

# COME JOIN US IN KENYA!

## What is SeeKenya?

In the UK, it's easy to get high-quality eye care treatment. All you have to do is book an appointment at your local Specsavers, be treated by an expert optometrist and you'll walk out with a fresh pair of glasses that day if not very soon after. There's also the option for prescriptive sunglasses, contact lenses and even laser eye surgery. And even better, some people are covered by the NHS - they can access this excellent service for free or for a discounted price.

This is not the case in Kenya. And **that's why we exist.**

Over 95% of Kenyans live without access to eye care according to the World Health Organisation. Let that sink in. **Over 95%.** Millions are struggling to see the blackboard in class, or to see and hold their newest grandchild or handle cash as part of their business. Eye care is an essential healthcare human right. And we work to achieve this by reducing blindness, providing specialist treatment and high-quality eye care services.



Evans and Violet, 2018 and 2024

80% of visual impairment is preventable or treatable. That means while the problem is complex, many of the solutions are simple. **But we need volunteers and supporters like you to make this a reality.**

## What is SeeKenya's story?

SeeKenya works in partnership with the NGO Edfri International, born from our relationship with the King's Church Mid-Sussex. SeeKenya has been an established charity for over 10 years. It all began when Pete Marson, a qualified optometrist, visited Kenya for the first time and was deeply moved by what he saw. He encountered first-hand the widespread poverty, and the devastating effect of a total lack of eye care treatment.

He came back **determined to make a difference.**

Fast-forward more than a decade, we've served thousands of people and set a solid foundation for change to come.

## Where is SeeKenya headed?

Ever since SeeKenya was born in 2010, our vision has been to create a place for the community to come and receive excellent eye care services, and later an eye care hospital to complement the clinic.

Our bi-annual clinics currently see around 2,000 people - which is no mean feat! Nonetheless, with a full-time clinic working with 5 optometrists, **we could see up to 21,600 patients**, serving the Northern Kenya region.

While we will never turn away someone who needs our help, at times our hands are tied because of the limitations on us as a small charity.

As a result, plans and building works are currently underway to establish a permanent eye care clinic at Isiome Hope Centre. Until this is completed, the twice-yearly clinics will continue running. **This is where you come in.**



## Tell me more about the trips...

We typically run two trips a year in March and October. Our teams consist of 12-15 UK volunteers, plus the all-essential optometrists and Kenyan volunteers.

Our trips are normally for 14 days. This includes time for training, 8 days of running the clinics, travelling and some downtime. We aim to treat over a thousand people per trip. While we often see more than a hundred people turning up for our clinics everyday, we aim to treat every patient who walks through our door.

Every person has a reason to be there; we want to return their trust in us by **offering the very best care we can**. The clinics provide eye health screening, refractive eye tests, prescription glasses, sunglasses and medication where required. We also refer and pay for surgery where appropriate. Full training is given so if you have no eye care experience, you soon will.

Excitingly, we are also offering a safari trip included in your time in Kenya. This is an incredible opportunity to see some magnificent wildlife up close, and tick off the 'Big



Five' off your safari bucket list. It's also a chance for some R&R and to bond with your fellow volunteers.

No trip to Kenya would be complete without an experience of the Kenyan church. We're proud of our partnership with Kambakia Christian Centre led by Edward and Fridah Buria. They are the powerhouses of Edfri International, and **their passion to see their community thrive is infectious.**

This also means that we get to join the Kambakia church service on one of their Sundays.\* For some volunteers this is the highlight of their trip and it's easy to see why. They are full of joy and excited to welcome us as their guests. It's a real honour to be a part of their church community.

Our Kenyan volunteers are also part of Kambakia and we love working with them. They assist us in the clinic and are part of our team at every stage of the process, and they carry on the work when we return to the UK.

\*You may be aware we are a Christian charity. Our faith underpins everything we do at SeeKenya. Although it is not a requirement to be Christian to be a part of a SeeKenya trip, we ask that you are sympathetic. We believe in doing everything as a team while we're in Meru, which includes attending Kambakia church. We promise it will be an experience like no other!



## Everything you need to know...

### Will I be given training?

We expect our team members to attend one evening training session ahead of the trip. This session is a chance to meet the rest of the team, ask any questions you might have and learn more about the essential work you'll be doing. Depending on where volunteers are based, this session either takes place face-to-face in Burgess Hill (RH15 9LR) or online via video call.

SeeKenya is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and expects all volunteers and staff to do the same. All volunteers involved in clinics trips will need to undergo a full DBS enhanced check and safeguarding training.

### How much does it cost?

Our trip fees are currently set at £1,900. This includes everything other than the following;

- A ETA VISA, costing approximately £35.
- Any immunisations you may need (please book an appointment with your GP or local travel clinic to arrange for these.)
- Antimalarials, usually Malarone or equivalent (these can be purchased from a pharmacy or travel clinic.)
- Spending money. £100 is plenty for this, but it gives you the chance to return with a memory or two, or a gift for a loved one.

You can pay in a lump sum or in instalments. However, we do require an initial deposit of £950 once flights have been confirmed and when you have confirmed you are joining us. At this stage the payment is non-refundable. The remaining balance must be paid 8 weeks before travelling, unless a payment plan or JustGiving page has been set up and agreed with SeeKenya.

There are lots of ways you can fundraise for a SeeKenya trip. Check out the Fundraising section of our website to find out more, or set up a JustGiving if you're asking friends or family to support you.

## What's the accommodation like?

During our time in Meru, we are guests of Kambakia Christian Centre, which is in the church complex. It is basic, but it is clean with wonderful housekeepers who cook and take care of us. Sleeping arrangements are either in individuals or shared rooms with your own toilets. Just as a heads up, sometimes the water supply is unreliable and hot showers are not a guarantee. But it is important to remember that by Kenyan standards our living arrangements are very luxurious, and we are grateful for the love they show us.

## What if I have more questions?

Feel free to drop our team an email at [volunteer@seekenya.org](mailto:volunteer@seekenya.org) and we'll do our best to answer them.



## Want to hear from previous volunteers?

'Four years ago, I left home for the first time - and found myself in Kenya. Little did I know then how much a month spent in this country would change my life. I've stayed connected with SeeKenya. I believe in their values, where they are envisioning their future, and the legacy they are creating of a permanent, self-sustaining eye care clinic led and run by Kenyans. It is an inspiring organisation to champion.'

*Lizzi Joyner*

'Seeing the impact it has on people's lives and the change that can bring to communities is astonishing.'

*Andy Heald*

'Not only does SeeKenya change thousands of lives across Kenya, it also changes the lives of people in the UK - I'm one of them.'

*Lizzie King*

## Sounds great! Where can I sign up?

We ask all our volunteers-to-be to fill out an application form by emailing [volunteer@seekenya.org](mailto:volunteer@seekenya.org)

## How can I keep supporting SeeKenya when I'm home in the UK?

What a great question - we're so glad you asked! There are so many ways you can spread the word about the life changing work of SeeKenya. From engaging with us on our social media, to taking on an ultramarathon or 5km to donating your birthday.

The work of SeeKenya continues long after the trips end. We have a long-term vision of building a permanent clinic at Isiome, and for that we need to be sustainable in our efforts to bring this dream to life.

Without eye care, millions are limited in their ability to help themselves, their families and their communities to thrive.

Eye care may seem like a small part in helping people help themselves out of poverty, but **it is part of a much bigger picture.**



If you believe in our vision and mission, **we are asking you to join us in this great adventure** of bringing life-changing sight to thousands in Kenya.

We'd love to hear your ideas about how you might get involved - and we'd appreciate every volunteer to commit to doing one thing for SeeKenya upon your return.

