

# K A R I B U

# K E N Y A



**An orientation guide  
for United Nations staff  
working in Kenya**





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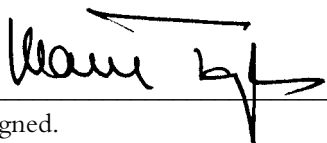
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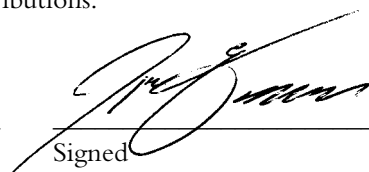
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Signed.  
Mr. Klaus Toepfer  
Director General  
United Nations Office  
at Nairobi  
Nairobi, Kenya



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Signed  
Mr. Per Engebak  
Regional Director, UNICEF  
Eastern & Southern Africa  
Regional Office  
Nairobi, Kenya

December 2004



At 17,058 feet (5,199 metres), Batian Peak, the highest of Mount Kenya's three summits, is the second highest point in Africa – and the continent's most challenging technical climb.



Lions have a field day on the Mara's central plains, as they prepare for the most productive hunt of the year.



Up to 1.4 million wildebeest and zebra crowd onto the Maasai Mara plains between July and September each year, in what is arguably the world's greatest wildlife spectacle.

# Life in Kenya

EVER SINCE THE FIRST 'MODERN TOURIST' ARRIVED ON ITS SHORES AT THE TURN of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Kenya has been a name synonymous with adventure and excitement. With arguably the world's best known game reserve in the Maasai Mara, an unmatched physical diversity that stretches from the snowcapped peaks of Mount Kenya to the sparkling sands of the Indian Ocean, and a history as rich as its famously hospitable welcome, the original 'Land of Safari' is still regarded by many as the ultimate African destination. It's no surprise that many people posted to work at the United Nations in Kenya end up making the country their lifelong home.

As Kenya moves into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, life in its bustling capital is gradually adopting more of the comforts and conveniences of the modern age. After a period in which the country became more famous for its corrupt governance and susceptibility to terrorist attacks, Kenya is emerging from its difficult past into a new era of social and economic promise.

The National Rainbow Coalition government of Mwai Kibaki elected in December 2002 has made a commitment to economic reform and a tough new anti-corruption agenda which has won it plaudits from governments around the world, as well as the return of badly needed donor support. Greater initiatives to unite East Africa by lifting trade and customs barriers have brought fresh hopes for a more investor friendly region, while Kenya is also playing a leading role in governance and human rights initiatives under the New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad). And the country's hosting of high-level peace talks for Sudan and Somalia has also signalled a more pivotal role for the nation in Africa's long awaited 'renaissance'.

Although it will be a long time before memories fade of the recent terrorist attacks on Nairobi's US embassy and the Paradise Hotel in Mombasa, Kenya is putting its collective strength into rebuilding the nation's image. And social strength the nation has in abundance; its 42 tribes and rich cultural heritage provide a cultural melting pot with few

equals, and a country that has survived the tumultuous post-Independence period with one of the most peaceful social records on the continent. Although the country sometimes seems strongly divided along tribal lines, its multitude of tribes have proved time and again that they can live in peace – and draw strength from their diversity.

## The Past

With the discovery of the two-million-year old fossilized skull of *Homo habilis* on the shores of Lake Turkana in 1972, Kenya cemented its claim as the original ‘Cradle of Mankind’ – the place where man first straightened his back and became a hunter on the plains of East Africa. Today, Kenya is still regarded by many as a modern-day ‘Eden’, a place with a geographical and cultural diversity to match its rich human history.

Over the past 5,000 years, Kenya’s lush grazing and farmlands have attracted people from all over the continent: Cushitic peoples from Ethiopia, Bantu farmers from Nigeria, Arabian and Persian settlers from the Middle East. An ancient Greek ship’s log recorded ivory, rhino horn and sugarcane being shipped out of Mombasa in 110 AD – a flourishing business that would soon be followed by the trade in human beings. The 16<sup>th</sup> century, when the Portuguese sacked Mombasa and built Fort Jesus, saw the beginning of nearly three centuries of bloodletting between the Portuguese and Arabs, which culminated in the arrival of the British in 1888.

Despite an often ignominious colonial history, Kenya remains very close to British hearts. Since Joseph Thomson went marching through Maasai land in the 1880s, a long list of explorers and colonial administrators – some bold, some cruel, all boundlessly ambitious – have staked their claim to different parts of Kenya. Nairobi was born with the arrival of the Mombasa railway on the last area of flat land before the Great Rift Valley in 1899. Sadly, despite the railway and other great infrastructural achievements, British rule also saw the dispossession of Kenyans from their farming and grazing lands, and the brutal repression of the pre-Independence Mau Mau movement.

Following an eight-year state of emergency, Kenya finally attained Independence on December 12<sup>th</sup> 1963, with the formation of an independent government with Jomo Kenyatta as Prime Minister six months earlier. Kenyatta proved as magnanimous as he was charismatic, inviting British settlers to stay on and join with Africans in “pulling together” to build the

new nation. The blood shed in the Independence struggle is remembered in the red on the Kenyan flag (while the green stands for the land, and the black for the people).

Kenyatta continued to lead Kenya until his death in 1978, when Vice President Daniel Arap Moi took power in a constitutional succession. The country remained a one-party state until 1991, when Moi acceded to internal and external pressure for political liberalisation. However, the ethnically fractured opposition failed to dislodge Moi's Kenya African National Union (KANU) from power in elections in 1992 and 1997, which despite widespread violence and fraud were viewed as generally reflecting the will of the people.

Moi finally stepped down in December 2002, following fair and peaceful elections in which he was defeated by Mwai Kibaki, running as candidate of the united, multiethnic National Rainbow Coalition. A respected economist, Kibaki had served as Kenya's finance minister and vice president in the 1970s and 80s before leaving KANU in 1991. His victory marked the end of almost 40 years of uninterrupted KANU rule, and it was 'third time lucky' for Mr Kibaki, whose Democratic Party had lost in the two previous elections.

## The People

Kenya is a truly multiracial nation, with 42 different tribes living in a remarkable degree of harmony and peace, and coexisting with the descendants of the European settlers and the Indians who came to build the railway. The largest tribe, the Kikuyu, occupy the central highlands around the Rift Valley and the capital city, the western regions are dominated by the Luo and Luhya, the east by the Kamba, and the coastal areas by the Giriama and other Swahili peoples. Most Kenyans are fluent in Kiswahili as well as their own tribal dialect, while those living in the cities and towns also often speak English.

Sadly, despite rapid advances in medical science, Kenya's endemic poverty and extremely high unemployment (currently estimated at over 40%) have conspired to keep the country among the world's 20 poorest nations. The rising incidence of HIV/AIDS and continuing vulnerability to epidemic diseases such as cholera, malaria and tuberculosis, combined with extremely poor sanitation coverage and high malnutrition rates, have contributed to the continuing deterioration of life in Kenya over the past 20 years. Infant and child mortality rates, often cited as primary indicators of a country's socio-

economic wellbeing, both rose by 30% between 1989 and 2003, with infant mortality reaching 78 per 1,000 live births and under-five mortality standing at 114 per 1,000 live births in 2003 – meaning that one in nine Kenyan children does not reach their fifth birthday.

Life expectancy also continued to fall steadily over this period, with the average lifespan among Kenya's 33 million people recorded at just over 45 years in 2003. The growing migration of jobless rural residents to Nairobi and other towns continues to put increasing pressure on the country's growing urban slums, where levels of sanitation coverage and accessibility to safe water remain pitifully low – and where unemployment and extreme poverty have contributed to one of the world's highest prevalences of HIV infection.

## The Land

Covering 582,650 square kilometres (225,000 square miles), Kenya is one of the most topographically diverse countries of its size in the world, with landscapes ranging from snow mountains and glaciers to sun blasted deserts, ancient rainforests to sparkling white beaches, and some of the world's most game rich wilderness areas in between (see Chapter 10). The country's topographical glory is the world's longest and most spectacular valley, the Great Rift, made famous by the Leakey family's hominid discoveries, while its western borders fall on the shores of Africa's largest lake, the 70,000-square-kilometre Lake Victoria, which influences weather conditions across much of the region.

Kenya's climate is strongly influenced by its landscape, with twice-yearly wet seasons delivering less than 10 inches of rain to the northeastern deserts but spilling more than 80 inches in the central and western highlands. Rainfall generally follows strong seasonal patterns – with the 'long rains' usually falling between mid-March and mid-May, and the 'short rains' from late October to early December – although this pattern is most pronounced in the dry north and east, and less so in the humid highlands and the western regions, which can witness rain at any time, particularly between March and September. When the sun is out, Nairobi enjoys relatively warm days all year round, although the nights are often cool at this 1,800-metre altitude. During the winter months between June and August, nighttime temperatures occasionally dip into single figures, and thick clothing and domestic heating are often required.

## The Economy

Following strong economic growth in 1995-96, Kenya's economy stagnated, with GDP growth failing to keep up with the rate of population growth. Between 1997 and 2003, two suspensions of International Monetary Fund aid due to the government's failure to maintain reforms and curb corruption combined with severe droughts, weak commodity prices and poor investor confidence severely limited Kenya's economic growth. In 2002, declining donor support and political infighting in the run-up to the December elections caused growth to fall below 1%. However, the arrival of a new government and several promising breakthroughs in efforts to root out corruption – particularly the trial over Goldenberg International's receipt of state compensation for non-existent gold and diamond exports – have boosted future prospects, and helped to win back strong financial support from the IMF and the World Bank.

Despite the new promise, however, vast challenges remain, particularly in the creation of jobs and overcoming of the crippling poverty that still sees half of all Kenyan families surviving on less than US\$1 a day. Much of the Kibaki government's poverty reduction efforts are focused on improving public services and market access for the country's vital agricultural sector, which accounts for an estimated 75% of its employment and 60% of its income. Much of the country's economy continues to be based on a lively *jua kali* (informal) sector, which is responsible for manufacturing everything from clothes and soap to wooden furniture and tin goods. The country's major export commodities include tea, coffee, flowers, vegetables and petroleum products, with Uganda and the UK as the largest export markets.

## The Currency

The basic unit of currency is the Kenya shilling, which is divided into 100 cents. The currency has undergone significant changes since the NARC government came to power, with new Ksh 5 and 10 notes joining the existing Ksh 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1,000 bills (the latter being the highest denomination available). Copper and silver coins are available in denominations of Ksh 5, 10, 20 and 40, with larger coins representing larger denominations. The common usage of a "pound" refers to 20 shillings – once equivalent to a sterling pound! The United Nations follows a standard exchange rate between the shilling and the US dollar, which is updated each month. Banks general-

ly offer better exchange rates than hotels, but the best rates can be found at the forex bureaux in the main shopping centres in town.

## Culture & Relationships

Despite its multitude of tribes and clans, meeting and getting along with Kenyans is not dictated by the kind of strict social rules prevalent in some societies. Basic politeness goes a long way in Kenya, and an effort to learn even a few words of Kiswahili will always meet with great appreciation.

On all occasions, greetings are generally accompanied by a handshake – whether between men and women, adults or children. Kenyans appreciate being addressed by their title, particularly if they have a position in government. People are often addressed simply by their surname, which is personal rather than disrespectful. It is also common for married Kenyans to be addressed as the mother or father of their eldest child, eg. ‘Mama Stephen’ or ‘Baba Zac’. Many people have both an ethnic and a Christian name, and it is good to ask what someone wishes to be called – particularly if you will be entering into a lengthy working relationship.

Relationships with domestic staff should usually be kept fairly formal and instructional, as over-friendliness can sometimes lead to confusion or manipulation. Staff should be made to feel that they are an important part of the household, although with your children’s ‘ayahs’ you may develop a closer relationship over time. It is best to set firm boundaries over what is expected of your domestic staff, and what they will receive from you in return.

Although punctuality is not strictly adhered to in the countryside, you will be expected to be prompt for appointments in Nairobi. Out of the city, where unreliable transport and weather conditions often conspire against punctuality, delays of 30 minutes or more are common, even for larger meetings. Written invitations to formal functions usually require a written or telephone reply, and when visiting someone in their home a gift such as food or flowers is highly appreciated. When hosting a dinner, you will usually be expected to serve a meat dish, accompanied by soft drinks and beer or wine. Some Asians are devout vegetarians, and it is best to check when you are hosting Asian guests. Strict gender differentiation still exists in rural areas, and you will often find the women gathering on one side of the room and the men on the other.

Kenyans are remarkably tolerant people, who are very successful in facing the continual conflicts caused by the clash of tradition and modernity in their

daily lives. However, some cultural customs and behaviours should be observed, particularly in the stricter Muslim societies of the Northeast and the Coast, where visiting men should be careful not to show too much affection towards women. However, in most rural areas, expatriate visitors are usually welcomed with open arms – and are nearly always forgiven any cultural indiscretions!

As an employee in Nairobi, it is also likely that you will be asked at some time to contribute to the funeral expenses of a colleague's relative. A donation towards such an occasion – usually for a family who cannot afford it – will always be gratefully received. In the spirit of 'Harambee' ('pulling together'), volunteers in communities across Kenya build schools, churches and medical clinics, or collect funds to send their most promising students abroad for further studies. It is common for visitors to be invited to 'Harambee' functions, and donations are always received with much gratitude.

## **Religions & Public Holidays**

The majority of Kenyans are Christian – some 45% are Protestant and another 33% Roman Catholic – while Muslims make up about 15% of the population. The country thus celebrates the usual Christian holidays as public holidays. One Muslim holiday, Idd el Fitr, which ends the fasting month of Ramadhan, is also celebrated as a public holiday. For a list of official public holidays, see Chapter 8.



Sunscrapers: The towering buildings of Nairobi's Central Business District, viewed from the panoramic heights of Upper Hill.

The lowdown: A sea of makuti tin roofs give shelter to some 700,000 residents in Nairobi's Kibera slum, now said to be the largest informal settlement in Africa.



## The ‘Green City in the Sun’

IN JUST 100 YEARS, NAIROBI HAS GROWN FROM A MURKY SWAMP AND UNLIKELY railhead for the Mombasa–Kampala railway to a booming city of 4 million people and the economic capital of much of eastern and central Africa. As well as Kenya’s commercial heart and a transit point for thousands of African tourists, Nairobi serves as the regional headquarters of dozens of multinational companies and major aid organisations, and the global headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT).

Nairobi is blessed with one of the most pleasant climates in the world, and – in its residential suburbs at least – retains a remarkably green, pollution-free environment. The city’s status as regional capital has also helped to create one of Africa’s most cosmopolitan leisure spots, with some of the continent’s finest hotels, restaurants, and modern and cultural entertainments (see Chapter 9). And, of course, Nairobi remains the centre of Africa’s very first ‘safari business’, with a range of wildlife, cultural and sporting adventures that is second to none.

Nairobi came into being in 1899, when Mile 327 of the East African Railway was established on a patch of papyrus bog known as *Uaso Nyrobi* (Maasai for ‘place of cold waters’) – the last area of flat land where the engineers camped to figure out their ascent up the eastern shoulder of the Great Rift Valley. In a few short years, this small supply depot was transformed, first into a campsite for thousands of Indian labourers, and then into the thriving capital of British East Africa. Encouraged by financial incentives and cheap land, Europeans soon began to move into the fertile highlands north and south of Nairobi, leading to friction with the local Maasai and Kikuyu. Mixed agricultural farms were set up, with coffee plantations established by new arrivals including the Danish author Karen Blixen. The number of white settlers rose to 9,000 by 1920, and by the 1950s stood at 80,000. Alienated from their land, many Kikuyu people also migrated to Nairobi, became part

of the colonial economy, and formed associations whose principal aim was the return of their native lands. One such person was Johnstone Kamau, who later changed his name to Jomo Kenyatta.

Up until after the Second World War, Kenya's white rulers were in no mood for accommodating the demands of the Africans. However, African troops returning from the war were equally in no mood to accept the *status quo* and the bloody Mau Mau rebellion, which mainly involved the Kikuyu, raged until 1956. Soon afterwards, Kenyatta was jailed and placed under house arrest until 1961, although there was no evidence linking him with the rebellion. Pressure continued to build on the British and, on December 12th 1963, Kenya gained independence, with Kenyatta as its first president.

Today, Nairobi remains a cultural and architectural melting pot of African, Asian and European influences, and the largest city between Cairo and Johannesburg. The city centre retains a few old colonial relics in its town hall and parliament, although these are now dwarfed by modern skyscrapers and streets of colourful souvenir shops and Indian-owned grocery and clothing stores. To the east of the city centre is the grubby but eternally busy Industrial Area, while the city is surrounded by thriving market areas ranging from the stylish malls of Westlands to the chaotic markets of Gikomba and Eastleigh, and a hugely disparate range of residential suburbs, from the ostentatious wealth of Muthaiga and Karen to the middle-class areas of Parklands and Kileleshwa, the housing schemes of Buru Buru and Nairobi West, and the sprawling slums of Kibera and Mathare Valley.

While Nairobi may lay confident claim to being Africa's most multicultural city, it must also admit to harbouring its most glaring wealth disparities. The burgeoning slums of Kibera may well be Africa's largest – and, to the uninformed visitor, are also probably its most dangerous. While Nairobi's warm weather and cool altitude make jogging, walking or cycling an inviting prospect, newcomers must remain aware of the risks inherent in such activities, and should take sensible precautions before venturing out (see Chapter 4). Poor road conditions, lack of special lanes and unpredictable driving standards make cycling a particularly dangerous pastime in Nairobi, while many of the city's parks and open spaces have sadly become the preserve of ruthless criminal gangs.

The city has also earned the unfortunate distinction of being the first major target in Al Qaeda's recent spate of global terrorist attacks – a mantle it is still finding hard to cast off. In August 1998, the US embassy in downtown Nairobi was blown up by militants in an attack that claimed the lives of over 200 Kenyans. Two years later, in November 2002, the terrorism threat

again reared its ugly head when suicide bombers attacked the Israeli-run Paradise Hotel in Mombasa, killing 16 people, and narrowly missed bringing down a Boeing 757 with a hand-held missile. As a result, Kenya's tourism industry, which attracted nearly a million visitors a year in the early 1990s, was receiving fewer than 400,000 visitors by 2003, and several airlines had discontinued their services to Nairobi and Mombasa.

## **Kenya's Response to Terrorism**

Although Nairobi will forever be remembered as the venue of the first major terrorist attack sponsored by Osama bin Laden, it has been a relatively peaceful city since those dark days in 1998. Embassies and diplomatic missions have dramatically improved their security, while several airlines have withdrawn their Kenyan services completely – with devastating consequences for the local tourism industry. However, the Kenyan Government has recently taken major steps to reduce the terrorist threat to both visitors and residents. An Anti-Terrorist Police Unit and a National Anti-Terrorism Centre have been established, both of which are working closely with international security agencies. Screening equipment and procedures have been significantly beefed up at the airports in Nairobi and Mombasa, and the perimeters put under increased surveillance, with watchtowers manned 24 hours a day and paramilitary patrols trained by British military experts.

## **Nairobi's Development Industry**

With the unstable political nature and huge social needs of the countries over its borders, Nairobi has grown into the official centre for much of the aid and development industry in the region. With the major United Nations presence and the regional headquarters of dozens of major development organisations, including the World Bank and the European Commission, the city has taken on the mantle as 'aid capital' for much of Eastern Africa and the Horn. Kenya's remarkable record of social and political stability has also seen it develop into an unofficial centre for some of the region's major political peace processes, particularly those aiming to end the complex long-running conflicts in Sudan and Somalia. Nairobi's development industry has become big business, with hundreds of Kenyan, Sudanese and other 'indigenous' NGOs, major international humanitarian agencies, and several private businesses – management consultancies, transport companies, relief food producers – springing up to service and supply development projects.

## International & Regional Links

Nairobi maintains strong air links with Europe and the rest of Africa, with major airlines such as British Airways, KLM, Emirates, Swiss International, SN Brussels, and South African Airways flying from the city's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport. The national carrier, Kenya Airways, flies daily to London, from where it links with the rest of Europe and the United States. Kenya Airways also recently launched a popular Far East service, flying thrice-weekly flights to Bangkok and Hong Kong. Kenya is also home to Regional Air, which serves the major capitals in Eastern and Southern Africa. Mombasa is served by daily flights by Kenya Airways and Regional Air, while a third domestic carrier, Airkenya, offers reliable passage in a well-maintained fleet of older aircraft to Lamu and the main national parks. Most areas within Kenya are accessible by air, and licensed pilots may also hire light aircraft to do their own flying.

For details of train services, taxi companies, and public transport within Nairobi, turn to Chapter 6.





A kaleidoscope of Kenyan cultures: A young Maasai boy in ceremonial headdress (1); an Arab girl on Lamu Island (2); a Pokot tribesgirl at Lake Turkana (3); a white Kenyan girl in Nairobi (4); a Maasai girl at a wedding in Laikipia (5); a Maasai moran in the Loita Hills (6); a Giriama girl on the South Coast (7); and an Indian girl in Nairobi (8).



Aerial view of the UN Complex in Gigiri, Nairobi.



A statue of Jomo Kenyatta, Kenya's founding father, looks out over the grounds of the Kenyatta International Conference Centre in downtown Nairobi.

# Government & International Organisations

## The Government & Legal System

SINCE 1991, KENYA HAS FOLLOWED A MULTI-PARTY POLITICAL SYSTEM, WITH more than 25 registered political parties. There are three arms of Government: the Legislature, which enacts laws, the Executive, and the Judiciary, which acts as an arbitrator. In 2003, the legislature comprised 210 elected and 12 nominated members of parliament. There is universal suffrage for all citizens over 18, with elections every five years by secret ballot.

The administrative structure consists of centralised services from line ministries, the provincial administration from the Office of the President, and district level authorities providing local public services. The central government comprises some 25 ministries, with various non-ministerial departments overseeing policy formulation, immigration, the civil service, and the government's anti-corruption agenda.

Since the last election on December 27<sup>th</sup> 2002, the country has been led by President Mwai Kibaki, who won with a 63% landslide after 39 years of KANU rule. Kibaki, who is both the chief of state and head of government, appointed Moody Awori as vice president on September 25<sup>th</sup> 2003. As this booklet went to press, a lengthy constitutional review process had yet to decide whether to create a Prime Ministerial post to run the government's business.

Kibaki's National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government is focused on resuscitating the beleaguered economy. NARC has also pledged its commitment to decentralising developmental planning and implementation to local authorities, while continuing KANU's efforts to strengthen regional trade and mediate processes to resolve conflicts in the Great Lakes region, Somalia and Sudan.

The Kenyan legal system is composed of Acts of Parliament, principles of Kenyan and English common law, and African customary laws. The Kenyan Constitution recognises the diverse, heterogeneous nature of Kenyan society

in allowing the application of tribal and religious laws in matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption and burial.

## The United Nations in Kenya

Nairobi is the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), which are located at the UN Gigiri Complex on the outskirts of the city, about 13km north of the city centre. These offices are headed by Executive Directors with the rank of Under-Secretary-General. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has an Eastern and Southern African Regional Office, headed by a Regional Director, and a separate Kenya Country Office headed by a Representative, as well as Operation Lifeline Sudan and UNICEF-Somalia offices, which are headed by Country Representatives. Other information is available at [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org).

The major UN organisations and associated international organisations in Nairobi are listed below, together with their physical and postal addresses, and telephone numbers. The UN Gigiri Complex itself is administered by the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), which is part of the United Nations Secretariat in New York.

## The UN Gigiri Complex

The Gigiri complex occupies a total of 140 acres (56 hectares) and lies adjacent to the Karura Forest. Despite the size of the complex and its steady stream of human traffic, Gigiri is home to a surprisingly rich diversity of wildlife, including red duikers, baboons and vervet monkeys, marsh mongooses and a stunning variety of birdlife. Nature-loving employees can escape from their desks and immerse themselves in nature on Gigiri's two Nature Trails, home to more than 100 indigenous tree species, the bird-rich waters of the Seasonal Swamp, or the peaceful environs of the Memorial Garden, dedicated to those killed in the 1998 embassy bombings in Africa. See the map at [www.unon.org](http://www.unon.org) for the location and more details about these unique natural attractions.

Gigiri offers a host of modern business facilities and services, which are also available to development agencies outside the United Nations system. The complex has eight conference rooms serving between 15 and 540 people, with comprehensive audio-visual and video conferencing facilities, as

### **UN International Headquarters**

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	Blocks R-X, Gigiri	P.O. Box 30552-00100	624001/2
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)	M-Block, Gigiri	P.O. Box 30030-00100	625004
United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON)	V-Block, Gigiri	P.O. Box 67578-00200	623591
World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)	ICRAF House, UN Avenue	P. O. Box 30677-00100	524000
International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI)	ILRI Campus, Naivasha Road	P. O. Box 30709-00100	630743

### **UN Regional & Country Offices**

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Kenya Country Office	Q-Block, Gigiri	P.O. Box 30218-00100	624466
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Kenya Branch Office	UNCHR Bldg, Chiromo Rd, Westlands	P. O. Box 43801-00100	4232000
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Kenya Country Office	D-Block, Gigiri	P.O. Box 44145-00100	622143
World Food Programme (WFP) Kenya Country Office	B-Block, Gigiri	P.O. Box 44482-00100	622048
World Health Organisation (WHO) Kenya Country Office	Capital Hill Towers, Cathedral Road	P. O. Box 45335-00100	2717902
International Organisation for Migration Regional Office	IOM Office, Rhapta Road, Westlands	P. O. Box 55040-00100	4444174
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Regional Office	C-Block, Gigiri	P.O. Box 30592-00100	622356
UNICEF Eastern & Southern Africa Regional Office	F-Block, Gigiri	P.O. Box 44145-00100	622226
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	New OCHA House, UN Crescent	P. O. Box 30218-00100	622148
UNICEF Somalia Country Office	USSC House, UN Crescent	P. O. Box 44145-00100	623952
UNICEF Operations Lifeline Sudan (OLS)	J-Block, Gigiri	P.O. Box 44145-00100	622406.

well as several in-house catering options. More information on the facilities and services at Gigiri and the administrative and business services provided by the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) can be found at [www.unon.org](http://www.unon.org), a comprehensive new website launched in 2004 and updated on a regular basis.

For details on the services and facilities offered to UN staff members at the UN Gigiri Complex, please see Chapter 8.

## Adult Education Courses

UNON offers a host of special courses to help UN staff and their spouses improve their languages and adapt to new working situations. These cover several areas that are helpful to staff and families newly arrived in Nairobi, including proficiency and conversation in Kiswahili and the official UN languages (Arabic, English, Russian, Chinese, French and Spanish) comprising 48 hours of tuition over 12 weeks and conversation courses (intermediate or advanced) comprising 24 hours over 12 weeks, there are also intensive language courses covering 20 hours of tuition over four weeks. In addition, UNON hosts several practical courses for individuals or small groups wishing to develop different work related skills, including administrative writing or report writing in English (12/15 hours over four weeks), English examination preparation (48 hours over 12 weeks), and effective reading courses (four sessions totalling six hours). For details and costs of all these courses, telephone 624037.

## Computer Training

There are also several different computer training programmes on offer to UN staffers, although family members can also take part for a competitively priced fee. These courses are presented by experienced external consultants three times a year and cover all manner of disciplines, from a basic computing course comprising eight hours over four afternoons to specific proficiency in Windows (four hours over two afternoons), spreadsheets (four full mornings), databases (four mornings), graphics (two or four mornings), basic Internet proficiency (one afternoon), email proficiency (six hours over three afternoons), and web design (two full mornings). For details and costings, telephone 624730.

# Staying Safe in Kenya

LIKE MUCH ELSE IN KENYA, SAFETY AND SECURITY IN THE COUNTRY ARE ALWAYS relative. For some people, life in Nairobi can seem secure and easy; for many newcomers, however, it can be plagued by uncertainty and fear. Although Nairobi does seem to suffer from an unfairly poor press, there is no doubt that incidents of theft and insecurity have risen in the city in recent years.

Although it is not possible to be completely secure – even if you turn your home into a fortress of electric fences and razor-wire – a little security knowledge can go a long way in helping to reduce the risks to your home, possessions and personal security. Most of the wealthier residential suburbs in Nairobi have their own neighbourhood watch groups, which provide local security information, liaise with police, and occasionally run private patrols during the night. While the most likely time for house break-ins is between midnight and 5am, daytime at weekends has also become a popular time for house break-ins – and no time can be deemed completely safe.

The principal ingredients in any crime are the criminal's ability and ingenuity allied to their opportunity to commit the crime. Although you can do nothing about the criminal's ability or ingenuity, you certainly can do something to deny him the opportunity to make you or your dependents his victims. This is the purpose of the security tips that follow.

## The UN Security & Safety Service

Based at the UNON Security Office in G-Block, the UN Security and Safety Service aims to ensure the safety of all UN staff members in Gigiri, in the field, and in their homes. As well as providing a rapid response to any security breaches, the office continuously monitors the wider security situation in Kenya, keeps records of all security infringements, and submits a monthly report to the UN Security Coordinator in New York.

The UN Security and Safety Service provides a steady flow of security information to all UN staff through a weekly Security Advisory sent out by email each Friday. All new employees will receive a Security Briefing on living and working in Kenya, while those travelling to the field will be required to undertake a short series of interactive tests on their computer before they are issued with security clearance. International staff moving into new residential premises can also apply for a Residential Security Survey, which will make recommendations on security improvements that are usually reimbursed by their agencies. The UNON Security Office issues all UN employees with an identity card together with a laminated card of emergency numbers, which they are encouraged to share with their families and domestic staff.

## Residential Security

The sensible selection of a house and good security awareness by everyone in it are key to strong residential security. The UN's Home Security Scheme entitles all internationally recruited staff to the services of a private security firm at their agency's expense. The following tips will help you in protecting you and your family at home.

### Choosing a House

- Try to find a house that is not too isolated and has other occupied properties around it.
- Try to avoid houses that back onto areas of forest or farms that could allow intruders a concealed approach and easy getaway.
- Avoid opulent and ostentatious homes that look like they contain a lot of expensive personal goods.

### Making Your House Secure

- The following should be considered as minimal security provisions for your house:
- A 24-hour guard service with a reputable security firm (as recommended by the Security Office).
- A security alarm system with backup service.
- A siren on the roof with a flashing light connected to the alarm system.
- A perimeter fence and solid gate, which cannot be seen through.

- Good perimeter lighting.
- Security bars on the windows, preferably fitted to the inside and set into the walls.
- Solid exterior doors, with strong quality locks and padlocks.
- A 'safe haven' area in which all residents can fit in the event of a robbery, with a telephone point and a radio alarm panic button.
- Consider also installing an intruder alarm system linked to your backup alarm system.

## Security Within the Home

- Try to get to know your neighbours and their house staff.
- Keep dogs, no matter how small, as a deterrent to thieves.
- Keep cash and valuables locked in a safe or another secure place, to which only you have the keys.
- Retain all 'safe haven' keys in your possession, and never leave them where others can find them.
- Change locks if a key is lost or you have to dismiss any of your house staff.
- Make sure all your staff and babysitters are well acquainted with door opening and telephone answering procedures.
- Do not admit unscheduled tradesmen or other strangers onto your compound, and make sure your staff inform you of any visitors they are receiving.
- Keep trees and bushes trimmed to make it more difficult for intruders to hide themselves or to observe your movements from outside.
- Never leave the house unattended and always lock up when you are out, even for very short periods.
- Keep your main gate locked at all times.

## House Staff

- Choose your house staff carefully and always ask for and check up on their previous employment references.
- Take the full particulars of each staff member, and photocopy their identity cards.
- Give each staff member clear rules of employment, and treat them fairly without becoming overly friendly.
- Try not to tempt fate by leaving cash or small valuables lying around.

- If you have watchmen from a security firm, try and keep the same ones and treat them like any other member of your house staff.
- If you notice items missing and you suspect your staff of stealing, speak to them about it. If one of them is responsible, report it immediately to the police.
- If you have to dismiss staff, dismiss them immediately (giving cash in lieu of notice) and consider changing the locks. Tell other staff so they will not be allowed back on to the premises.

## Security in Public Places

- Street muggings can – and do – occur at any time of the day or night in Nairobi. The best protection is to remain alert and to follow these simple rules:
- Keep to the main streets and avoid shortcuts, back alleys, or areas that you are unsure of.
- Be wary of approaches from street-children, who are often part of pick-pocket gangs, and try to ignore individuals who approach you with hard-luck stories.
- Try to remain conscious of what is going on around you, and walk in a confident manner. If you lose your way, go into a shop rather than walking around trying to regain your bearings.
- Never walk in the centre of Nairobi at night, even for a short distance. Always take a taxi or your own car.
- Be wary of people hanging around outside hotels, which is a favourite place for catching unwary tourists.
- Do not carry large sums of money when shopping and never go out wearing expensive jewellery.
- Never carry more than you can afford to lose. Always carry some form of identification, but not your passport.

## Security on the Road

- Most of the roads in Nairobi and up-country are in a relatively poor state, and the standards of driving often leave much to be desired. It is important to drive defensively and to follow these simple ‘rules of the road’:
- Keep all car doors and tailgates locked, and the windows open only about three inches.

- Keep valuables in the boot or out of sight.
- Always lock the vehicle when you leave it unattended, even for a few minutes, and make use of alarms or anti-theft devices.
- Try to avoid an obvious pattern of behaviour when leaving or entering your house, which could enable potential hijackers to predict your movements.
- Do not give lifts to strangers and do not stop for vehicles that appear to have broken down – this can be a ruse to rob you or steal your car.
- If you have a puncture or your vehicle breaks down, be wary of offers of help, particularly from ‘instant mechanics’ who may come to your assistance. If possible, drive to a garage or other safe place to change a tyre. Membership of the AA will entitle you to call them for assistance.
- If you are involved in an accident, wait for the police to come and take details. Make your status known as a UN staff member and give them your name, address and insurance details. If there is any hostility from passersby before the police arrive, drive *immediately* to the nearest police station. You should also call the UNON Security Office for assistance at the earliest opportunity.
- Only stop for clearly visible roadblocks manned by two or more uniformed policemen. Such checkpoints usually have a red triangular sign in the centre of the roads and two sets of iron spikes placed on opposite sides of the road.

## Travel Outside Nairobi

- Always travel prepared, with a pre-checked spare tyre and tools, spare fuel, food and plenty of drinking water.
- If you can help it, try not to drive at night.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to arrive at your destination.
- Do not stop for people apparently looking for help at the side of the road.
- Choose picnic spots with care, and do not leave your vehicle unattended.
- On longer safaris, try to travel in convoy with at least one other vehicle.

## Armed Vehicle Hijacking

Unfortunately, armed ‘carjackings’ have become more common in Nairobi in recent years. There are few indications to suggest when or where car hijack-

ers may strike; interestingly, statistics suggest that the more common Japanese saloon cars are more popular with hijackers than larger 4X4 vehicles – although no vehicle is ever entirely safe. The main ‘rule’ about carjacking is that, if you do become a victim, you should *never* try to resist the hijackers, nor to activate anti-hijacking devices or fuel cut-offs. If you react calmly and slowly and follow all the hijackers’ instructions, there is every chance that you and your passengers will be released unharmed.

Although there are no foolproof means of avoiding carjacking, the following basic precautions can help you to minimise the chance of being hijacked:

- Try and keep to busy roads and avoid isolated or unfamiliar neighbourhoods, particularly after dark.
- If something suspicious appears to be taking place on the road ahead, stop and turn before it is too late. Beware of accident scenes that may be fake.
- Where possible, keep a gap between your vehicle and the one in front to avoid being boxed in.
- Keep an eye on your rear-view mirror and note vehicles that may be following you, particularly saloon cars full of men. If you are being followed, go directly to a police station, the UN compound, a petrol station, or another busy public place. Try and keep to the centre of the road to prevent the hijackers from cutting in front of you.

## Reporting of Incidents

The UNON Security Office keeps records of all security incidents and provides weekly security updates for all staff, as well as detailed briefings for new employees. If you are involved in an incident, you should report it immediately to the Security Office, which will then liaise with the police in providing the swiftest and most appropriate response. If you become involved with the police, you should always make clear to them your UN status and show them some official identification. After an incident, try to make written notes while the sequence of events is still fresh in your mind. In the event of a rape, PEP treatment kits are available from your agency or the UN Medical Service. The Security Office Control Room can be contacted on 622999 or 626666, or on the emergency line 212000.

## Private Security Companies

In the event of a security breach at your home, you should always call your own security firm first, which will provide the fastest response. If you have the

slightest suspicion of intruders in or around your house, do not hesitate to press your alarm button. Tell your watchmen to do the same, and provide them with a portable alarm button if possible. The UNON Security Office can advise you on the choice of a reputable security firm with an effective presence in your neighbourhood. These firms will also help you with other domestic emergency situations, such as fires or the need for an ambulance, and can be called to watch over a vehicle if you break down.

### **Some of the main security firms operating in Nairobi are:**

911	2712780-1/27123911
Bob Morgan Security	567211/567701
EARS	560122/560135
Factory Guards	534720/535516
Falcon Security	449250-3
Group 4 Security	558679/531276
Securax	3746321-6
Securicar	532380/532360
Ultimate Security	566475/566485
Wells Fargo	500818/604700.

### **Emergency Numbers**

A more detailed list of emergency numbers is available in the blue booklet entitled 'Security Plan for Kenya & Security Advice', issued by the UNON Security Office. We recommend that you keep all these numbers posted next to your telephone at home:

UN Security and Safety Service	626666/622999/622344
Emergency Line	212000
Police Emergency Service	999
Nairobi Police Control Room	714995/724201
Anti-Vehicle Theft Unit	767730
Central Police	222222
Gigiri Police	521353
Nairobi Fire Department	999/222181-2
Emergency Response Service	911
Africa Air Rescue (AAR)	2717374-6/0722-314394/0733-636617
AMREF (Flying Doctors)	315454/600090/0722-314239/0733-639088
St. John's Ambulance	222396/224066.

The Village Market at Gigiri, which recently scooped an award for its innovative design from the International Council for Shopping Centres in the United States.



The Sarit Centre in Westlands, the most modern and popular of Nairobi's new breed of glitzy shopping malls.

# At Home in Nairobi

## Housing

MOST UNITED NATIONS EMPLOYEES ARE EXPECTED TO FIND THEIR OWN HOMES from commercially available properties. You will pay rents directly to your landlord, and also negotiate the costs of repairs and maintenance with them. Like most cities in the world, Kenyan lease agreements put the onus on landlords for the maintenance of the house's infrastructure and the payment of rates and taxes, while the tenant is expected to take care of routine maintenance and 'wear and tear'. The tenant is also responsible for paying all utility bills.

Before seeking housing, employees are advised to approach the UN's Security and Safety Service in G-Block to avail themselves of the latest information on residential security conditions. As well as advising you on the nature of a particular area, the Security and Safety Service will be able to inform you about the local coverage of private security firms, the availability of water and electricity, the nature of the commute from Gigiri and your children's schools, and what measures you might need to take to make a property secure for your family (see Chapter 4). Staff members are usually advised to arrive in Nairobi before their dependents in order to have time to find suitable accommodation.

## Finding a House

Popular areas of expatriate housing include the area around Gigiri and the Runda Estate, the upmarket suburb of Muthaiga, Spring Valley, Loresho, Westlands, Riverside Drive, Nyari Estate and Lavington. Other reasonable and pleasant housing is available in Hurlingham, Kilimani, Kileleshwa and the State House area. Some people prefer to live in the green environs of Karen and Langata, which are located to the south of Nairobi, roughly 15 km from Gigiri, and enjoy close proximity to Nairobi National Park and several other natural attractions (see Chapter 9).

The best way to find residential accommodation is either by word of mouth or by looking at the noticeboards at the Gigiri Complex, or at the

more popular shopping centres, particularly the Sarit Centre, the Yaya Centre and Village Market. It is also worth looking at the *Nation* and *Standard* newspapers, the monthly *Focus on Property* magazine, and the website [www.theexpatriate.org](http://www.theexpatriate.org), which provides practical information and contacts especially designed for new residents.

## Rental Costs & Conditions

House rents are still quite high in Nairobi, with average rents ranging from Ksh 30-50,000 for an unfurnished two-bedroom apartment or a small cottage, Ksh 50-80,000 for a two- or three-bedroom townhouse, and Ksh 60-140,000 for a three- to five-bedroom house with a large garden in one of the more upmarket suburbs. Most rental agreements involve the signing of a 1-2 year lease, with renewal clauses allowing for a rental fee increase – usually in the region of 10%. UN staffers are encouraged to request a ‘diplomatic clause’ that permits the tenant to terminate the lease with 1-3 months’ notice in the event of a reassignment or transfer. Most landlords request three months’ advance rent, and arriving staff should apply to their agency for a salary advance to meet this requirement.

## Furnished & Serviced Apartments

Nairobi also has a good number of furnished and/or serviced apartments for rent, which are ideal for those on short-term contracts or newcomers who are in the process of finding somewhere more permanent. Most of these apartments are located in two main areas: the Hurlingham/Kilimani area, which has some of the city’s most comfortable serviced apartments, and Westlands, which has several new apartment developments, particularly in the vicinity of Rhapta Road.

Nairobi has a growing number of efficient housing agents that deal with property rentals, most of which also feature a selection of properties on the Internet. The best of these are:

<i>HassConsult</i>	4446914	<a href="http://www.hassconsult.co.ke">www.hassconsult.co.ke</a>
<i>Kenya Valuers</i>	522001/521870	<a href="mailto:harber@iconnect.co.ke">harber@iconnect.co.ke</a>
<i>Lloyd Masika</i>	215900/218112-3	<a href="http://www.realtorsafrika.com">www.realtorsafrika.com</a>
<i>Knight Frank Kenya</i>	4440174/4442167-9	<a href="http://www.knightfrank.com">www.knightfrank.com</a>
<i>Tyson's Ltd.</i>	222011/330331	<a href="mailto:tysons@nbnet.co.ke">tysons@nbnet.co.ke</a>
<i>Villa Care</i>	4448246/4447444	<a href="http://www.villacarekenya.com">www.villacarekenya.com</a>

Among the most comfortable furnished and serviced apartments on offer are:

Mimosa Court	Hurlingham	Mucai Drive	2715755/2715730
Palacina	Kilimani	Kitale Lane	2715517/8
Woodmere	Kilimani	Rose Avenue	2715111/2710228
Yaya Apartments	Kilimani	Argwings Kodhek	2713360
Prime Executive	Kilimani	Tigoni Road	571114/570023
Tipuana Apartments	Brookside	Brookside Close	4447444
Kate's Apartments	Westlands	School Lane	4451124
Andrews Apartments	Westlands	Rhapta Road	4252000
The Gables	Westlands	Rhapta Road	4444630/1
Prime Apartments	Westlands	Rhapta Road	4446938/9
Liza Apartments	Westlands	Rhapta Road	4441355
Njerna Court	Westlands	Raphta Road	4445117/4442576

## House Furnishings

Although houses can sometimes be rented with a cooking stove and/or refrigerator in place, most international staff will have to import their hard furnishings or purchase them locally, which can be an expensive business. However, *staff are entitled to import new kitchen equipment tax-free within their first three months*, and new staff are advised to take advantage of this provision and to import all essential household items other than furniture, a good selection of which can be found locally at reasonable prices. Furniture may also be rented at reasonable prices for temporary use from Kenya Furniture Rental Limited. They may be contacted on telephone 2718789 or e-mail [info@kfr.co.ke](mailto:info@kfr.co.ke)

## Public Utilities

### Water Supplies

The Nairobi City Council water supply has become unreliable in recent years, but many of the major 'estate suburbs', including Gigiri, Runda, Muthaiga and Spring Valley, have relatively regular water supplies, which arrive on set days of the week. House hunters are advised to check on water availability from the council and local boreholes before moving into a new area. Although council tap water is treated with chlorine, residents are strongly advised to boil and filter all water used for drinking, cooking and even

brushing teeth. Water supplies are also available from Nairobi's huge fleets of private water tankers (browsers), which charge about Ksh 2-3,000 for 10,000 litres of freshwater, usually sourced from private boreholes.

## Electricity

The electrical supply in Kenya is the same as in Europe: 220-240 volts at 50 cycles, mostly using 13-amp three-pin square sockets. Although socket adaptors are readily available for appliances that run on different plug formats, those that run on different voltages (eg. US appliances utilising 110 volts) will require a transformer. Without a generator, domestic electricity supplies are prone to periodic blackouts, particularly during and after heavy rains. No rain, on the other hand, can also result in power rationing. When power is reconnected, there is often a sudden voltage surge, which can damage sensitive electrical equipment such as stereo systems and computers. Voltage regulators or 'spike protectors' are highly recommended for such equipment, as are 'fridge guards' for refrigerators.

## Telephones

The service provided by the national telecommunications operator, Telkom Kenya, remains plagued by the poor condition and lack of maintenance of the telephone infrastructure, much of which still dates back to colonial times. However, the recent digitisation of several exchanges has helped to improve the quality of lines in much of Nairobi. The poor condition of Kenya's fixed lines has contributed to one of Africa's fastest growing mobile phone markets, with nearly 2.5 million lines sold in 2000-2003 – more than seven times the number of fixed lines. International calls, which pass through Kenya's four Intelsat stations, are often frustratingly slow to connect, and remain exorbitantly expensive. If you have trouble calling overseas from your home, you should call the International Operator on 0195/6. However, all UN employees working at the UN Gigiri Complex are entitled to discounted rates for telephoning overseas from their offices (see Chapter 6).

## Garbage Collection

The garbage collection services provided by Nairobi City Council have dwindled in recent years to an unreliable weekly service covering only a

handful of residential areas. The vast majority of residents subscribe to one of the city's growing number of private garbage collection services, which collect garbage weekly from residential suburbs (for about Ksh 7,000 per year) or 2-3 times a week from business premises. The main service providers are BINS Nairobi Services (Tel: 533088/532098), Domestic Refuse Disposal Services (711810/723840), and Citibins (545979/555714).

## Payment of Bills

Private tenants are responsible for the payment of electricity, telephone and water bills. The first two are billed monthly, while the latter is billed quarterly. Water bills must be paid at the Sewerage & Water Department at City Hall. Bills for the other utilities can be paid at several locations: electricity at the KPLC Pay Centres in Gigiri or at the Sarit Centre, Stima Plaza in Parklands, Adam's Arcade, the Cooperative Banks at Ukulima House and University Way, and the KCB Building in Jogoo Road; and phone bills at the Telecare Centres on Kenyatta Avenue (opposite Nyayo House), at Westlands Shopping Centre, on Ngong Road just past Dagoretti Corner, and at Nyayo Stadium. People with personal accounts at Standard Chartered Bank can also now pay their electricity bills through their ATM machines. While telephone bills can be paid with personal cheques, electricity bills can only be paid in cash at some centres. Despite major improvements in recent years, all public utilities are occasionally prone to erratic billing or over-charging. However, it is relatively easy to have a bill checked, by calling 32013201 or 243366 for KPLC or 32032000 for Telkom Kenya.

## Transfer of Bills

Transferring a utility bill into a tenant's name can be plagued with bureaucratic hurdles and delays. The transfer of a telephone bill, for example, involves writing a letter signed by both the line's owner and the new renter and presenting it to Telkom together with a cheque for Ksh 2,650, photocopies of the last bill, the renter's ID and PIN form, and a witness with copies of their ID. The transfer of an electricity account requires a letter from the previous account holder, photocopies of your ID and the last paid bill, together with a Ksh 2,500 fee. Water bills generally remain in the name of a landlord or plot owner, although the address can be changed to the P.O. Box of the leasee. There are a handful of

### **Useful Numbers**

Water	225222/224291
Kenya Power & Lighting Co.	32013201/243366/214214/221251 (bill enquiries)
Telkom Kenya	32032000/501426/572288
Nairobi City Council	224281
Telephone operator	900
Directory enquiries	991/992
International operator	0195/0196
Telegrams	990
Wake-Up Calls	900
Time, English	993
Time, Kiswahili	994

private companies that will assist you in transferring bills – see ‘Messenger Services’ in the section below.

## **Domestic Staff**

It is usual for households in Nairobi to have two or more domestic staff, depending upon the size of their family, age of their children, and size of their house and garden. Domestic help can be obtained very easily, although it is strongly recommended that you only hire people with verifiable references and initially only on a trial basis (making this clear to each staff member). The ideal solution is to hire someone who has previously worked for a friend, an acquaintance or a colleague who is transferring elsewhere.

After hiring an employee, it is important to create a clear record of their employment, including their full name, identity card number, date and place of birth, a photocopy of their identity card, and records of their salaries, holidays/leave, and any loans or advances. House staff typically work a 52-hour week over six days, and are entitled to a minimum of 21 working days’ leave with full pay each year, as well as 15 days’ paid sick leave.

It is a wise rule of thumb not to leave money or small valuables lying around your house – particularly when you have new staff on the premises. Although honesty and loyalty cannot be bought, paying and treating your employees fairly is key to the creation of mutual trust and respect. Salaries and employment terms are a personal matter, although as a rule a housekeeper or

children's ayah will expect in the region of Ksh 6,000–10,000 per month, while a gardener or casual worker might expect Ksh 200–300 per day. It is also a common Kenyan practice to give domestic staff a 'Christmas bonus' equivalent to one month's salary at the end of each year.

As well as salaries, employers are expected to furnish staff with uniforms, medicines and medical expenses, and with a housing allowance – usually 15% of the basic salary – in cases where accommodation is not provided. Some employers also provide their domestic staff with food, tea, furnishings and toiletries. While loans are often expected, these are also at the employer's discretion, and it is wise to establish a policy on all expenses early on in a new staffer's employment.

In the era of AIDS, many residents may initially want to have their house staff tested for HIV. However, this is not required by law and many doctors advise against testing house staff for HIV because of the very negligible risk of transmission in a domestic setting. However, it is worth requesting your house staff to have a stool test for salmonella and typhoid and a chest X-ray for tuberculosis, and, if they consent, a blood test for Hepatitis B. For more information about domestic staff health, call the UN Medical Service on 622267/8.

When leaving the country, employers are obliged to give severance pay to their domestic staff, usually at a rate of one month's salary for every year of employment. Details of this and other labour related issues are contained in a booklet of *Guidelines on Employing Domestic Workers* published by the UN Staff Counsellor's Unit. The latest terms and legislation on domestic employment in Kenya can also be sourced from the Provincial Labour Officer based at Nyayo House (Tel: 333511).

## Home Services

### UN-Appointed Services

Nairobi has a host of reliable private home service providers – from electricians, plumbers and gardeners to major building contractors – which can be sourced from the Yellow Pages or by asking longer serving staff members. UNON employs the services of several contractors, including Kinetic Ltd. for electrical work (622500), Diani Flowers and Landscaping for gardening and landscaping services (622640), and Varsani Enterprises for construction projects (622505) who may also be contacted for assistance in identifying service providers.

## Relocation Services

As well as the assistance you will invariably receive from your initial contacts and colleagues at Gigiri, there are a handful of companies that offer ‘one-stop’ relocation services to newcomers, from finding a house to buying furniture and identifying suitable schools for your children. The most established of these is Karibuni Relocation Services, whose proprietor, Jane Barnard, has an excellent reputation for helping international arrivees to find their feet in Nairobi. As well as house and school searches, Jane will take you and your family on weekend ‘Orientation Tours’ during which you are guaranteed answers to just about any Nairobi-related question! Call 4451780/0722-525896 or visit [www.karibuni.co.ke](http://www.karibuni.co.ke) for more information.

A second relocation company that has recently opened its doors is Fastrack Ltd., which is run by two English ladies, Fiona Cheffings and Raila Jones, from offices in Karen. Fastrack offers comprehensive orientation tours, including visits to schools and medical facilities, pre-interviews of domestic staff, and the novel ‘Ladies’ Tour’ of Nairobi’s main shopping areas and other places of interest. Call 884019/884239/0722-373600 or mail [fastrack@africaonline.co.ke](mailto:fastrack@africaonline.co.ke). Also in the South, but also willing to travel, is Langata Link, which has a good reputation for helping expatriates to find houses, staff and schools; call 891314/890480 or visit [www.langatalink.com](http://www.langatalink.com) for more information.

## Messenger Services

Some companies specialise in taking the hassle out of life in Nairobi – which, after a few weeks as a resident, you will discover there is plenty of! Whether paying or transferring utility bills, renewing passports, insurance cover or driving licences, there are countless ‘messenger services’ that invariably involve lengthy queues and mountains of paperwork. Langata Link is one company that offers a convenient and affordable one-stop shop of domestic support services, and has recently brought these services closer to Gigiri through the offices of Exclusive Classic Properties on the top floor of Village Market (520943/521074). Another company that provides similar solutions is Muthaiga Connection at Muthaiga Travel (3750034/36), which provides the more common licensing and renewal services together with courier and secretarial support.

## Shipping & Freight Forwarding

Transami Ltd. and Urgent Cargo have been officially appointed to manage the shipping and freight forwarding of UNON, UNEP and UN-HABITAT employees, and have offices at the UN Gigiri Complex. Transami can be contacted on 624756 and Urgent Cargo on 624320. Other reputable shipping companies which can be found in the Telephone Directory include AGS, Airlink Ltd., Luckam Freight Services and Removals Freight International.

## Shopping

As an increasingly cosmopolitan city, virtually every kind of foodstuff and commodity is available somewhere in Nairobi. As well as all manner of fresh fruits, vegetables, fish, meats and dairy produce at very reasonable prices, a wide variety of tinned and packaged foods, toiletries, cleaning materials and other goods are now manufactured in Nairobi and available from most local shopping centres. There are also a growing number of Western style supermarkets and delicatessens selling all manner of imported produce – although these often cost considerably more.

The main supermarkets, where both local and imported goods can be found at the most reasonable prices, are the Uchumi and Nakumatt chains, which both have stores in town, in Westlands, in Gigiri, and on the Ngong and Langata Roads. The major shopping malls – Sarit Centre and the Mall in Westlands, Yaya Centre in Kilimani, Highridge Shopping Centre in Parklands, Muthaiga Shopping Centre, and the Village Market in Gigiri – have a wide variety of shops selling all kinds of produce. For fabrics and baby products, the best shops are on Biashara Street and Ngara Road in town. Excellent second-hand clothing (often as good as new) and ‘brand rejects’ from Europe can also be found at the many *mitumba* complexes scattered around town, such as Toys at Adam’s Arcade and Kikomba. UN staff can also shop for certain types of duty-free goods at the Commissary on the Lower Concourse at Gigiri (see Chapter 8), or the Duty Free Shop at Village Market.

## Pets

Although there are no quarantine regulations in Kenya, those wishing to bring a pet into the country will need an up-to-date vaccination certificate and a health certificate from the country of origin. Before your pet arrives,

you will also require an import permit from the offices of the Director of Veterinary Services (632231). When your pet arrives at the airport, the Veterinary Officer will inspect all these documents before the animal is released into your custody.

The Kenya Society for the Protection and Care of Animals (KSPCA) runs an animal shelter, which is always looking for good homes for a variety of dogs, cats, rabbits and guinea pigs. All dogs and cats are fully vaccinated and adult female dogs and cats and male cats have been sterilised. For more information, call 882500 or 890806 or visit the KSPCA Headquarters on Langata Road, next to Hillcrest Secondary School. The Kennel Club of Kenya (566067) also has various pedigree dogs looking for good homes. New arrivals are urged not to buy dogs from the street boys in Westlands, as these dogs are often unhealthy (and, in some cases, rabid) and this practice encourages a cruel trade.

## Vaccinations

As rabies epidemics occur from time to time in Kenya, it is essential to have your dogs and cats vaccinated against rabies every year. It is also advisable to vaccinate your dog against distemper and cats against cat flu. These injections can be done at private veterinary clinics in Nairobi (see below).

## Boarding Kennels

There are a variety of good kennel facilities available for pet owners going on leave, including Blue Cross Kennels in Nakuru (051-850245/0722-709195), which provides a door-to-door service for clients in Nairobi, Paws & Claws

### **Veterinary Clinics**

The following are some of the most established and experienced veterinarians in Nairobi:

Karen:	Dr Dieter Rottcher Sercombe Veterinary Clinic	882225/883451 882754/882059
Lavington:	St Austin's Veterinary Clinic Lavington Veterinary Clinic	576979/562750 562658/567041
Ngong Road:	Dr Z.A. Cockar	564287/561061
Rosslyn Estate:	Dr Cockar	520271/520938
Sarit Centre:	Dr Shah	4447958
Westlands:	Mpaka Vet Clinic Chiromo Road Vet Clinic	580043/580070 3745492/3751102

in Karen (883029) and David Long, also in Karen (883294/0722-527910). Blue Cross and Paws & Claws will also help pet owners who wish to export their pets when they leave Kenya. KSPCA will also help you to find a new home for pets, although they may require a donation to help offset costs.

## Animal Health Tips

One of the most common diseases found in dogs in Kenya is tick fever, through which dogs become weak, refuse to eat, and their gums become very pale. Prompt veterinary treatment is very important as an infected dog can die very quickly. Fleas and worms are also very common, and it is advisable to wash your dogs at least once every two weeks and to deworm your pets every three months. Washing also helps to control the ticks that give dogs tick fever.

## Rabies

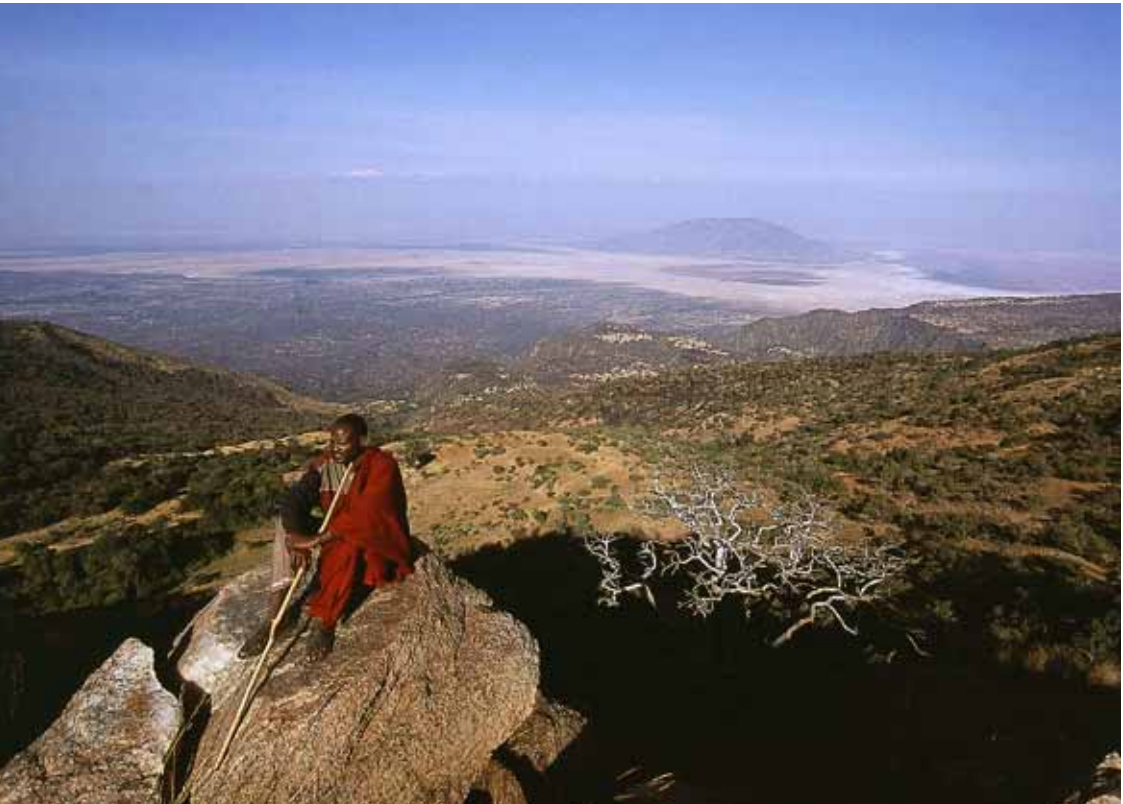
As most people have never seen an animal with rabies, it is good to be aware of the symptoms. Rabies is found mostly in dogs in Kenya. There are two types: the 'dumb' form and the 'furious'. In the dumb form, the infected dog grows quiet and often friendly, and it usually cannot shut its mouth. In the furious form, the dog suffers from mood swings, growing quiet and then turning aggressive and trying to bite. Once the symptoms show, death will occur within a day or two. If you are unfortunate enough to be bitten by a dog that you suspect may have rabies, wash the wound immediately using some spirit or disinfectant and consult your doctor without delay (see Chapter 7).



Walking on Watamu Beach, one of Kenya's most beautiful stretches of sand, on the North Coast.



Guests enjoy breakfast at the Maasai Mara's Migration Camp in a spectacle that harks back to the earliest days of safari – an art-form pioneered in Kenya.



View from the Nguruman escarpment south towards Tanzania's Lake Natron.

# Facilities & Services

## Education

NAIROBI IS HOME TO A WIDE RANGE OF PRIVATE PRE-PRIMARY, PRIMARY AND secondary schools, several of which follow the British and American primary and secondary syllabi (see following page). For international staff posted to Nairobi, it is advisable to enquire about vacancies well in advance of one's arrival, as most of the best private schools are heavily subscribed.

International schools in Kenya generally follow the British school calendar, with three terms running from early September-early December, early January-late March, and late April-mid July. British syllabus schools offer Common Entrance exams at the primary level and GCSEs/'O' and 'A' levels in secondary schools. Three Nairobi high schools – Rosslyn Academy, West Nairobi School and the International School of Kenya (the 'American School') – follow the North American school calendar, the first term of which usually begins in late August. A fourth school, Rift Valley Academy, which is open to boarders in Kijabe, also offers the North American syllabus.

There are several schools maintained by foreign communities, with classes in their native languages. These include the French, Japanese, Dutch, Danish, German, Norwegian and Swedish schools. Nursery schools and kindergartens offer an informal education for children aged three and upwards, usually in the mornings, in many of the more upmarket residential areas. There are also a few special education schools for children with special needs, such as the Accelerated Learning Centre in Kileleshwa. Comprehensive listings of Nairobi's kindergartens and private primary schools are available at [www.theexpatriate.org](http://www.theexpatriate.org), while details of primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, as well as information on courses and registration, are available at [www.kenyaweb.com/education/nairobi.html](http://www.kenyaweb.com/education/nairobi.html).

## Courses on Kenya

There are several fun and informative ways to get to know Kenya, apart from the obvious choice of a safari to one of her wilder areas. The *Kenya Museum*

*Some of Nairobi's leading international primary and secondary schools are:*

### *British Syllabus*

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*Banda School,*

Magadi Road, Langata. P.O. Box 24772-00502, Nairobi. Tel: 891220/891698. Co-educational primary and secondary day school.

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*Braeburn School,*

Gitanga Road. P.O. Box 45112-00100. Tel: 572572. Co-educational primary day school.

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*Braeburn High School,*

Garden Estate Road. P.O. Box 45112-00100. Tel: 861144/802945. Co-educational secondary day & boarding school.

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*Braeside School & High School,*

off Muthangari Road. P.O. Box 25578-00603. Tel: 566001/566956. Primary & secondary day schools.

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*Brookhouse Preparatory School,*

Brookside Drive. P.O. Box 14271-00100. Tel: 891641. Brookside Drive. Co-educational primary school.

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*Brookhouse Senior School,*

Magadi Road. P.O. Box 24987-00502. Tel: 891236/244.

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*Greenacres School,*

Limuru Road. P.O. Box 38888. Tel: 066-76015/41722. Co-educational primary school.

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*Cavina School,*

Elgeyo Marakwet Road. P.O. Box 43090-00100. Tel: 566011. Co-educational pre-primary (3-5 years) and primary (6-13 years).

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*Hillcrest Primary & Secondary Schools,*

Langata Road. P.O. Box 24819-00502. Tel: 883913-5 (primary), 882222/4448 (secondary). Co-educational day & boarding schools.

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*Kenton College,*

Kileleshwa. P.O. Box 30017-00100. Tel: 560260. Co-educational primary school.

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*Nairobi Academy,*

Langata Road. P.O. Box 24817-00502. Tel: 891156/0983. Co-educational primary & secondary day school.

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*Rusinga School,*

Gitanga Road. P.O. Box 25088-00603. Tel: 566783/4323. Co-educational kindergarten, primary & secondary schools.

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*St. Austin's Academy,*

Lavington. P.O. Box 25138-00100. Tel: 4348195/9272. Primary & secondary day school.

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### *American Syllabus*

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*Rift Valley Academy,*

Kijabe. P.O. Box 80, Kijabe. Tel: 066-64646. Kindergarten, elementary and high school (Grades 1-12), day & boarding.

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*Rosslyn Academy,*

Limuru Road. P.O. Box 14146-00800. Tel: 520039/702. Co-educational day school, Grades 1-12.

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*The International School of Kenya,*

Peponi Road. P.O. Box 14103-00800. Tel: 582421/0596. Co-educational day school, Grades 1-12 & International Baccalaureat.

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*West Nairobi School,*

Karen. P.O. Box 44456-00100. Tel: 884905-6. Co-educational kindergarten & elementary day school (Grades 1-8).

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*Society* offers an annual ‘Know Kenya Course’, which usually runs for eight days in late October or early November. The course is a perfect way for newcomers to learn about the country’s fascinating history, geography, ethnography and culture through a rich variety of lectures, films and tours of sites around Nairobi. The Museum Society also offers day trips to city sights such as the Railway Museum and Arboretum, and a monthly ‘Weekend Outing’ to prehistoric sites and areas of natural beauty outside Nairobi. For more details on all these programmes, call the museum on 3742131/3743808 or visit [www.kenyamuseumsociety.org](http://www.kenyamuseumsociety.org).

## **Banking**

UN employees and their family members are entitled to open personal accounts with the United Nations Federal Credit Union, which offers competitive banking terms and has a permanent liaison office on the Lower Concourse at the UN Gigiri Complex. The branch also has an ATM offering US dollars to holders of major credit cards. Visit [www.unfcu.com](http://www.unfcu.com) for more information.

Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) is the officially appointed locally based bank at the UN Gigiri Complex, and offers banking services to all UN staff members, provided that they maintain a minimum balance of Ksh 10,000 in their accounts. Accounts in US dollars are also available at KCB’s UN Gigiri Complex branch, which is based on the Lower Concourse.

Other convenient local banks include Barclays Bank of Kenya, which has a Prestige Centre for its Prestige Plus account holders at the Warwick Centre, and the Commercial Bank of Africa (CBA), which has branches at ICRAF and the Village Market. Barclays and Standard Chartered also have ATMs at the Village Market.

Most of the major banks are open from 8am to 3pm from Monday to Friday, and from 8am to 11am on Saturdays. KCB at the UN Gigiri Complex offers a special ‘late service’ until 4pm on weekdays, while CBA has two city branches that stay open until 8pm. Barclays, National Bank of Kenya and Transnational Bank all have branches in the International Arrivals hall at JKIA, which offer 24-hour money changing services seven days a week.

While only a few shops in Nairobi accept personal cheques, most of the larger shops, supermarkets, hotels and restaurants accept major credit cards such as Visa, American Express and Mastercard. Cards linked to overseas accounts can also be used to withdraw local currency at the ATMs of the

major local banks. A good listing of local banks and their contact details can be found at [www.theexpatriate.org](http://www.theexpatriate.org).

## Insurance

Insurance is big business in Nairobi, and as such attracts its fair share of disreputable operators. While the only form of insurance that is compulsory to UN staffers is a private vehicle policy, the pitfalls of life in Kenya make it wise to consider other forms of personal and property coverage. Because of the high number of vehicle thefts in Kenya, many insurance companies encourage their customers to also insure their homes, their domestic staff and themselves with them. However, it is worth shopping around as some firms can negotiate a better deal with their reinsurers when providing insurance to expatriates or UN staff. It is also well worth reading the fine print of any policy you do purchase as some companies are notorious for escaping from claims because a minor condition was not met or specific coverage was excluded from a policy.

Many UN staff have found it cheaper to insure their vehicles overseas, although this still necessitates the purchase of a third-party policy in Kenya. Otherwise, it makes sense to buy a comprehensive policy for your vehicle, or at least to purchase a third-party policy that covers fire and theft (distinct in Kenya from basic third-party coverage). Comprehensive coverage usually

*Some of the most reputable and reliable insurance companies operating in Nairobi are:*

ALICO Kenya	711242
Jubilee Insurance	341030/340343
Kenindia Assurance	333100/333116
Madison Insurance	721970-1/717110
Pan Africa Insurance	247600/247217
UAP Provincial Insurance	712175/722600
Lion of Kenya	2710400
Insurance Company of East Africa (ICEA)	221652/340365
Royal Insurance	2712620
Kenyan Alliance Insurance	241626/336500

*UNON's official insurance brokerage is Aon Minet Insurance Brokers (710053/717240).*

includes damage to your vehicle caused by you or another party, liability for another party's injuries, and a limited amount of medical coverage for your own passengers.

A standard domestic insurance package will usually cover your building and its contents against theft, fire, overflowing water-tanks, storm damage and other natural disasters. It will also provide coverage for domestic staff against injuries at work and your liability towards other people for accidents on the premises. In addition to the personal medical coverage provided by your agency (see Chapter 7), employees doing a lot of travelling should also explore options for medical evacuation coverage, which will cover the costs if you or one of your family has to be airlifted to Nairobi – a very real possibility in the event of a rural accident – but is not covered in most MIP and Van Breda policies. The famous 'Flying Doctors' at AMREF (Tel: 315454-5) offer a very competitively priced evacuation policy, covering flights within 500 km of Nairobi, for Ksh 1,500 per person per year.

## Transportation

Despite Kenya's 2,800 kilometres of narrow-gauge railway, roads remain the country's major means of transport – and, for many areas, the only public or cargo transportation. While a few areas are still inaccessible by road, there are at least 64,000 km of classified public roads in Kenya, and although only 8,800 km of these are tarmac, major donor funds have recently gone into accelerating the tarmacing of major highways. The key Nairobi-Mombasa highway, until recently an oft-cited barometer of the country's economic decline, has recently seen major upgrading, with the 500 km 'coast run' now taking between 4-6 hours (depending on traffic, roadworks and weather conditions).

## Travel in Nairobi

The Kenyan capital has no metro or overland train service, other than the main rail line that runs through the city en route to Mombasa or Kisumu. All public transport in Nairobi is by public buses (Kenya Bus), large minibuses (Metro Shuttles), and the ubiquitous *matatus* that ply hundreds of routes throughout the city. A major new campaign by the Kenyan Government has helped to instil a greater sense of safety on Kenya's roads, including the mandatory use of seatbelts and speed governors by all *matatus*. Despite this,

however, the poor condition of roads and famously erratic driving standards continue to make transport by *matatu* a dangerous and unpredictable business.

Before you have bought your own car, you should try to travel in reputable taxis or to hire a car from a well-established car hire company. A few examples are given below.

## Taxis

Taxis come in all shapes and sizes: from smart new saloons and black London cabs to battered old vehicles that often don't make it to their destinations. People do not tend to hail taxis from the side of the road, but catch them either from taxi bays at large hotels or other landmarks, or by calling them over the phone. Rates vary widely, and it is important to agree the fare before setting off; few taxis have fare meters. The best-known local taxi companies are Jatco and Kenatco, although several new companies have sprung up in recent years offering reliable and punctual services. The nearest reliable taxi service to the UN Gigiri Complex is JIMCab, which is based at the Warwick Centre.

### *Some of the better taxi firms in Nairobi are:*

Amco Taxis	4446376
Dial-a-Cab	243244
Kenatco	225123/230771
Jatco	4446096/575369
JIMCab	521205/522565/0733-735499/0722-711001
Buzz-a-Cab	828585-6/0734-828585/0721-349590
Hilltop Radio Taxis	723218/723270

### *Some recommended car hire firms in Nairobi are:*

Avis	336704/333082
Budget	223072/330169
Car Hire Services	3743270-2
Chequered Flag	4443354/443806
Express Travel	334722-7
Hertz	331973-4
Payless	228379/227304

## Hire Cars

Only by hiring cars from a reputable and established firm will you be sure that the vehicle has been well maintained and is in good running condition, and that you have the right insurance cover. Car hire is quite expensive in Nairobi, ranging from Ksh 4,000 for a middle-range saloon car to Ksh 10,000 for a 4X4 vehicle, although you can usually negotiate discounts for longer term hire. Bunson Travel, which has offices at the UN Gigiri Complex & Village Market (Tel: 624988 & 524757 respectively), is the franchise holder for Avis Kenya, which offers a variety of new vehicles and attractive long-term deals.

## UN Transport Service

The UNON operated Staff Transport Service runs a special fleet of buses for local employees, which offers transport to and from a variety of designated drop-off points at set times of the day. The service is available only to locally recruited UN General Services Staff members and National Officers from all agencies with a minimum three months' contract, but not to international staff, consultants, interns or employees' relatives. All prospective users must first register with UNON at Room W-214.

## Railways

The narrow-gauge railway line to Mombasa, which provides a slow and sedate overnight rail journey remains one of the safest ways of reaching the coast. Kenya Railways operates a total network of 2,700 kilometres, consisting of the main lines from Mombasa to Kisumu and from Nakuru to Malaba. Branch lines are Nairobi-Thika-Kiganjo-Nanyuki, Voi-Taveta, Konza-Kajiado-Magadi, Gilgil-Ol Kalou-Nyahururu, Rongai-Solai, Leseru-Kitale, and Kisumu-Butere.

## Air Travel

Air travel is statistically a very safe means of travel in Kenya, with the main domestic airlines – Kenya Airways, Regional Air and Airkenya – all running well maintained fleets of modern and well-maintained older aircraft. Most domestic flights leave from Wilson Airport, except for Kenya Airways and Regional Air's Mombasa services, which fly from the Jomo Kenyatta

International Airport. There are approximately 230 airstrips around Kenya, including well-maintained dirt strips in most of the national parks and reserves. More information and tickets are available from Bunson Travel, which has a dedicated office at Gigiri (624988), or from one of the major Nairobi travel agencies (see Chapter 10).

## Communications

The liberalisation of Kenya's telecommunications sector began in 1998 with the dissolution of the old Kenya Posts and Telecommunications Company. However, despite the creation of several digital exchanges and the beginnings of a new customer-oriented business ethic, acquiring and running a fixed telephone line in Kenya remains fraught with problems. Today, Nairobians who need to get in touch quickly tend to go the mobile route, with efficient services offered by the country's first two mobile network operators, Safaricom and Kencell, and a third, led by Econet of Zimbabwe, due to roll out in 2004.

Most UN staffers, however, can remain in blissful ignorance of the communications hurdles that surround them. The UN is blessed with its own digital exchange at the UN Gigiri Complex, which – contrary to what some employees may initially believe – is one of the best in the country. All UN employees with their own telephone extension located at the Gigiri Complex are also entitled to greatly discounted rates for telephoning overseas. Calls cost about \$0.19 a minute to Europe and the United States, and \$0.47 a minute to anywhere else in the world.

For residential services, most Nairobians will want to get a working fixed line, if only to escape the still-overpriced mobile charges. Despite the poor maintenance and ancient equipment that still plagues many fixed line owners, in Nairobi the future is looking brighter. As well as the arrival of a second national operator due to join Telkom Kenya in 2005, a number of 'local loop operators' are also due in town, providing new exchanges and wireless 'loops' for the next generation of fixed line users. Best of all, the competition in the fixed line and mobile sectors is destined to dramatically lower the prices of both.

Kenya's two mobile network operators, Safaricom and Kencell, have so far registered 2 million and 1 million users respectively, and have rapidly improved their services in recent years, heralding a new era of mobile Internet access and extensive international roaming, as well as a security network to bar stolen phones. The two networks already cover most of the population

belt between Mombasa and Kisumu, including all the major towns, highways and tourist sites. Both companies offer credit ‘top ups’ through scratchcards of different values, or a more competitively priced prepaid service.

## Email & Internet

Internet use has also mushroomed in recent years, with more than 30,000 connections (including 1,200 corporate connections on LANs and WANs) and at least 150,000 regular users. The increase in the uptake of the Internet is largely due to the arrival of cyber cafes in all of Kenya’s major towns, and the licensing of some 78 Internet Service Providers (although only 18 are active to date). Employees at the UN Gigiri Complex are fortunate to have access to 24/7 Internet and email access through a reliable network of dedicated digital lines.

Internet access is poised to expand rapidly throughout Kenya, with a new government that has shown a strong commitment to information communication technology development as well as introducing attractive tax breaks for computer products. The arrival of a second national telephone operator and the expiry of the exclusivity period granted to Kenya’s sole internet backbone, JambaNet, will also both serve to bring down prices in the Internet arena.

Computer users can also connect to the Internet through either of the two mobile networks to send and receive emails on WAP-enabled mobile phones. Users go through an internet service provider connected to the mobile network to send and receive email or browse at a rate lower than the standard call rate within the network. The coming years will also see the introduction of wireless networks through public ‘hotspots’ in Nairobi (similar to those in the UK and US), where users will be able to go online directly from wireless enabled laptops.

### *The following are the largest and most efficient ISPs in Kenya:*

Access Kenya	3749599	info@accesskenya.com
Africa Online	243775	info@africanonline.co.ke
Inter Connect	243775	info@iconnect.co.ke
KenyaWeb	245630	info@kenyaWeb.com
Swift Global	534767	sales@swiftkenya.com
UUNet	2715700	info@uunet.co.ke
Wananchi Online	313985	sales@wananchi.com

For those who want email access at home, a number ISPs can be recommended – although unlimited email and Internet access remains more expensive here than in the West.

## National Postal Services

Kenya's postal services have become much more efficient and reliable in recent years, particularly as regards the security of mail travelling into and around the country. However, as in most countries, it is still not advisable to send cash or anything valuable by ordinary post. Apart from the speedpost and courier services, post is not delivered directly to people's homes, but to personal or corporate boxes at the major post offices.

Nairobi's main post office is at Telposta Towers on Kenyatta Avenue, with other major post offices at Haile Selassie Avenue, Tom Mboya Street, Ngara Road, Enterprise Road, Westlands, Yaya Centre, Adams Arcade, Nyayo Stadium, Lavington, Village Market, Muthaiga, Karen, Hardy Estate Langata, and the International Airport. There is also a sub post office at the UN Gigiri Complex. Hours of service are 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

The Postal Corporation of Kenya (Posta) runs efficient daily airmail services, delivering letters to Europe in 3–4 days and the United States in 6–7 days. There are also reliable internal airmail services between Nairobi and Kenya's other major towns. Surface mail is less reliable, taking up to 3 months from Europe depending on shipping traffic. For urgent mail, Posta's Expedited Mail Service (EMS) offers next-day delivery in the UK and delivery within 3 days in the US, at much more competitive prices than the courier companies (Ksh 1,650 for 0.5kg or Ksh 2,500 for 1.5kg). Posta also offers a Post Cargo service for bulky mail, and several different types of secure national and regional money order services. For more information, call 243434 or visit [www.posta.co.ke](http://www.posta.co.ke).

## UN Postal Services

UN employees can use the UNON operated Pouch Service to send official mail and small personal mail to most major UN agencies and regional offices worldwide. As well as all UNEP regional offices, pouches are sent to most UNDP African field offices once a fortnight. There is a twice-weekly pouch service to UN Headquarters in New York and the UN Office in Geneva every Wednesday and Friday, which takes five days and three days respectively. This is a particularly convenient and secure means of sending cheques to the UN Federal Credit Union in New York.

All bulk mail sent in boxes or cartons for dispatch by pouch should be accompanied by an authorisation form or a covering letter indicating the contents and the budget line to be charged. No boxes or cartons weighing more than 20 kilogrammes can be sent by pouch. For more details, contact the UNON Mail and Pouch Unit on 622549.

## Courier Services

DHL is the officially appointed courier service at the UN Gigiri Complex, and offers very competitive rates to UN employees from its offices inside the Gigiri Post Office. Those wishing to use this service should call the DHL office directly on 622580 or 622579 for details of costs and schedules.

## The Media

The Kenyan media is the most diverse in East Africa, with a large middle class providing a base for substantial advertising revenue. The liberalisation of broadcasting has had a profound effect in Nairobi, with the number of radio and television stations increasing in recent years to 48 and eight respectively, after three decades of almost exclusive domination by the state-run Kenya Broadcasting Corporation. The most popular television stations are KTN, Nation and Metro, while popular radio stations include Nation (96.4 FM), Kiss (100 FM) and Capital (98.4 FM). The local *Daily Nation*, *East African Standard*, *Taifa Leo* and *East African* newspapers are avidly read by news hungry Kenyans, and the climate of media freedom has vastly improved in recent years. FM relays of the BBC World Service are also on the air in Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu at 93.7 FM, and the Voice of America has a relay in Nairobi (107.5 FM).

As well as the main terrestrial television stations, the South African satellite provider MultiChoice will hook you up with some 60 channels, including comprehensive news, sports, movie and lifestyle coverage, for a fee of approximately Ksh 5,000 per month. For more information, call MultiChoice Kenya on 4449000, or visit their offices behind the Sarit Centre. There are also a huge number of video libraries, located in most of the main shopping centres around town, renting out videos of widely differing quality for Ksh 50–80 per tape and DVDs for around Ksh 100 each. For short-stayers, televisions and VCRs can be rented from Audio Video Rentals in Soin Arcade, Westlands, and Television Sales & Rentals, Bruce House, Kaunda Street.



Tourists marvel at an old bull elephant on the plains of the Maasai Mara – scene of one of the greatest concentrations of wild animals on the planet.



Maasai morans take part in one of the colourful initiation rites that characterise their traditional pastoralist culture.



A female cheetah takes a break from her hunting in the Maasai Mara.

# Staying Healthy in Kenya

## Health & Hygiene Conditions

BECAUSE OF NAIROBI'S HIGH ALTITUDE, RESIDENTS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO SUCH A HIGH risk of many of the tropical diseases that afflict other African cities. However, outbreaks of cholera, typhoid and other bacterial infections are not uncommon here, particularly in the overcrowded slum areas, where water and sanitation infrastructure are poor or non-existent and diseases often flourish as a result. However, the altitude does have some setbacks: it can make people feel excessively tired when they arrive (a phenomenon that usually wears off after 2-3 weeks), and Nairobi's location near the equator also increases the risk of sunburn, particularly for those with pale or sensitive skin. The use of hats and sunscreen is recommended, particularly for young children. Foods should be well cooked, and salads washed thoroughly in boiled water. News of the latest health threats and regularly updated travel health advisories can be obtained from the UN Medical Service.

## Water Treatment

Although Nairobi City Council does treat its water supplies with chlorine, they are not recommended to drink untreated. Either drink bottled water or ensure that all your drinking water is filtered and boiled for at least 10-15 minutes. On safari, it is recommended to bring bottled water or to use Hydroclonazone purification tablets. To be safe, Nairobi residents should also use boiled water for brushing teeth, and should only use ice made from boiled or treated water. Some of Nairobi's suburbs, such as Karen, Langata and Tigoni, have recorded high levels of fluoride in their borehole water, which can lead to the permanent discolouration of teeth.

## Malaria

As a disease that kills over 1 million Africans each year, the risk of malaria must always be taken seriously. Although Nairobi is generally considered to be malaria free, the disease is endemic in most parts of the country – with the

exceptions of Lake Naivasha, Mount Kenya and the Aberdares. The anopheles mosquitoes that carry malaria are common at the coast, in Baringo and in most of the national parks. These mosquitoes bite mainly at dusk and during the night, so the most important guards against malaria are to spray yourself with a good repellent (preferably one containing DEET), to wear trousers, socks and long-sleeved shirts, and to sleep under a treated mosquito net.

Malaria generally causes symptoms such as headaches, aching limbs, fever and chills 10 days to two weeks after being infected (although these time-limits are not set in stone). If you have travelled to a malarial area and you subsequently get a fever, you should consult a doctor *immediately* – even if you have been taking a prophylaxis.

With the rising resistance of some malaria strains to traditional antimalarial drugs, you will invariably encounter conflicting opinions about malaria prophylaxis. The UN Medical Service recommends the traditional combination of chloroquine and paludrine together with the newer mefloquin (Lariam), although there remain many more options available. What is important is to find a balance between effective medicines and potential negative side-effects. The UN Medical Service will be very happy to advise staff on what prophylaxis might best suit them and their dependents. Updated information on malaria and antimalarial drugs is also available on the WHO website at [www.who.int](http://www.who.int).

## Dog Bites

Although there has been little rabies in Nairobi, the disease is endemic in Kenya. If you are bitten by a dog or another animal that could be infected (such as cats and monkeys), it is important to immediately scrub the wound with soap, apply an antiseptic, and consult your doctor. If it is possible to impound the animal, it will also help in determining their rabies status. Even if you have been vaccinated against rabies, you will still require a short course of anti-rabies inoculations. Dog owners are strongly advised to keep their annual rabies vaccinations up to date.

## HIV/AIDS

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS has grown rapidly in Kenya in recent years, with Nairobi as one of the principal ‘hotspots’ of infection. Comprehensive information on the risks of contracting the virus and means of protecting

against it is available, in total confidence, from the UN Joint Medical Service on the ground floor of F-Block. As well as providing free HIV counselling and testing, the UN Medical Service also facilitates access for HIV-positive staff to a ‘one-stop clinic’ at the Aga Khan Hospital, which provides free anti-retroviral drugs, personal counselling, and medical and dietary advice to employees of subscribing agencies. For more information, please contact the UN Medical Service, in complete confidence and without fear of discrimination, on 622267. You may also visit the UN website dedicated to assisting UN employees in learning more about HIV/AIDS: <http://unworkplace.unaids.org/>. The UN community in Kenya also has a Learning Team established to improve staff knowledge on HIV/AIDS. Call 624082 for more information.

Nairobi has also seen the arrival of hundreds of Voluntary Counselling & Testing (VCT) centres around the city in recent years.

*VCT centres outside the UN Gigiri Complex include:*

AMREF Clinic, Wilson Airport	501301
Amani Centre, Mbagathi Way	602672
KEMRI	2725016.

## Medical Services in Nairobi

Nairobi is designated as a UN evacuation centre for surrounding countries, and the city has some top-class private hospitals and medical facilities offering a wide range of specialist treatment, including state-of-the-art scanning and MRI technology and excellent dental and ophthalmic services. As most specialist medical practitioners will only accept patients referred to them by a general practitioner or a medical clinic, the UN Medical Service suggests that all newly arrived employees select a doctor on the recommendation of their colleagues, embassy or neighbours. A list of some of the excellent physicians and dentists practicing in Nairobi can be obtained from the UN Medical Service.

## The UN Medical Service

Operated under the auspices of the United Nations Office at Nairobi, the UN Medical Service offers a comprehensive variety of medical services to all UN employees, including emergency treatments and evacuations, vaccinations

and travel medicine, health advice, cancer detection tests, AIDS awareness, voluntary HIV counselling and testing, and access to free anti-retroviral treatment. There is also a walk-in medical clinic and a doctor available by appointment, although all new staff are advised to register with a private physician as soon as possible. Although the UN Medical Service cannot see employees' dependents, it is happy to provide details of treatments, fees and the contacts of some excellent GPs in Nairobi. For more information, call the head of the UN Medical Service on 622267/8.

UNON also operates a designated Staff Stress Management Counsellor, who can be contacted by staff members from all agencies for all types of psychological needs, from work-related stress to trauma counselling after a robbery or carjacking experience. Please call 624703 in complete confidence.

## Medical Insurance

Most internationally recruited staff are provided with medical insurance through the Van Breda Insurance Company in Belgium, which provides for the reimbursement of medical, hospital and dental treatment costs of up to \$250,000 per calendar year. More information can be found at [www.vanbreda.be](http://www.vanbreda.be). Locally recruited staff are usually on the UN's in-house Medical Insurance Plan (MIP), which is operated from UN Headquarters in New York. Both Van Breda and MIP offer full refunds for hospital care, as well as 80% of the fees incurred in visiting a chiropractor, physiotherapist or psychologist, upon presentation of a doctor's referral letter. For details of the provisions of your personal medical plan, you should contact your agency's Human Resources Section.

### *Staff and dependants on the MIP have credit facilities at the following Nairobi hospitals:*

The Aga Khan Hospital, Parklands	Tel: 3740000/3742501/3742531
The Nairobi Hospital	Tel: 2722160/2714400/352101
Mater Misericordiae Hospital	Tel: 531199
Metropolitan Hospital, Buru Buru	Tel: 784432/541215
Gertrude's Garden Children's Hospital, Muthaiga	Tel: 3763474-6.

*Bills from GPs, private doctors, X-ray centres and laboratories should be settled directly and reimbursement then claimed from MIP.*

## Emergencies

In the case of an emergency, you should not delay treatment by trying to contact a doctor. The two leading private hospitals in Nairobi – Aga Khan and Nairobi Hospital – both have well equipped and professionally staffed 24-hour casualty departments. As there is no public ambulance service, it is advisable to subscribe to a private road and air evacuation service such as AAR (2715319) or AMREF (315454-5), whose ‘Flying Doctors’ offer a very competitively priced nationwide evacuation policy. Domestic security providers will also assist you to reach hospital quickly in the event of a life-threatening emergency.

## Vaccinations

Although yellow fever is still the only vaccination officially required for entry into Kenya, it is advisable to keep all of the following immunisations up to date:

<i>Vaccine</i>	<i>Period of Validity</i>
Polio	10 years
Tetanus	10 years
Diphtheria	10 years
Yellow fever	10 years
Hepatitis A	10 years
Hepatitis B	10 years
Typhoid	3 years
Meningitis A & C	3 years.



The bright new Gigiri Recreation Centre, home to an array of modern sporting facilities as well as a full-size football and rugby pitch.

The smart new lobby of the Norfolk Hotel, which recently celebrated its 100th birthday.



# Working at Gigiri

## The Working Environment

THE UNITED NATIONS GIGIRI COMPLEX IS A THOROUGHLY MULTI-CULTURAL environment, with dozens of nationalities, races and religions all living and working in easy harmony. Although different agencies have different working terms and conditions, there are some basic conditions that exist throughout the complex. All the main agencies require their employees to work for four days a week between the hours of 8am and 4.30pm, with a 45-minute lunch break to be taken between 12pm and 2pm, while on Fridays, working hours are 8am-2.30pm with a 30-minute lunch break. Whilst there is no official dress code at the UN Gigiri Complex, staff are expected to dress in a decent and sensitive manner as befits their standing as international civil servants.

Contracts and terms of service are arranged individually with each employee through their agency's Human Resources Section. For employees of UNEP, UN-HABITAT and UNON, issues of protocol – visas, PIN cards, vehicle registration, etc. – are handled by UNON's Host Country Relations Unit (Room W-215), while UNICEF and UNDP staff have such issues dealt with by their Protocol Offices (Rooms F-213 and Q-220 respectively). Details on these issues are contained in this chapter.

## Annual Leave & Public Holidays

Both local and international staff with fixed term contract in all the UN agencies (including those on temporary fixed term contracts) are entitled to two-and-a-half days of annual leave in each calendar month, or 30 days per annum. Different UN agencies have different policies relating to other leave entitlements. For example UNICEF offers new fathers eight weeks paternity leave on a flexible basis whilst UN employees are permitted seven days of uncertified sick leave per year as their paternity leave entitlement. There are policies governing durations of full-pay and half-pay certified sick leave which depend upon the nature of contract and duration of

service. Allocations for study leave are up to the discretion of individual agencies, and in accordance with relevant policies.

All of the UN agencies agree each year upon the UN entitlement of 10 official holidays to be taken that year. In addition to the General Assembly mandated celebration of principal Christian and Muslim days, the UN normally attempts to observe the majority of official Kenyan public holidays, including the commemoration of important national milestones. When these holidays fall on a Sunday, the following Monday is usually observed as the official holiday – although, if they are not selected by the UN, the day on which they fall is considered to be a normal working day.

<i>Usually observed holidays</i>	
1st January: New Year's Day	1st June: Madaraka Day
February/March: Idd el Fitr*	20th October: Kenyatta Day
March/April: Good Friday*	November: Idd el Adha*
March/April: Easter Monday*	12th December: Jamhuri Day
1st May: Labour Day	25th December: Christmas Day

*\* Actual day varies each year.*

## Services at the UN Gigiri Complex

### Business Services

In addition to its extensive meeting and conference facilities, the UN Gigiri Complex has a fully equipped Business Centre and Internet Cafe on the Lower Concourse, which provide extensive business and secretarial services, including photocopying, telephone and fax facilities, mobile phones, and the rental of PCs, projectors, fax machines and photocopiers. The Internet Cafe offers Internet access in total privacy behind the Delegates' Lounge.

### Catering Services

Staff and visitors to the UN Complex have access to a wide range of catering options, from delicious international cuisine at the restaurant in the Central Concourse (622460/3) to wholesome sandwiches and snacks at the Old

Cafeteria next to Block G (622496). A third caterer (623840) runs coffee stations throughout the complex, together with a bar in Block W and a tented 'restaurant' specialising in African dishes between Blocks T and U. All three caterers also provide catering for official functions and private parties.

## Shopping

As well as a fully stocked Commissary (see 'Duty-Free Liquor'), there is also a United Nations Gift Centre on the Lower Concourse, with a wide range of souvenirs and gift items ideal for those rushing to keep personal appointments. The Gift Shop is open from 8.30am to 5pm on all weekdays. A UNICEF GCO Shop also operates within the same period.

## Formalities & Privileges

### Privileges for International Staff

International professional staff with fixed-term contracts may be eligible for UN international entitlements, including diplomatic and duty-free privileges depending on the type and duration of contract (It is wise to confirm details of these entitlements before you travel, by contacting the protocol office of your agency). However, duty-free applications cannot be processed before a Notification of Arrival form is submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, either by UNON's Host Country Relations Unit or UNICEF's or UNDP's Protocol Offices. New staff are encouraged to introduce themselves to HCRU or their Protocol Office as soon as they report on duty so that they may be included in the list of duty-free privileged staff with a minimum of delay.

### Initial Formalities

As soon as they arrive, new staff members are required to complete a Notification of Arrival form to submit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. When this form is approved, the Ministry will issue the new employee with a Diplomatic Identity Card, which will be used for all official identification purposes, including the renewal of Kenyan driving licences. After the Notification is approved, the UN can apply for a Work Permit Exemption for the new employee and a Re-entry Pass to enable them to leave and re-enter Kenya freely during the period of their contract. Dependent children between

the ages of 18 and 21 must also complete a Notification of Arrival before they can be issued with Diplomatic Identity Cards.

## Shipments of Personal Effects

All personal effects and household goods should be shipped or sent by airfreight directly to one's agency, well in advance of your employment start date. It is prohibited to include any wildlife species or the products of species considered threatened or endangered by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, while agricultural produce and domestic pets are only permitted with a special import permit. Firearms can only be imported with an import permit from the Central Firearms Bureau, although the UN strongly advises against the importation of firearms. Staff members who are in doubt as to whether any items in their possession could be restricted should consult their nearest Kenyan Embassy or High Commission.

It is recommended that essential household items are bought as accompanied baggage by air, as shipping or airfreight can take a long time and frequently entail delays. Storage costs can be very high, and new staffers are advised to fax copies of their Bill of Lading/Airway Bill, invoices and an itemised inventory of their shipping consignment to the HCRU or protocol office at least two weeks before their arrival, to enable them to obtain the necessary customs exemptions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## Duty Free Imports

International staffers are entitled to import most household goods duty-free into Kenya, although this permission does not extend to permanent fixtures such as fitted kitchens or wall units. New staff members are exempt from paying duty on only one of each major electrical appliance, such as refrigerators, cookers, washing machines, computers, televisions, stereo systems, DVD players, video cameras and radios. International staff can also claim a refund for VAT paid on locally manufactured furniture and other household effects.

## Entry Visa Requirements

Nationals of Commonwealth countries and other countries with bilateral visa agreements with the Government of Kenya will be issued with Kenyan visas upon arrival at Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport. The visa fee will

be refunded by your agency. Nationals of countries with which Kenya does not share reciprocal visa agreements must apply for a visa through the Kenyan embassy in their country or through UNON, UNICEF or UNDP. Nationals from these countries with UN Laissez Passers or diplomatic passports do not have to apply for visas ahead of their arrival.

## PIN Cards/Numbers

New staff members are required to apply for a PIN (Personal Identification Number) Card from the Income Tax Department as soon as they arrive in Kenya. This application will be submitted on your behalf by the HCRU or your agency's Protocol Office. Although international staff are generally exempt from paying income tax in Kenya, they must still have a PIN number, which is necessary for obtaining insurance, registering vehicles and clearing duty-free goods. Staff members' spouses must also apply for their own PIN numbers.

## Importation of Vehicles

Approval for the importation of personal vehicles can be a lengthy process, and new employees are advised to ensure that all necessary documents – Bill of Lading/Airway Bill and invoices – have been processed and submitted to HCRU or their Protocol Office before their vehicle arrives in Kenya. Please note that different UN agencies have different policies relating to duty free entitlements. For example, international staff joining UNEP, HABITAT or UNON with a spouse who will also reside in Kenya are entitled to two duty-free cars, while staff joining UNICEF or UNDP are entitled to one duty-free car.

Bearing in mind the lengthy processes of importing and selling duty-free vehicles, staff on contracts of less than one year are advised against personally importing a vehicle. One straightforward option is to purchase a duty-free car from a UN staff member who is leaving the country, while it is also possible to buy a duty-free car from certain local dealers. Your protocol office or HCRU can provide more information and assistance with the paperwork involved in such purchases.

Duty-free cars may be resold, either to a person with similar diplomatic privileges or on the local market. In the latter case, it will fall to the owner to pay the duty and other relevant taxes. Prior approval must first be obtained

from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before any vehicle can be sold or disposed of. Selling cars is a lengthy process in Kenya and should be commenced at least two months before the termination of a contract. Red number plates issued by UN agencies must be removed from the vehicle and returned to the issuing office before one departs from their duty station.

## Vehicle Registration and Licensing

All vehicles, new or second-hand, must be registered in the name of the staff member or his/her spouse. Once a PRO1B form for the importation or purchase of a vehicle has been approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, HCRU or your agency's Protocol Office will help you to register the vehicle and to apply for a road licence. Road licences are free of charge for vehicles bearing red number plates, or priced between Ksh 1,250 and Ksh 15,000 according to engine size for other vehicles, and are valid for a period of one year.

New staff members are advised that all privately owned vehicles, whether UN plated or not, must possess a valid road licence and a minimum of third-party insurance coverage. Drivers should retain a copy of their registration logbook inside the vehicle, while keeping the original (required only when exiting Kenyan borders) in a secure location. Under Kenyan law, all drivers must carry a valid Kenyan or international driver's licence at all times.

## Vehicle Insurance

With the high incidence of vehicle theft and accidents in Kenya, the UN strongly recommends that all staff members purchase comprehensive insurance coverage for their vehicles. A regular third party insurance policy in Kenya does *not* cover the fire or theft of a vehicle. Although third party insurance is sufficient for the purpose of vehicle registration and road licence renewal, staff are urged to ensure that their duty-free vehicles are insured for all risks and at the full market value, inclusive of duty and VAT. It is against Kenyan law to drive a car without insurance coverage.

Among the most reliable local insurance companies are: Alico Kenya (Tel: 3711242), Gateway Insurance (3713131), Kenindia (333100), Pan Africa Insurance (339544), and United Insurance (227345). While some international staff find it cheaper to insure their vehicles with overseas companies, it is

still mandatory for them to hold third party insurance with a local company to facilitate vehicle registration and licensing.

## Driving Licences

Kenyan law requires that all motorists carry a valid driving licence with them at all times. A Kenyan driving licence will be issued to a holder of an international licence or a licence from another country upon completion of a form available from HCRU or your Protocol Office. National driving licences that are not in English must be translated and certified by the respective country's embassy in Nairobi. International driving licences can also be renewed through the Automobile Association of Kenya.

## Duty-Free Liquor

International staff members are entitled to monthly allocations of duty-free liquor, wines and cigarettes at the UN Commissary open from 9am-5pm on weekdays and 9am-4pm on Saturdays. New staff members should contact the Commercial Operations Unit (Room G-217) upon their arrival, where they will be issued with a card allowing them access to the Commissary. Internationally recruited staff are also permitted to purchase duty-free goods from the Kenya Wine Agencies Ltd. (KWAL) and the Nairobi Diplomatic Duty Free shop (NDDF) at Village Market, where a PRO1A form must be completed to enable purchases to be deducted from one's monthly quota. Quotas are based upon rank, with most employees entitled to 60 bottles of wine, 12 litres of spirits and 1,500 grams of tobacco each month.

## Duty-Free Fuel

The UN fuel Station on UN Avenue offers duty-free unleaded petrol and diesel to international staff who own duty-free vehicles, have been issued with red number plates, and are registered with the Commercial Operations Unit. Entitled staff have the option of making their fuel purchases through a pre-paid electronic card or a Petrol Coupon Book, which must be handed back to the COU upon the completion of one's contract. International staff can also claim back VAT on petrol purchased at other fuel stations upon the production of a receipt.

## VAT Exemptions

Internationally recruited staff are exempted from paying Value Added Tax on most locally purchased goods and services, with the exception of building materials and large electrical equipment (eg. televisions, cookers and computers). VAT exemption applications must be submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the HCRU or your Protocol Offices. Claims for VAT refunds by new staff members who join the UN during the year are processed at the beginning of the following year.

## The UN Cooperative Society

All UN employees, whether locally or internationally recruited, are entitled to membership of the United Nations Cooperative Society, which has registered more than 2,500 members since its establishment in 1975. As well as helping employees to save part of their income, the society permits members to borrow up to three times their standing contribution in the purchase of a house, car or other important asset. After one has been a member for six months, they become eligible to apply for three types of loans: 'normal loan' repayable over four years, 'emergency loans' repayable over 12 months, or 'instant loans', which can be provided in 24 hours and must be repaid in six months. Loans are available up to a maximum of Ksh 6 million. For more details about the society, call 622700/2 or email [unsacco@unon.org](mailto:unsacco@unon.org).



Past master: The stately façade of the Macmillan Library in downtown Nairobi, reminiscent of a more refined architectural age.



Early morning at the Nairobi Railway Station, once the end of East Africa's celebrated 'Lunatic Line' – now a vital lifeline to Mombasa, Kisumu and beyond.

The gracious old steam engine, Masai of Kenya, occupies pride of place at Nairobi's evocative Railway Museum.



# The Fun Side of Nairobi

## City Attractions

AS THE ORIGINAL 'SAFARI CITY', NAIROBI BOASTS A VARIETY OF PLACES OF NATURAL beauty worth visiting – particularly if you have visitors from overseas. A small selection of these are:

**Nairobi National Park:** The world's first city park is still probably its most famous – primarily thanks to the trademark images of rare black rhinos browsing just out of the shadows of Nairobi's office blocks. Opened in 1946, this 117 sq km park has a surprising diversity of habitats and wildlife, from lion, cheetah and buffalo on the plains, hippo and crocodile in the river, to leopard and 500 bird species in the forests along its western border. The new Nairobi Safari Walk at the Main Gate offers an informative close encounter with several animals from a boardwalk meandering through three different ecosystems, as well as an orphanage where a variety of animals including cheetah, hyena and lions are being cared for by the Kenya Wildlife Service. Open from 9am to 5.30pm daily; Tel: 501081.

**The National Museum:** In a country often touted as the birthplace of humanity, the National Museum is a great place to start exploring Kenya's cultural riches. It has a variety of cultural exhibits, displays of rock art, fossils, fascinating exhibits on the origins of humans, 900 stuffed birds and a fibreglass replica of Kenya's most famous elephant, Ahmed. It also houses a gallery of wonderful contemporary paintings by local artists. The museum is a leisurely 1km stroll northwest of the city centre just across the Nairobi River. Tel: 3742131-4.

**The Giraffe Centre:** A raised wooden platform offers a uniquely sticky encounter with the long tongues of a Rothschild's giraffe as it takes cereal pellets from your hand. Across the road, but still part of the centre, is a small patch of forest through which you can take a 1km forest walk among beautiful birds, butterflies and warthogs. Southwest of central Nairobi, the Giraffe Centre is signposted from Langata South Road. Open 9am to 5.30pm daily; Tel: 891658/890952.

**The African Butterfly Research Institute:** A fun and informative butterfly education centre for children and adults alike with a beautiful large greenhouse teeming with butterflies and tropical plants, an outdoor restaurant and an excellent gift shop. Open 9am to 5pm daily, at 256 Dagoretti Road, 2.5 km from the Karen Roundabout. Look for the big white butterfly sign! Tel: 884972-3.

**The Railway Museum:** Located in untended bush at one end of the station (although Kenya Railways claims there are plans to return it to its former glory), the glistening relics of the ‘Lunatic Express’ hark back to the gilded era of steam engines and elegant rail travel. One of the exhibits is the coach from which the hapless engineer, Charles Ryall, was dragged to his death by a lion, while another is the ‘cowcatcher’ on which Theodore Roosevelt rode in 1909 on Kenya’s highest profile safari. Open daily from 8.30am to 4.45pm; Tel: 221211.

**The Maasai Market:** Run every Tuesday opposite the giant Globe Roundabout, at the Village Market on Fridays, and in the Yaya Centre carpark on Sundays, this market offers some of the most beautiful and reasonably priced crafts in Kenya – particularly the traditional Maasai crafts of woven baskets, beaded jewellery and exquisitely carved gourds. Definitely the best place to shop for souvenirs in Nairobi – although watch out for youngsters ‘shopping’ from your back pockets!

**The Karen Blixen Museum:** This is the beautiful farmhouse where Karen Blixen, author of *Out of Africa*, lived between 1917 and 1931, until she left Kenya after a series of personal tragedies. It has been restored with many of her own furnishings, as well as replicas made for the movie. It has a beautiful mature garden and a superb view of the Ngong Hills, which Blixen described so tenderly in her book. Located on Karen Road, between the Karen College and Bogani Road, it is open from 9.30am to 6pm daily. Tel: 882779.

**Mamba Village:** Ostensibly a crocodile and ostrich farm, this fun family destination also offers camel and horse rides and boat rides on a small lake off Langata Road. It has a restaurant serving various dishes, including fresh talapia and catfish caught on the premises. Open from 11am daily. Tel: 891765.

**The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust Orphanage:** The ‘Elephant Orphanage’ offers a fascinating close encounter with the world’s largest land mammals – or at least their smaller versions! This is where young orphaned elephants – usually from poached or snared parents – are hand-reared to an age at which they can be released into the wild. You can see the baby elephants at their mud wallow between 11am and noon daily, and afterwards

watch them being bottle-fed by their dedicated keepers. A unique way to get close to Africa's most charismatic creatures! The orphanage is located on the Magadi Road, through the gate to Nairobi Park after passing Banda School. Tel: 891996.

**Splash & GP Karting:** Few family days out can match the convenience and fun of the combined thrills of Splash! and GP Karting. Located side by side at the end of the Carnivore turn-off on Langata Road, Splash! is one of Nairobi's most exciting value-for-money entertainment venues, with a variety of swimming pools and waterslides alongside various electronic games and a great Crazy Golf course. Best of all, it's right next door to Nairobi's only Go-kart track, which boasts some of the best thrills in the city, with state-of-the-art Honda-powered carts racing on a 500-metre track overlooking the national park. The track is equally suitable for first-time drivers or talented speed-merchants, and is fast becoming one of Nairobi's hottest venues for corporate teambuilding. The track's giant television screen also makes this the perfect venue for watching Formula One and other sporting events. Tel. Splash! on 608525/603777, and GP Karting on 608444/5 or 0733-666333 (closed on Mondays).

## Annual Events

As East Africa's most cosmopolitan city, Nairobi is drawing an increasing number of regional and international sporting and cultural events.

Nairobi hosts a number of world-class sporting events, including the Nairobi Marathon, which was launched in October 2003 and gives some of the world's best marathon runners a chance to showcase their talents on their home turf, and the Safari Sevens, which pits the world-ranking Kenya Rugby Sevens team against other African teams and international invitation teams each June (see [www.nairobimarathon.com](http://www.nairobimarathon.com) and [www.safarisevens.com](http://www.safarisevens.com) for more details). Another sporting event that is fast becoming an international showcase is the Kenya Open Golf Championship, traditionally held at the Muthaiga Golf Club every March (see [www.kgu.or.ke](http://www.kgu.or.ke)). And then there's the rather different Lewa Marathon, the world's only marathon run in a game reserve, where the competitors run alongside giraffes and rhinos as well as some of the world's finest long-distance runners (see [www.lewa.org](http://www.lewa.org) for details).

Another famous spectacle is the Nairobi Airshow, run by the world's second oldest international air club, which celebrates the city's rich aviation

history with a stunning display of high-speed daring and some more sedate means of flying at Wilson Airport each November (see [www.nairobiairshow.com](http://www.nairobiairshow.com)). And for equestrian buffs, the Jockey Club of Kenya runs a lively season of Sunday horse races at the Racecourse on Ngong Road; call 566108-9 or email [jck@karibunet.com](mailto:jck@karibunet.com) for a list of upcoming race meetings.

## Hotels in Nairobi

Nairobi boasts a great variety of hotel accommodation, from lavish five-star suites at some of Africa's greatest 'names' – including The Norfolk and The Stanley, both of which still compete for the title of 'Kenya's first luxury hotel' – to a variety of comfortable and reasonably priced three- and four-star accommodation. Unfortunately, the UN's location in Gigiri means there are no hotels around the corner, but there are a variety in Westlands, a 15-minute drive away, including the comfortable four-star *Jacaranda* Hotel opposite the Sarit Centre and the Holiday Inn on Parklands Road. Diplomatic identity cards will entitle international UN staff to residents' rates at most hotels. A short list of some of the hotels in Nairobi is presented below. More details, including a location map and distances to Gigiri and JKIA, are available at [www.unon.org](http://www.unon.org).

Nairobi's status as a 'safari centre' has also led to the establishment of a variety of luxurious private retreats, where one can stay upon arrival or take your spouse for a pampered battery-charging weekend. Several of these are located in Karen and Langata, including the beautiful 1932 Giraffe Manor (891078), which must be the only place in the world where you can feed giraffe through your second-floor bedroom window, the unique treehouses of Ngong House (890840), and the peaceful residential retreat of Macushla House (891987). Closer to Gigiri, the Kentmere Club in the Tigoni Highlands (066-50625) blends the atmosphere of an English country inn with one of the most beautiful tropical gardens in Kenya.

Another weekend option that is becoming increasingly popular among the get-up-and-go Nairobi crowd are self-catering private houses and villas – some luxurious, some simple, but all in beautiful places – which are rented out by a growing number of local agents. The largest of these is Langata Link (891314/890480), which, in partnership with Exclusive Classic Properties at Village Market (520943/521074/0734-688772), has 120 private homes for rent, complete with live-in cooks and cleaners, in places as close as Athi River and the Ngong Hills and as far as Laikipia and the Coast. The houses are also listed on a

### *FIVE-STAR Hotels*

Grand Regency, City Centre; Singles from \$120; Tel: 211199; gregency@africaonline.co.ke

Hilton Hotel, City Centre; Singles from \$90; Tel: 250000; hilsales@africaonline.co.ke

Hotel Inter-Continental, City Centre; Singles from \$85; Tel: 32000000; nairobi@interconti.com

Nairobi Serena, City Centre; Singles from \$130; Tel: 2710511; mktg@serena.co.ke

Safari Park Hotel, Thika Road; Singles from \$95; Tel: 802493; sales@safariparkhotel.co.ke

The Norfolk, City Centre; Singles from \$100; Tel: 250900; ckikuvi@lonrhohotels.co.ke

The Stanley, City Centre; Singles from \$125; Tel: 716688; reservations@thestanley.sarava.co.ke

Windsor Golf & Country Club, North of city centre; Singles from \$100; Tel: 862300; marketing@windsor.co.ke

### *THREE- & FOUR-STAR Hotels*

Fairview Hotel, Near City Centre; Singles from \$65; Tel: 2723211; reserv@fairviewkenya.com

Hotel Boulevard, Nr. City Centre; Singles fm. \$60; Tel: 227567; hotelboulevard@wananchi.com

Holiday Inn, Westlands; Singles from \$115; Tel: 3740920; hi-sales@africaonline.co.ke

Jacaranda Hotel, Westlands; Singles from \$78; Tel: 540780; blocktmm@africaonline.co.ke

Lenana Mount Hotel, Nr. City Centre; Special B&B rate for UN employees: Ksh 3,000; Tel: 717044/48; lenanamounthotel@iconnect.co.ke

Silver Springs Hotel, Nr. City Centre; Singles from \$43, with 10% discounts for UN guests booked for five days or more; Tel: 2722451-2; silversprings@iconnect.co.ke.

special website at [www.kenyasafarihomes.com](http://www.kenyasafarihomes.com). Muthaiga Travel (3750034-6) also has 30 private homes for rent in Naivasha, Laikipia and at the Coast.

## **Health Centres**

Nairobi has a large and fast growing number of private health centres and state-of-the-art gyms. Nearly all of the major hotels in town have excellent health centres with competitively priced membership fees, including the Serena, Stanley, Hilton, Grand Regency and Holiday Inn. For a listing of some of the best health centres in Nairobi, see [www.theexpatriate.org](http://www.theexpatriate.org).

Gigiri has its own state-of-the-art Recreation Centre, which offers a swimming pool, international standard football pitch, sauna, steam bath, squash and tennis courts, together with a bar, restaurant and creche facilities. The Centre is open to all UN staff members. Contact 624615 for more details.

## Theatres, Cultural Centres & Galleries

Nairobi is home to a large number of theatres and cultural centres, showcasing some of Kenya's – and the world's – brightest performing stars. The following are among the most dynamic theatres, cultural centres and art galleries, offering a rich variety of plays, concerts, art exhibitions, poetry and drama evenings, and cultural entertainments:

### Theatres

*The Phoenix Players*, Parliament Road; Tel: 225506/212601. Kenya's most popular theatre group hosts a continuous programme of monthly repertory theatre shows.

*The Courtyard Theatre*, Ngong Racecourse. For more information on what's showing at this exciting new theatre in town, contact [courtyardtheatre@yahoo.com](mailto:courtyardtheatre@yahoo.com).

*Kenya National Theatre*, Harry Thuku Road; Tel: 313171. The National Theatre hosts various amateur and professional groups, plays and musicals, throughout the year.

### Cultural Centres

*Maison Française/French Cultural and Cooperation Centre*, Monrovia/Loita Street; Tel: 336263-5; [info@maisonfrancaisekenya.org](mailto:info@maisonfrancaisekenya.org). The centre presents a multitude of activities in visual and performing arts, film shows and conferences year round, and offers a multimedia library, French language cooperation bureau and French language classes.

*Goethe Institut/German Cultural Centre*, Maendeleo House, Loita/Monrovia Street; Tel: 224640/211381; [www.goethe.de/nairobi](http://www.goethe.de/nairobi). German language classes and cultural activities.

*Italian Institute of Culture*, Ex Agip House, 6th Floor, Westlands; Tel: 4451266-8; [iicnbi@iicnairobi.org](mailto:iicnbi@iicnairobi.org). Italian language classes and cultural activities.

*Japan Information and Cultural Centre*, ICEA Building, Kenyatta Avenue; Tel: 340520/341244.

## Art Galleries & Workshops

*Ramoma Gallery*, Rahimtulla Museum of Modern Art, Rahimtulla Towers, Upper Hill; Tel: 2729181/2; [ramoma@africaonline.co.ke](mailto:ramoma@africaonline.co.ke). Ramoma hosts regular art exhibitions and an annual 'Art Affair' promoting upcoming Kenyan artists each October.

*Kuona Trust*, Museum Art Studio, National Museums of Kenya; Tel: 748996. Hosts workshops and occasional exhibitions of some of the country's finest artistic talents.

*The Godown*, Dunga Road, Industrial Area; Tel: 555770/555227. A new and exciting centre for homegrown performing and visual arts.

*Pimbi Gallery*, General Mathenge Close; Tel: 581124.

*Gallery Watatu*, Lonrho House, Standard Street; Tel: 217673/228737.

Several of Nairobi's leading restaurants and meeting places also hold regular art exhibitions, including *Le Rustique* in Westlands (3753081), *Java House* on Mama Ngina Street (313564/5), and the *Turaco Club* in Langata (891759).

## Music Venues

*Kenya Conservatoire of Music*, Harry Thuku Road, opposite Norfolk Hotel; Tel: 222933. Offers lessons in vocal and instrumental music.

*Nairobi Music Society*; Contact person: Valerie Kent; [kent@wananchi.com](mailto:kent@wananchi.com). Provides an active programme of lunchtime concerts, evening recitals and choral presentations.

*Nairobi Orchestra*; Contact person: Bill Dixson; Tel: 2713820. Welcomes newcomers with reasonable experience, preferably with their own instruments.

## Annual Cultural Events

There are several exciting cultural and artistic events that take place every year in Nairobi. These include the *Kisima Awards*, which celebrate the best Kenyan musicians in a musical extravaganza at The Carnivore each June, *African Cine Week*, which showcases the best Kenyan and regional audiovisual productions at the French Cultural Centre and Kenyatta International Conference Centre in October, the *European Film Festival*, showing the best new films from Europe at the French Cultural Centre in October, and the *Nairobi Theatre Extravaganza*, an exciting theatrical festival organised by leading local theatre groups each December.

## Restaurants

Nairobi boasts itself as a ‘culinary capital’ in Africa, and it is hard to dispute, based upon the huge variety of exotic and exquisite cuisine available in and around the city. Nairobi’s restaurants cater to all budgets and tastes, from European, Asian and Latin cuisines to the ubiquitous and (for meateaters, at least) delectable *nyama choma* meat feasts. For sheer indulgence, no place beats the legendary Carnivore Restaurant, which serves the whole gamut of Kenya’s wild ‘game meats’ – from ostrich and zebra to hartebeest, gazelle and crocodile – on the edge of Nairobi National Park. As such, this has become a particularly popular place (some would say gratuitously so) to take visitors from overseas.

Among Nairobi’s other famous eateries is the Tamarind, famous for its delectable day-fresh seafood, Akasaka, Nairobi’s oldest Japanese restaurant, the Rickshaw, renowned as the city’s best Chinese restaurant, and Alan Bobbe’s, the smallest but finest French bistro in Kenya. In the Mall in Westlands, there’s the Haandi, rated by many as the best of Nairobi’s vast legion of Indian restaurants, the Tamambo, which serves a variety of continental and African dishes, and the excellent Italian Mediterraneo. The other top restaurants are in the city’s five-star hotels: the Mandhari Restaurant at the Serena, the Ibis Grill at the Norfolk, the Zen restaurant at the Stanley, and the famous colonial dining room of the Muthaiga Country Club. The green suburbs also offer a host of different dining experiences: from the Lord Errol Restaurant in Runda to the Rusty Nail, The Talisman and the Turaco Club in the beautiful tropical gardens of Karen and Langata.

## Electronic Information

The growth of Kenya’s booming Internet cafe scene has been matched by an impressive growth in homegrown websites offering up-to-date information and links on things to do and places to go in the ‘Green City’. Some of the best of these sites are listed here as a one-stop reference for budding surfers who want to catch a wave into Nairobi’s future:

[www.nationaudio.com](http://www.nationaudio.com) – News from Kenya’s largest media group, including a What’s On tourist guide with news of the latest events and cultural, sporting and travel attractions.

[www.kenyawebsite.com](http://www.kenyawebsite.com) and [www.africaonline.com](http://www.africaonline.com) - Kenya's two largest ISPs run websites with extensive news, ads, business and event listings, and links to everything imaginable.

[www.magicalkenya.com](http://www.magicalkenya.com) - The official website of the Kenya Tourist Board has a good selection of destination information and some exciting interactive tours.

[www.kws.org](http://www.kws.org) - The Kenya Wildlife Service offers detailed information on the parks & reserves, conservation projects, education opportunities, wildlife news, interactive maps.

[www.museums.or.ke](http://www.museums.or.ke) - The National Museums of Kenya site has plenty of information on exhibitions, research, publications and everything to do with Nairobi's excellent museum.

[www.yellowpageskenya.com](http://www.yellowpageskenya.com) - All the listings you could want to do business in Nairobi.

[www.all-links-kenyan.com](http://www.all-links-kenyan.com) and [www.kenyahost.com](http://www.kenyahost.com) - Links galore on business, entertainment, sports, events, news and things to do with Kenya in general.

[www.theexpatriate.org](http://www.theexpatriate.org) - Set up by a former UN staffer, this is an excellent site to guide expatriates seeking a specific service or trying to sell, rent or buy goods and services.



A herd of gentle grey giants emerge from the arid bush of Samburu National Reserve to drink from the vital waters of the Uaso Nyiro River.



A Maasai boma nestles beneath the boughs of an acacia tortilis tree at Il N'gvesi, an award-winning ecotourism destination on the Laikipia plains.

A Maasai junior elder looking out over the Loita Hills east of the Maasai Mara National Reserve.



# On Safari in Kenya

## Safaris on Nairobi's Doorstep

AS AFRICA'S ORIGINAL 'SAFARI CAPITAL', NAIROBI STILL BOASTS SOME OF THE BEST and most varied wilderness adventures on the continent. From the great wildebeest migration in the Maasai Mara to the little-explored corners of Tsavo and Samburu to some of Africa's most beautiful beaches, the brochures do not exaggerate when they imply that you are living in one of the most diverse and spectacular countries on Earth. And these destinations are available in all levels of comfort, with all manner of luxury lodges and hotels, private homesteads and public campsites, and a rich variety of cultural, sporting and family activities that can be tailored to any type, length or price of safari.

Most international personnel who travel abroad on their annual leaves may only have a few short days or long weekends to escape from work. There are several short wildlife viewing adventures that can be made in 3-4 days overland, including Tsavo, Amboseli, the Chyulu Hills and the Maasai Mara – particularly for the great migration every July and August. These parks have all levels of accommodation, from five-star tented camps and luxury lodges to self-service chalets and campsites, which any of the good travel agents below can tell you about. The larger hotel groups can also arrange overland or flying itineraries that take in two or more parks.

Closer to home, an idyllic peaceful weekend can be spent on the shores of Lake Naivasha, a stunning freshwater lake in the Great Rift Valley, just over an hour's drive northwest of Nairobi. Here again there are all manner of accommodation and activities, from the stylish surrounds of Olerai House (890596) to the peaceful charm of Crater Lake (05020-20613), and stunning views with horse rides, pampered care and delectable cuisine at Malu (05020-21200), Malewa River Lodge (05020-30312) or the Great Rift Valley Lodge (4446651), which also boasts one of Africa's most spectacular 18-hole golf courses.

South of Nairobi, the Rift presents a wilder side at Lake Magadi, whose high soda content attracts a stunning variety of waterbirds. Visitors can make the journey on to Shompole (884135), one of Kenya's most beautiful and

innovative lodges, which is co-owned by the local Maasai. Close to Magadi too is the fascinating prehistoric site of Olorgesaille, where on the shore of an ancient lake bed Louis and Mary Leakey family found thousands of stone age tools, which are now preserved in a series of ‘living museums’.

## Family Destinations

Some of Kenya’s largest hotel and lodge operators have in recent years launched a variety of children’s ‘safari clubs’ to make their destinations more attractive to visiting families – and to enable Mum and Dad to get a little peace from the kids! The market leader is Heritage Hotels (4446651), which runs two clubs, the Adventurers’ Club for 4–12 year olds and the Young Rangers’ Club for teenagers, offering a rich variety of educational games, wildlife-spotting walks and cultural outings from the group’s properties in the Maasai Mara, Samburu, Mombasa and Naivasha. Several other hotel groups have taken up the family baton, including Sarova Hotels (2716688), whose Ozone Club hosts younger children in the Mara, Shaba and Mombasa, and Lonrho Hotels (216940), with a Young Explorers’ Club in the Mara, the Aberdares and Mount Kenya.

## Golf Courses

Kenya boasts a huge variety of golf courses, from the manicured fairways and lake-ringed holes of the grand Windsor Golf & Country Club to the smaller but no less challenging nine-hole city course at the age-old Nairobi Railways Club. All of the courses give priority to members, and are usually open only to members on weekends, but during the week non-members can usually turn up and play on a first-come, first-serve basis. However, it is always best to call the clubs in advance, as there may be competitions taking place, and most clubs have at least one members-only day during the week. Prices for 18 holes normally range from Ksh 1,500 to Ksh 3,000, with an additional Ksh 150–400 caddy fee.

Karen Golf Club	882801-2
Muthaiga Golf Club	318804
Nairobi Railways Club	725125
Racecourse Golf Club	566108-9
Royal Nairobi Golf Club	2725769/2721630
Sigona Golf Club	066-32462/32144
Windsor Golf & Country Club	862300/862500

## Travel Agents

The country's largest air ticketing agency, Bunson Travel, has an office on the Upper Concourse at Gigiri (624980/5), which usually has a variety of special offers available to UN staffers. Village Market also houses offices of Bunson and the excellent safari company, Gamewatchers (523129), which offers tailor-made itineraries to Tsavo and the Maasai Mara, with comfortable mobile camps and excellent hosts. There is also the efficient office of Muthaiga Travel just up the road at the Muthaiga Shopping Centre.

### *Major travel agents and ticketing agencies in Nairobi include:*

Bunson Travel	221992	info@bunsontravel.co.ke
Express Travel	334722-7	info@etg.expresskenya.com
Going Places	4442312/3	info@goingplaces.co.ke
Let's Go Travel	4441030/7151	info@letsgosafari.com
Muthaiga Travel	3750034-6	tours@muthaiga.co.ke
Rickshaw Travels	211861	info@rickshawtravels.com

While Bunson is focused on air tickets and travel outside Kenya, Nairobi still touts itself as Africa's 'safari capital' and there is no shortage of travel agents and consultants to arrange safaris within Kenya, as well as camp offices and the headquarters of the major hotel groups for direct bookings. While safaris can be expensive in Kenya, having resident status enables UN employees to apply for the much reduced 'resident rates' at local lodges and safari camps. For safaris to the major game parks, you will also need to visit the Kenya Wildlife Service headquarters to buy and add credit to a KWS Smartcard.

## Domestic Airlines

Kenya Airways (32822000) and Regional Air (604588/605150) both operate 3-4 flights daily to Mombasa. Kenya Airways also operates scheduled services to the towns of Kisumu, Malindi, Lamu and Lokichoggio. Flights are easily booked over the telephone at any of the travel agencies listed in the previous section.

There are also a large number of domestic and charter airlines offering flights to the main game parks and tourist destinations. The most reliable of these are Airkenya and SafariLink, which offer daily scheduled flights to the

*The main carriers serving the tourist circuit are:*

Airkenya (schedules)	605730-1/501421
Blue Sky Aviation (charters)	601753
Boskeys (charters)	602026/600741
East African Air Charters (charters)	603858/9
Everett Aviation (helicopter charters)	601638/607003
SafariLink (schedules)	600777/787
Phoenix Aviation (charters)	605835/604048
Tropic Air (charters)	062-32891.

Maasai Mara, Samburu and Amobseli, while Airkenya also flies to Lamu and SafariLink has daily schedules to Tsavo and Nanyuki.

## Behaviour on Safari

As a cultural melting pot, meeting Kenya's different tribes presents a fascinating human tapestry – but also a strong need for cultural sensitivity. Much of the coast is predominantly Muslim and as such visitors should dress respectfully when visiting coastal villages and never bathe topless on the beach. It is also important not to support beach kiosks that are destroying turtle nesting areas, nor to give money to young children begging on the beach. As a rule, you should always seek permission before taking any photographs of local people, their homes or livestock – particularly Maasai, Samburu or Turkana people in traditional clothing, who may try to force money from photographers who do not seek permission. The Ecotourism Society of Kenya (2724755) has produced an excellent *Safari Code of Conduct*, which is well worth reading before going on safari.

