

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

31 January 2016



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1 Introduction

Porridge and Rice (PaR) welcomes volunteers at all times of year and of all levels of skills. All that is required of volunteers is a desire to make a difference.

PaR can accommodate people from students on a gap year, to university students doing an elective, professionals taking a career break, or someone simply wanting to make a difference. Volunteers are welcome whether 16, 60, or older.

There are a wide variety of roles in the six different programs for any level of skills, and if you are looking for something specific to meet the requirements of an elective, for example, PaR can combine elements of different programs to suit your university or college's requirements.



Figure 1.1 Pupils at Excel Emmanuel Community School

2 Flights

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

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

PaR usually travels via Istanbul as Turkish Airlines generally provides flights at the best price. Volunteers must pack an overnight bag for Istanbul as the main luggage will be checked through to Kenya. Include items like a change of underwear and a small towel with small toiletries (remember the 100ml limit per item, and a clear plastic bag per person for liquids).



Figure 2.1 Volunteers wait to board a flight in Istanbul to Nairobi

3 Dates

Volunteers can travel to Kenya at any time of year to volunteer and for any length of time. PaR organises group trips three times a year namely January/February, July/August, and October/November. Exact dates are available directly from PaR closer to the time to take advantage of the best flight prices and accommodate term end and start dates.

Volunteers can volunteer for any length of time in Kenya. While the most popular lengths of time are 2 and 4 weeks, some volunteers have chosen to stay for longer.



Figure 3.1 Playground at Glad Kids Community School

4 Accommodation

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

Wildebeest Eco Lodge has a small restaurant which serves simple food and sells drinks both alcoholic and sodas. There is a communal room with a large screen TV and a pool table off the raised deck.

Wildebeest Eco Lodge offers a range of accommodation from dormitories to single rooms. We book volunteers into dormitories by default. Volunteers can choose any type of room provided they are willing to pay the extra cost.

There are lockers in each room for keeping valuable items like passports and laptops. Volunteers need to bring their own lock to secure the locker.

Wildebeest Eco Lodge is within walking distance of The Galleria, a shopping mall with a range of shops from a supermarket to a chemist, some fast food restaurants, and several ATMs.

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



Figure 4.1 Volunteers having breakfast on the deck at Eco Wildebeest



Figure 4.2 The grounds of Eco Wildebeest Lodge

5 Tasks

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

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

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

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



Figure 5.1 Volunteers serve lunch and bananas at Lizpal Community School

The PaR Facebook page contains a comprehensive collection of photographs of the work done by PaR and PaR volunteers. Please take a look and like it to show your support.

5.1 Feeding and Nutrition

A hungry child cannot concentrate, and a child that does not receive the nutrients needed for healthy development (hidden hunger) will miss school because of illness.

The Feeding and Nutrition program provides nutritionally balanced meals to students at PaR community schools each school day. The meals do not only alleviate hunger but also protect cognitive potential by tackling the most serious nutrient deficiencies that beset children in the Nairobi slums.

PaR launched the first feeding program in March 2014 at Excel Emmanuel Community School for 250 pupils and their teachers. In July 2014, PaR set up a feeding program for a second school, Glad Kids, adding 150 pupils to the number of pupils that receive porridge for breakfast, rice and stew each lunch, and a piece of fruit. In January 2015, PaR expanded its feeding program yet again to a third school, Lizpal, with 400 pupils.

By July 2015, pupil numbers at the 3 partner schools had grown considerably, when PaR launched its feeding program at Heri Junior with 561 pupils, taking the total number of children fed by PaR each school day to over 1750. The aim is to continue to increase the number of children fed each school day by partnering with at least two additional schools a year.

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

- Vitamin A - each child receives sweet potato with breakfast once a week to provide a week's Vitamin A and mangoes when they are in season.
- Iodine - small amounts of iodised salt are added to the lunch stew to meet iodine requirements.
- Iron - kale was added to meals and the quantity of Nyayo beans served with each meal was quadrupled to meet iron requirements. This will need to be monitored as it may not prove sufficient. It may be necessary in the long term to provide iron supplements.



Figure 5.2 Volunteers serve Uji for breakfast at Excel Emmanuel Community School

PaR volunteers have helped prepare and serve meals. They have also helped to redesign meals to deliver the nutrients required for a healthy diet and with sourcing of foods. In addition, each time the food program has been expanded to a new school, volunteers have helped with purchasing the equipment and launching the food program.

Future plans include sourcing fortified foods and increasing urban farming to provide fresh food and improve the sustainability of the school feeding programs. Possible ventures include fish and chicken farming. There could even be opportunities to cultivate Kale and Nyayo beans.

The charity takes its name from its feeding program with children receiving porridge for breakfast and rice with a stew for lunch. The porridge is an African porridge known as sour Uji, a mixture of ground sorghum wheat and millet. It is served hot with sugar.



Figure 5.3 Volunteers prepare cabbage for lunch at Glad Kids Community School

5.2 Health and Hygiene

The Health and Hygiene program safeguards potential, reduces illness, and saves lives.

Water in the slums costs 4 or more times what it costs in nearby suburbs with most slum families not being able to buy very much at all and then only for what is considered absolutely essential. Soap and disinfectant are just as expensive making them a luxury for people living in the slums.

Furthermore, few people have access to hygienic toilets and open defecation is still common. This creates an ideal environment for diseases like helminths to multiply and spread.

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

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

PaR provides soap and water so the children can wash their hands after going to the toilet and before meals. The soap and water also enables all pupils to wash their faces once a day. Hand and face washing is done to break the transmission of diseases like trachoma and helminthiasis. Volunteers have helped supervise and monitor hand and face washing. They have also helped with washing and cleaning pots, plates, and utensils demonstrating the need for thorough cleaning of all items used in the preparation and eating of food. Three of four PaR schools now have 5000 litre tanks to cut the cost of water.

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

Worms (helminthiasis) are a major cause of poor health even death for children in the slums, and infection is widespread. A recent CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/) report found a prevalence rate of 80% in one Nairobi slum which is extremely high and for which the people in the slums pay a heavy price. Worms can cause significant cognitive impairment limiting potential and even death. Deworming reduces malnutrition and restores the immune system.

All students at PaR schools are dewormed every 6 months with a single dose of Albendazole along with Vitamin A supplements. Volunteers have helped with the administration of deworming tablets and supplements, as well the growth monitoring (weight and height) of pupils 5 and under.

Trachoma is an infection of the eyes that may result in blindness after repeated re-infections. It is the world's leading cause of preventable blindness and occurs where people live in overcrowded conditions with limited access to water and health care. Trachoma spreads easily from person to person and is frequently passed from child to child and from child to mother within the family.

Infection usually first occurs in childhood but people do not become blind until adulthood. The disease progresses over years as repeated infections cause scarring on the inside of the eyelid, earning it the name of the "quiet disease" The eyelashes eventually turn in. This causes rubbing on the cornea at the front of the eye. The cornea becomes scarred leading to severe vision loss and eventually blindness.

Trachoma is caused by a bacterium. Through the discharge from infected eyes, trachoma is passed on by hands, on clothing, or by flies that land on the face of the infected child.

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

Primary interventions advocated for preventing trachoma infection include improved sanitation, reduction of fly breeding sites and increased facial cleanliness with clean water among children at risk of disease.

Good personal and environmental hygiene has been proven to be successful in combating trachoma. Encouraging the washing of children's faces, improved access to water, and proper disposal of human and animal waste has been shown to decrease the number of trachoma infections in communities.

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



Figure 5.4 A volunteer nurse assists with measuring and weighing 5 year olds and under



Figure 5.5 A volunteer nurse assists with measuring and weighing 5 year olds and under

5.3 Education and Sponsorship

Teachers in Porridge and Rice partner schools are committed, hardworking and talented but very few have had any formal teacher training. Most have no more than a secondary school diploma, the equivalent of GCSE. The work they do is commendable but would be greatly improved with some basic training in teaching skills.

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

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

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



Figure 5.6 Pupils at Excel Emmanuel during break time.

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

Currently, pupils attending schools in the slums, are required to pay school fees and despite these being extremely low in western terms, they present a barrier to many children attending schools because they are a high percentage of family income. Some parents can only afford part of the school fees while some can afford nothing. Many will keep their children in school for as long as they can but when they owe too much are forced to withdraw their children from school leaving them to play on the streets all and every day.

As part of its Education and Sponsorship program, PaR pays the school fees of children whose parents are unable for whatever reason to do so in return for the parents working for the school. Parents earn the school fees by working for the school at least twice a week as opposed to PaR simply providing a handout. In this way children will stay in school while parents can hold their heads high and say that they have earned their child's place in school.

Children are identified by teachers, and after careful assessment which includes at least one home visit, may be included in the sponsorship scheme allowing them to stay in school for the foreseeable

future. PaR currently has 42 places on its sponsorship scheme and plans to increase the number of places when it has the funding to keep as many children in education and off the streets.

5.4 Facilities and furniture

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

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

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



Figure 5.7 Toilets at Glad Kids Community School

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

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

While community schools must be registered with the government as self-help groups, they do not get any money from the government. Schools are forced to charge school fees to cover their costs but not all pupils can afford to pay the fees. Money is a constant problem with most schools struggling to pay rent and accumulating significant salary arrears. School maintenance is not a real option because of other financial pressures.

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



Figure 5.8 Excel Emmanuel Community Schools

Three of four schools have 5000 water litre tanks to bring down the cost of water and ensure that there is a ready supply for cleaning and hand washing. New classrooms have been built, walkways have been created, and three kitchens constructed. PaR has supplied 80 new desks shared between three schools to replace broken desks and allow children to spread out not having to sit 4 to 6 to desks designed for 2.

There is a huge amount of work still to be done. All classrooms need electrification, blackboards need replacing, many more desks are needed, and existing classrooms desperately need repairing. The strain on facilities is being compounded by the success of PaR programs which are attracting more and more pupils. It is expected that PaR will support close to 2000 children by December 2015.

Without doubt the biggest and most complex challenge is the provision of adequate and hygienic toilets. PaR schools simply do not have enough toilets and the toilets that exist are in dire condition needing complete replacement. For example, 500 pupils at Lizpal share toilets with their local community. The toilet doors provide limited privacy and fall off regularly. The smell is appalling.

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

Volunteers have been invaluable to the furtherance of the facilities and maintenance program, helping with tasks from constructing new blackboards to building a kitchen. There is so much work to be done to maintain and improve schools, that there are tasks for all levels of skills. Every group of volunteers that has visited Kenya has helped with the maintenance and repair of some aspect of

schools, and this is not expected to change for the foreseeable future. It can be hard work but it is extremely rewarding because the results are very visible.



Figure 5.9 Volunteers assisting with levelling an preparing an area of Excel School



Figure 5.10 Volunteers clearing drains to allow them to flow at Excel School

5.5 Extracurricular

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

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

PaR volunteers accidentally started an inter-school sports day for all PaR schools. The event which was intended to be a one-off was such a success that it is now a regular event repeated by each group of volunteers in Kenya. The sports day introduces the children of the Nairobi slums to games and races like piggy-back races, relay races and Simon says, which whilst familiar in the UK, are unknown to the these children. It has become an exciting event for all the children at schools. Volunteers play an important part in organising and running the PaR inter-school sports day.



Figure 5.10 Inter-school Sports Day organised by PaR

PaR is working towards making sport and exercise a standard part of the school week by providing the equipment and expertise to offer PE classes, and regular games training sessions. In addition to exercises and entertaining games like "Simon says", PaR is working towards regular skipping and

football sessions for girls and boys as a first step in the plan. PaR plans to provide each school with enough footballs and equipment like goals, as well as skipping ropes to organise weekly exercise, games, and sport sessions for pupils.

PaR has plans to expand its extracurricular activities beyond sport and exercise to include music and art. The charity needs to raise the necessary funds first before it this can be done as well as to identify adults from teachers, parents, and the community that are willing and able to lead these extracurricular classes.

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



Figure 5.11 Volunteers demonstrating piggy-back races at the Inter-school Sports Day

5.6 Sustainability

The long term goal for each PaR partner school is that the school is able to generate the income that is needed to run the school without PaR. To this end, PaR has introduced projects in Kenya with PaR partner schools that generate income to be used in Kenya.

Each school generates considerable organic waste from the vegetables and fruit for meals. The waste is turned into compost used to grow papaya and sweet potatoes.

Kienyeji are chickens indigenous to Kenya. Over many years, these chickens have adapted to tough local conditions, like high temperatures.

PaR is building a flock of Kienyeji chickens run by all the schools together. Chickens are raised both for eggs and meat. Both are sold to the local community at competitive prices.



Figure 5.12 A compost pit at Lizpal School

6 Getting Around

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Figure 6.1 Volunteers getting out a matatu

7 Sightseeing and Safari

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



Figure 7.1 Volunteers visiting the Giraffe Centre

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

The Sheldrick Wildlife Trust takes in orphaned baby elephants which they release back into the wild when they are old enough and able to care for themselves. Most of the baby elephants are orphaned because of poaching and would starve to death without The Sheldrick Trust. At the current rate of elephant poaching, with one elephant killed every 15 minutes, a lack of action could see the loss of wild elephants in Africa by 2025.

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

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

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

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



Figure 7.2 A baby elephant being fed while visitors look on

The African Fund for Endangered Wildlife commonly known as the Giraffe Centre breeds the endangered Rothschild Giraffe which is close to extinction in Kenya. The endangered Rothschild giraffe, *Giraffa camelopardalis rothschildi*, is found only in the grasslands of East Africa. The centre has had huge success, resulting in the introduction of several breeding pairs of Rothschild Giraffe back into the wild in Kenyan national parks.

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



Figure 7.3 Visitors feeding Rothschild giraffes

The Masaai Market brings local craft makers together in one location within Nairobi at different locations each day of the week. It is held each Thursday at The Junction, a shopping mall near to PaR schools. It is a good place to buy gifts.



Fig 7.4 Shopping at the Masaai Market at The Junction shopping mall

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

restaurant also has a good vegetarian menu. The décor and atmosphere in the restaurant make eating at Carnivore a great experience.

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



Figure 7.5 Volunteers white water rafting

No one should go to Africa and not spend time on safari. It is such a phenomenal experience seeing animals like elephant and giraffe in the wild.

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

Safari trips are organised for groups of 4 to 6 people sharing accommodation to keep the price down. It is possible to book separate rooms for an additional charge if required. Safari trips usually include the cost of 3 meals but not drinks. The wildlife of Africa in the wild is such an impressive experience and such an integral part of Kenya, that the experience should not be missed.



Fig 7.6 Volunteers on safari at Amoboselli



Fig 7.7 Elephant at Amoboselli

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

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

8 Charity Leaders and Rules

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

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

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

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

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

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



Figure 8.1 Volunteers walking in the Nairobi slums

9 Food and Drink

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Fig 9.1 Volunteers at Carnivore Restaurant

10 Vaccinations and Malaria

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

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

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

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

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

- Yellow Fever
- Tetanus
- Tuberculosis
- Diphtheria
- Typhoid
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Cholera
- Rabies



Fig 10.1 Pupils at Excel Emmanuel School enjoying breakfast

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

While Malaria is not common in Nairobi, it has begun to increase because of drains in the slums and it abounds in areas that volunteers visit on safari. It is thus essential that volunteers take Malaria tablets. Mosquito nets are provided so not necessary.

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

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

11 Medication, Allergies and Disabilities

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

12 Volunteer Orientation

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



Fig 11.1 Volunteers serving lunch at Lizpal School

13 Porridge and Rice Schools

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

1. Compassion CBO in Githogoro
2. Excel Emmanuel School in Ngando
3. Glad Kids School in Ngando
4. Heri Junior School in Riruta
5. Lizpal School in Ngando

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

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

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

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



Fig 11.1 The pupils of Excel Emmanuel enjoy a fresh mango after lunch

14 Slum Tours

The Nairobi slums are not a single unit but rather a collection of areas with noticeable differences. A tour of the slums is available for volunteers wishing to learn about the area.

The largest and probably most famous slum in Nairobi is Kibera. It is not easy to count the people in a slum which by its nature is changing constantly and has little structure. Most organisations agree that there are at least a million people living in Kibera.

The Porridge and Rice schools are not in Kibera.

15 Swahili Lessons

PaR provides lessons in basic Swahili while in Kenya at a small extra cost to volunteers. These are optional.

16 Passports and Visas

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

Porridge and Rice will require a scan of each volunteer's passport, and will assist with visa applications if requested.

Full details for Kenyan Visas can be found online at <http://kenyahighcom.org.uk/visas-2/>

17 Insurance

All volunteers must have personal insurance. Porridge and Rice advises use of its own policy or the Post Office insurance. All volunteers must provide Porridge and Rice with a copy of their insurance.

18 Packing List

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

- Airline ticket
- Anti-bacterial gel – should only be used where handwashing with soap is not possible. Remember that clean water and soap is the most effective way of removing pathogens
- Anti-malarial tablets
- Any current medication
- Backpack – for overnight items in Istanbul and to carry items to and from PaR schools in the slums
- Bath Towel
- Camera and charger

- Clothing – on the first day when meeting staff for the first time, volunteers are required to dress smart casual (trousers, skirt or dress). After the first meeting, volunteers can dress down with clothing like t-shirts and shorts. Evenings are cold so it is necessary to pack trousers and jumpers and days are hot so it is advisable to pack light clothing. Do not wear valuable clothing. Only bring items that you would not mind being damaged or lost. Washing will be done once a week.
- Hat- one will be issued to each volunteer to keep
- Insect repellent. Mosquito nets not required, but repellent and sting-ease can be useful when sitting outside of an evening
- Jumper – evenings in Nairobi and Istanbul can be very cold
- Flip flops or sandals for wearing around camp
- Overnight bag. Pack an overnight bag for Istanbul as the main luggage will be checked through to Kenya. Include a change of clothing and a small towel with small toiletries as required (remember the 100ml limit per item, and a clear plastic bag per person for liquids)
- Padlock – a small padlock will fit the locker
- PaR T shirt
- Passport
- Personal toiletries
- Reading Material
- Snacks like peanuts and raisins
- Swimming Towel
- Swimming costume
- Suntan lotion – always use suntan lotion or wear a hat
- Sanitary towels/Tampons
- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Shoes – comfortable shoes for walking around the slums. Roads and paths are not paved. Solid trainers will do best. Be prepared to throw shoes away at the end of the trip.
- Soap or Shower Gel
- Sponge/Flannel
- Travel insurance documents
- Toothbrush & toothpaste
- Warm clothing – evenings and Istanbul can be cold. Days are hot
- Yellow fever certificate

19 Contact and Social Media

- Email: info@porridgeandrice.co.uk
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/Porridgeandrice/
- Website: www.porridgeandrice.co.uk
- Twitter: PaRfeeding
- Instagram: [porridge_and_rice](https://www.instagram.com/porridge_and_rice)

20 Useful websites

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