

[Volunteering in Kenya](#)

As a volunteer in the IHF Center Nakuru, Kenya

A dream becomes true: Already as a little girl I dreamt of going to Africa to help children there. It was about five years ago when I saw a documentary about Africa that I decided, I wanted to go right after high school. To me it appeared the best time to go, since all my studies were done and I could not study for anything else, because I have no new classes yet. After spending weeks, looking for the right organization I finally found the advertisement of International Humanity Foundation. 'This is my chance, to help without having to get financial help from my parents and relatives!' and immediately I applied.

Now that I am here at the children's home in Nakuru I am learning new things every day. Currently I am the youngest volunteer here which I sometimes get to feel in the way that I have no experience in particular situations. I am very grateful to have many very friendly and open people around me who help me.

Working with the children is often a challenge I must say, because not only is the culture very different, but also their perception of the world. I am surprised by some things the children ask me, which to me are very normal and logical to me, but they had never heard about it.

A regular day here starts at 5:30am for the children – except for weekends – when they get their tea and towards 6am they start leaving for school. After all of them have left – or at least all the ones that are not sick – we have time to do our online tasks, go to the hospital with sick children, help our cook cooking lunch, going to teacher-parents meetings, going to town to buy necessary utensils, and whatever else is needed. At lunch time some of the children come back to eat and some stay at school and eat there. Only the smallest ones stay here for the afternoon, all the others have to go back to school. In the evening, since they are in different schools they come home at different times, and we start playing games with them – they love football! – or help them with homework. Sometimes there are also big activities planned, though more on weekends than during the week. Saturday and Sunday are the only two days when we look after the children all day long, so these are our most exhausting days – fun never the less!

We are facing many difficulties with that many children around us – 70 children is quite a number to me! Problems like illnesses – meaning going to the hospital and waiting there for several hours – making sure the children are good in school, which means tutoring, helping with homework, doing extra work with them for practicing, and many things more. Every day is a challenge, and I like to every day have a new "task" to achieve.

So far all my experiences have helped me grow mentally, and to understand this completely different culture. Already now, that my third week is over, I think about how sad that it is that I only stay here for two months. I wish I could be here for longer, trying to have a bigger impact in the lives of those children, showing them how much potential they have and how they can use it, giving them the love they deserve, giving them an idea what life is all about, how important education is... I could go on with this list. I really think they are great children and I am happy to

see that there are people from all over the world, willing to give them their time and influencing and teaching them, everyone in their very own way.

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