



POSITIVE LIFE KENYA

VOLUNTEERS 2023

Welcome



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Dear reader,

ABOUT PLK

Positive Life Kenya began as a small community based organization (CBO) in 2010 under the name Living Positive Mlolongo. At the time, our founder was doing social work at hospitals and neighborhood in Mlolongo (a suburb 20km south of Nairobi), when she became aware of the severe lack of services and support for victims of family breakups, poverty and health issues especially HIV/AIDs as well as their children. Due to the demand for additional services in other areas outside of Mlolongo the organization obtained official status as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with the new name: Positive Life Kenya. Today, PLK serves more than 300 women and children in five different slums and informal settlements around Mlolongo and Athi River, and also supports outreach efforts in areas of Western Kenya.

To make a real difference, Positive Life Kenya focuses on integrated responses to Youth and Children Welfare, Livelihood Support and Health in a bid to empower the community while creating hope. Positive Life Kenya emphasizes on the importance of community participation in creating a sustainable environment while targeting the best methods of poverty eradication. The beneficiaries of our programs are often people from marginalized groups who are the most vulnerable and the hardest to reach.

Vision

To see healthy and empowered communities living with hope and equal opportunities.

Mission

Positive life Kenya works to break the cycle of poverty by promoting active participation of communities through education and advocacy to build a healthy environment for children to thrive and create lasting change.

VOLUNTEER WITH US

At Positive Life Kenya we have always worked closely with people from all over the world, from all walks of life. Many of our past volunteers continue to support our work and have sustained a long term relationship with our organization. We offer the opportunity for volunteers to get involved in various areas of work, such as; community development, social business counselling, health care, teaching, grant writing, fundraising, and social media management.

As a volunteer with us you will have the chance to experience Kenya, first hand. Interns are immersed in Kenyan culture and have the chance to see the beautiful landscapes and the opportunity to partake in all that Kenya has to offer. Weekends and holidays are considered free time and interns are encouraged to go on safari, explore our capital city - Nairobi, visit our beautiful coastal city of Mombasa, and any other excursions an individual might enjoy.

The communities we work in are disadvantaged on several levels; common obstacles for the individuals we work with include educational barriers, occupational insufficiencies, and health care disparities.

To ensure that our volunteer programs are beneficial to both the organization and the volunteer we have adopted the following 5 principles:



NEED

There is a severe lack of accessible services within the community we work with, and a large demand for them. Our clients are amongst the most vulnerable people within the community, and as a volunteer with us, you will be directly helping the people who need it the most. Although we have a permanent team of local and skilled employees, the extent of the need by far outweighs our capacity.

AFFORDABILITY

All costs to volunteers are kept to an absolute minimum.

TRANSPARENCY

We believe that transparency from a non-profit organization is vital to gain the trust and loyalty of our community and supporters.

COMMITMENT

As a volunteer with us, we have a commitment to you to ensure that your time with us is valued and productive.

SUPPORT

From the moment you decide to volunteer with us we, will support you as required. You will be in direct contact with some staff from our team, who will be able to answer any questions or enquires and provide you with all the information and details you may require. This support is ongoing throughout your placement.

PLACEMENT OPTIONS

CHILD AND YOUTH WELFARE

1. Kiotani School, Lukenya
2. Tumaini Educational Center

LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT

1. Community Outreach
2. Women empowerment program
3. Vocational Training

HEALTH

1. Advocacy and Awareness Creation

ADMINISTRATION

1. Admin Support/ social media Management
2. Fundraising & Grant Proposal Writing

TUMAINI EDUCATIONAL CENTER

The local settlements are a home to majority of our clients. The environment and conditions of these slums are particularly dangerous for the children. Many of the children born and raised in these settlements have never attended school due to extreme poverty. As such they tend to spend their days wandering around, unattended, and at high risk of being victims of abuse and negative influence by older children or adults.

In 2012, our team opened an education and nutrition center at Kicheko, one of the settlement areas. Tumaini (a Swahili word to mean Hope) now provides protection, education and daily nutrition to over 100 vulnerable children attending playgroup through grade 3. At Tumaini the children are given classes in English, Reading and Math. They are also served a hot meal, which is often their only meal for the day.



The children benefit greatly from the exchange that they have with international teachers, and the extra assistance in the classroom always improves their learning experience and their engagement.

Core activities:

Assist in teaching classes in English, Reading & Math.

Work with our program coordinator on the development of activities and games.

Singing, dancing and playing sports with the children.

Help renovate the building / classrooms.

KIOTANI PRIMARY SCHOOL

Over the years, our work within the community has indicated the necessity to provide a safe haven for vulnerable children. Although we have Tumaini, our education & nutrition center, we are often faced with the challenge of how and where to care for children who are either abandoned or whose parents are deceased. Kiotani (Swahili for 'Inside the nest') is our boarding school and a safe haven for the orphaned and vulnerable children.

Today, Kiotani runs as a mixed day and boarding Primary School. The school has a farm that supports the nutrition of the school. As days go by, we are still improving the farm and infrastructure to become a sustainable boarding school and rescue center. There is a lot of work to be done on the farm and within the school itself, ranging from teaching to building. Just recently



Core activities:

Assist in teaching classes in English, Reading & Math.

Work with our program coordinator on the development of activities and games.

Singing, dancing and playing sports with the children.

Help renovate the building & the land.

LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT

Our community outreach program focuses on the most vulnerable members of the community including HIV victims and women at risk, caregivers (grandparents, guardians, family members of orphaned children) and youth. Our work is accomplished through therapy, counselling for HIV+ members that usually don't come to our offices or are isolated in their own communities, education (health issues, HIV prevention, vocational training, trade skills), home-based care, medical support (referrals and basic care), nutrition, businesstraining, microfinance and savings program, as well as sponsorship opportunities.



Our community outreach program has expanded over the years and now we have several community support groups around the local areas. Our social workers and community specialists visit the neighborhoods to conduct community meetings on a weekly basis to discuss different issues and help find solutions or provide the support these families need. In City Carton, one of the settlement areas, the community has several income generating projects alluding to farming, water sale project and bead works.

Core activities:

Assist social workers and community specialists in outreach efforts.

Provide advice and counseling during home visits (when appropriate).

Assist the Director in new initiatives & implementation of projects or campaigns

YOUTH & WOMEN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

Our Empowerment Program focuses on helping youth and women who come from impoverished communities to learn how to become self-sufficient and confident in their own abilities. Through our Empowerment Centre at Faraja, we teach them bead-making, tailoring and dressmaking, entrepreneurship and microfinance. This enables them to be financially stable and positively contribute to the society.

Many of the women have worked in the sex trade, which is a very common way of women and girls earning a living in the area. Recent studies have shown that commercial sex workers choose to remain sexually involved in the business despite acknowledging the potential and deadly role of the HIV pandemic. Due to lack of education, extreme poverty, and the appeal of fast money, despite the danger involved in prostitution, many of the women choose to remain in the sex trade.



Through our community empowerment program, we provide skills-based training to the youth and women in the community coming from GBV and vulnerable backgrounds. They learn bead-making, tailoring and dressmaking, entrepreneurship and microfinance which enable them to be financially stable.

Core activities:

Research topics and prepare presentations for group therapy sessions.

Assist social workers in delivering group therapy sessions.

Provide general psycho-education.

HEALTH

Our health related programs emphasize more on creating awareness on how the community can observe healthy measures and lead a healthy life. We are big on advocacy and making it known to the community, the dangers related with sexual activities as well as other dangers facing the Mlolongo area, and Machakos as a whole.

We also administer deworming in schools on a quarterly basis in a bid to create a healthy learning environment.



Core activities:

Participate in advocacy activities to help create awareness on health related issues within the community.

Assist social workers identify and assess health related needs within the community.

Provide general knowledge to the community on matters SRHR and the importance of being on the know.

ADMIN SUPPORT / SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT



The use of social media has grown dramatically over the last decade, and is now a fundamental tool for not only businesses but also non-profits organizations like ourselves. Social media facilitates our organization in reaching out to potential sponsors, connecting with old and new partners, raising awareness of our work, sharing news and information, and engaging with our support base.

Administrational support is always required and is an important role to ensure that our organization is organized internally and is actively engaging externally.

Core activities:

Create and update case profiles of the children, women and men in need of sponsorship.

Produce and circulate quarterly newsletter.

Revise and create new content for our website.

Maintain our social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram & Twitter).

Photography

FUNDRAISING & GRANT PROPOSALS

Most of our projects and activities always call

Core activities:

Help find grant opportunities and draft proposals.

Develop fundraisers under our Director's supervision.

Engage with potential sponsors and donors.

FEES AND ACCOMMODATION

FEES

Our fees for all programs are currently set at 26 dollars per night. This includes:

- ✓ Accommodation
- ✓ Breakfast
- ✓ Lunch
- ✓ Dinner

This fee covers the living expenses and contribute to maintaining the basic programs of the organization. We consider this amount to be very reasonable. Our volunteers will not be asked to pay great amounts of money like many other 'non-profit' organizations do! We value very much your willingness to offer your time and energy to the project.

Not included:

- Flights
- Transfer to/from airport
- All transport within Kenya
- Snacks
- Recreational activities
- Travel insurance

We can organize transfer to and from the airport for you at approximately 20 dollars each way.

ACCOMMODATION

Our accommodation is within our vocational center, Faraja. The location is ideal and offers volunteers a chance to interact with the youths and women undergoing learning and other programs related to their wellbeing. Our rooms have capacities ranging from 1 to 9 beds depending on the arrangement you will have with us.

The accommodation is basic; you will be provided a bed, blanket and a mosquito net. There is a bathroom within the facility with a toilet and running water.

Breakfast and dinner will be served at Faraja while lunch shall be packed to office or field depending on the work plan for the day. Volunteers will be made to feel very welcome at Faraja. They are expected to come up with initiatives that promote harmony and teamwork within the facility.

HEALTH, SAFETY & SECURITY

HEALTH

With respect to health issues we highly recommend travel insurance (which can be purchased through travel companies, banks, or extended health care providers prior to leaving your home country). There are a variety of hospitals and clinics located in and around the local area. There are also major hospitals within Nairobi for more serious injuries. Most travel insurance companies require the individual to pay for medical costs while in the country and reimburse upon return and submission of claim, so should you find yourself needing medical attention, make sure to keep all your receipts for any costs incurred.

Malaria

The risk of malaria is low in Nairobi and the immediate surrounding areas, however, it is still present and therefore we advise all volunteers to take precautions to minimize the risk. Preventative measures include taking anti-malaria pills, using insect repellent and covering skin during night-time hours. If you plan to travel to the coastal areas be aware that the risk of malaria increases and extra precautions should be taken.

SAFETY

Positive Life Kenya operates in the interiors of the slums among other areas. As such, there is a fair amount of personal responsibility on the part of the volunteers themselves. With regards to an emergency exit policy or plan, it is recommended that within the first few days of arrival, the intern/volunteer register with their embassy which are all located in Nairobi (approximately 20 min - 1hr using taxi/public transport). If an individual is not registered with their embassy there is no way for their home country to help them in emergency situations such as natural disasters or political uprisings. Registering with your embassy is a pretty simple process - you are required to fill out some forms and provide information about your place of residence while in Kenya. They would also be able to provide you with an emergency contact in case of emergency situations.

SECURITY

Due to the nature of the work we do and the communities we serve, our volunteers will be experiencing situations that might be new for them or living conditions that they are not accustomed to. Before making the decision, we recommend you to assess your own physical and emotional ability to handle these situations.

FAQs

1. How can I access the Internet while volunteering with Positive Life Kenya?

While at our office, there's Wi-Fi which you can connect to, either on your own devices – phone and/or computer.

There also other several options: - prepaid and postpaid services from the local ISPs, modems, cyber cafes, etc.

2. Should I bring my laptop with me?

This is a personal choice, however, the majority of our volunteers do decide to bring either a laptop or an iPad. You may find this useful to assist with your work for us, for example; researching lesson ideas if your teaching or writing up documents, and to use in your free time. We recommend that you do have travel insurance which covers the cost of the laptop, just in case something unexpected happens.

3. What is the weather like?

In order to get an idea of what the weather is like you can look at a weather forecast for Nairobi. For example: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/weather/forecast/129>. Generally, the weather in Mlolongo is slightly warmer than in Nairobi as it is lower from the sea level. There are two rainy seasons in Kenya. A short rainy season in November and a longer one that usually lasts from the end of March through May. During the night the temperature falls down, so the mornings can be a bit chilly at times. All around the year it would be a good idea to take a light, but rainproof jacket with you. Especially during the rainy season, you should also bring sport shoes and a warm jacket with you.

4. What clothing is appropriate for me to bring?

For women, most tops are acceptable such as t-shirts/tank tops. The main thing that you should be aware of is with respect to bottoms. Whether a skirt, dress or shorts, it's important that it be at least to knee level (i.e. covering your thighs). If shorter length bottoms are worn, it can result in unwanted and inappropriate attention from men.

For all interns in general a variety of clothing for both warm and cold weather should be brought since the weather can be unpredictable.

5. How much money should I bring with me?

In Kenya we use the Kenyan Shilling, it's probably best to ensure you have some Kenyan Shillings prior to arrival in Kenya – you can do forex in your home country at the airport. There are exchange bureaus within the airport and the city center, however, there are no exchange places where you will be staying. There are ATM machines close to the office which will allow you to withdraw money using VISA or MasterCard cards. There is also a Western Union, should you need it. The local shops and restaurant do not accept credit cards or travel checks, and everything should be paid with Kenyan Shillings.

You should bring enough money to cover the monthly cost (approx. 400€ or \$450 US), which includes accommodation, dinner & breakfast during weekdays and during weekends, it includes all meals. You should also reserve some money for lunch during the weekdays and for the public transport to and from the office on daily bases. A basic lunch in the restaurants in Mlolongo costs between 1-2€ (\$1.5-3 US) and the transport to and from the office is about 1€.

If you are planning to go on a safari or enjoy other activities during the weekends, then you should have extra money for this.

6. How will I get from the airport to my accommodation in Mlolongo?

Before you start your journey to Kenya, you should let the staff at Positive Life Kenya know your itinerary. They will arrange a taxi that will pick you up from the airport and take you to your accommodation in Mlolongo. The taxi driver will have a post or paper with your name written on it. The cost of the journey is 2000KSH, which is about 20€. You should reserve this money in Kenya shillings.

7. Should I fundraise before I come?

At this point we are unable to provide interns with funds to start new projects, therefore if you have any ideas of new self-sustaining projects you would like to implement for the youth and women in the program, fundraising prior to leaving for Kenya should be carried out. Many past interns have found working on projects whether small or large tend to require some money. Fundraising from the local community has shown to be very difficult and is not recommended, thus fundraising should be carried out on an international level.

You can always place a zoom call prior to your travel to inquire of the ongoing projects which will guide you on what to fundraise for.