

**LOGISTICAL INFORMATION FOR JOURNALISTS  
WISHING TO TRAVEL TO REFUGEE CAMPS IN KENYA  
JANUARY 2008**

UNHCR welcomes your interest in the refugees living in refugee camps in Kenya; Kakuma and Dadaab. We do, though, have a large number of journalists and delegations traveling to our refugee camps, and the first priority of UNHCR and other international organizations must be assisting the refugees. We therefore ask you to be completely self-sufficient when you come to Kenya.

**IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR ALL JOURNALISTS TO INFORM UNHCR A MINIMUM OF TWO (2) WEEKS IN ADVANCE OF THEIR ARRIVAL IN KENYA. THIS IS THE MINIMUM TIME NEEDED TO OBTAIN THE NECESSARY PERMISSION AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAVEL TO THE CAMPS. (SEE ALSO SECTION BELOW AND ATTACHED PDF FILE ON GOVERNMENT PERMISSION.)**

Please send an email with the following details;

Your name

Your organization

Function (writer, photographer, cameraman, soundman)

Travel dates in Kakuma/Dadaab

Areas to be visited in Kakuma/Dadaab

A letter from your organization stating the purpose of your visit in detail and areas of focus

A list of the equipment you will be bringing into the country and its value

To the following e-mail addresses:

To: [nyabera@unhcr.org](mailto:nyabera@unhcr.org)

Cc: [adongo@unhcr.org](mailto:adongo@unhcr.org)

[opile@unhcr.org](mailto:opile@unhcr.org) (for Kakuma)

[wordleya@unhcr.org](mailto:wordleya@unhcr.org) (for Dadaab)

**VISAS**

A visa is necessary for entering Kenya.

**UNHCR does not assist in obtaining visas; please make arrangements before flying to Kenya.**

## **GOVERNMENT PERMISSION**

Once you get to Kenya, you need permission from the government to visit refugee sites; this applies to anyone wanting to go to Kakuma or Dadaab. Please note that we will not make further arrangements for your visit until Government authorization is obtained. Government clearance is sought from the Ministry of Immigration and Registration of Persons. The contact person at the Refugee Affairs Department is Mr. Peter Kusimba. The telephone numbers are 254 20 248675 or 254 20 250120. The fax number is (254) 20 315573. Mr. Kusimba's mobile phone number is (254) 20 209 3675. They do not have an official email address unfortunately. If you are based in Nairobi, the Refugee Affairs Department office is situated off University Way in Maendeleo House (next to the Goethe/German Institute) on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor.

**Please ensure that you obtain confirmation of Government authorization prior to making final plans for travel to Nairobi.**

## **TRAVEL TO THE CAMPS**

Inside Kenya, UNHCR has flights two times a week (Tuesday and Thursday) from Nairobi to Kakuma Camp, where most of the Sudanese refugees are. UNHCR also has flights twice a week (Monday and Wednesday) going to camps in Dadaab, where the majority of Somali refugees are. If space is available, we will offer seats to journalists at a fee. Charges are USD.280.00 for a return trip to Dadaab and USD. 380 for a return trip to Kakuma. Ticket fees are to be paid a day before travel at UNHCR Finance Office. Check in is at Wilson Airport, ALS, from 06:00am to **06:30am** at which time we **close** the passenger manifest. **YOU WILL NOT BE REIMBURSED IF YOU MISS THE FLIGHT**. There is an airport tax fee of Kshs.300.00 per passenger that is to be paid to the ALS personnel on ground for which a receipt shall be issued. Please understand there is no guarantee you can get on these flights, as they are intended to shuttle aid workers around. **Note: Luggage is restricted to 10 kg per passenger. Special arrangements must be made for television crews wishing to carry more weight than specified.**

## **OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION:**

**Equipment:** Prior to your arrival in Nairobi, please send us a list of the equipment that you will be bringing into the country and its value. There have been incidences where international crews have had their entry delayed because of lack of appropriate paperwork for their equipment. In such cases, you may be required to pay a **non-refundable** fee of 500USD or a percentage of the total value. If you send the list in advance, UNHCR will handle the customs paperwork as a courtesy to journalists.

**Accommodation:** Accommodation for journalists in **Dadaab** is 700Kshs per night in the UNHCR guesthouse rooms (ensuite bathrooms), 1200Kshs per night in the self-contained house (shower room, WC, large bedroom and living room). Food is 800Kshs per day. Accommodation is provided subject to availability as staff members are given priority.

Accommodation for journalists in **Kakuma** is Kshs1000 per day in the UNHCR Guest House. The cost of meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) totals Kshs800 per day. Due to the

high number of visitors to the camp we recommend that booking is made at least three weeks in advance. Late booking will be considered on a case by case basis depending on availability.

Partner agencies working in the camps can sometimes provide accommodation if need be. (Any journalist living outside the UNHCR or Agencies compound is doing so at his or her own security risk). Beds are provided at the UNHCR guesthouse but bring your own mosquito net and mosquito repellent. The short rains mean that malaria is now a high risk. Prophylaxis is also recommended.

Money: Take as much cash with you as you need for the trip as there are no banks or ATMs in the vicinity of the camps.

Food and Water: Consider taking snacks – energy bars, nuts, biscuits, powdered soups etc. – with you or buying them in Nairobi before you set out for the camps. Food, some snacks, bottled water, soft drinks and beer are available at the UNHCR cafeteria and kiosks in the area.

Weather Patterns: In Dadaab, November-December is the short rainy season; roads are in a bad state (flooded with 1-2 feet of water and mud). The temperature is still high (around 30 degrees Celsius) and relatively humid. January-March are the hottest months, temperatures reach at the highest 45-50 degrees Celsius. There is a longer rainy season at the beginning of March. The effects of El Nino are however altering weather patterns.

Electricity: There is electricity in both camps throughout the day and night. The UNHCR or Agencies compound is powered by diesel generators; there is electric power throughout in the offices and the rooms. Certain areas in the camp such as UNHCR field offices also have electricity but it is advisable for the journalists to charge their equipment while at the UNHCR or Agencies compound.

Interpreters: Interpreters charge about Kshs 300 per day. It may sometimes be difficult to get them as they are usually engaged in other activities in the camp. English is more widely spoken in Kakuma than in Dadaab.

Road Travel: Some journalists wish to travel to Dadaab Camp by road. A security escort is a must when travelling from Garissa to Dadaab. The convoy from Garissa to Dadaab leaves at 14:00 on Thursdays and Sundays and return from Dadaab to Garissa on Wednesdays and Saturday mornings. Days in between are almost impossible to arrange as the police vehicles are in short supply.

Camp Travel: Special escorts are a must when travelling within the camps or beyond the offices. Fore planning is needed a few days in advance so that unnecessary pressure is not put on our security officers and the administrative police.

Rental cars: The best option for car hire is in Nairobi as the quality of cars in Dadaab and Kakuma is often very poor, especially with the current road conditions. You will need a

four by four vehicle when travelling by road to the camps.

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Contact for Information on Chad and Sudan at UNHCR HQ in Geneva:

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**For the latest stories on Kakuma and Dadaab Camps please check our Web site,  
[WWW.UNHCR.ORG](http://WWW.UNHCR.ORG).**