough of a supply with you from the house.
2. Crew are first aid trained and use specially designed first aid kits on each location. However, you still need to take your own small personal first aid kit with you which will compliment the Project one.
3. Project sites are located with a maximum 4hr driving radius of a hospital that can be reached by a vehicle in case of emergency.
4. Be prepared that safety standards on the building site are not exactly as you would expect to find them at home. Our crew risk assess the project regularly throughout and will guide you on avoiding unnecessary dangers.

### **We want your Blogs, Photo's and Video's**

Before you depart you can set up your own free MAD Tribe Blog ([www.madtribe.com](http://www.madtribe.com)) by going to <http://www.madtribe.com/register> and following the online instructions.

At any point during your trip or when you return you can access the Mad Blog allowing you to keep everyone back home and us here in HQ up to date with what you are doing or have been doing whilst on a Madventurer project. You can even upload photos of your travels for friends/family back home.

We always ask our Mad travellers if they would kindly give us copies of their photos, and permission to use them on the Mad Tribe Blog/Brochure/Posters. These can be via email to [team@madventurer.com](mailto:team@madventurer.com) or disc sent to our Mad HQ office. You never know, your picture might make it to the front page of our brochure, posters or be on the next Madventurer Newsletter!

**Happy and Safe Travels!**

**Mad HQ**