
Career Transition to Nairobi: Information for UN Staff & Partners

UNON HR Talent Development Unit

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28 April 2026

Overview



1. Nairobi duty station and Job Market
2. Networking opportunities
3. Visa and work permit for UN spouses
4. Integration to Nairobi duty station



1. Nairobi Duty Station and Job Market

Nairobi

- An economic hub for Kenya and the East African region
- Over 50 UN entities have a presence in Kenya
- Over 4,500 UN staff access the UN Campus in Nairobi
- UN Campus = 140 acres next to a native forest

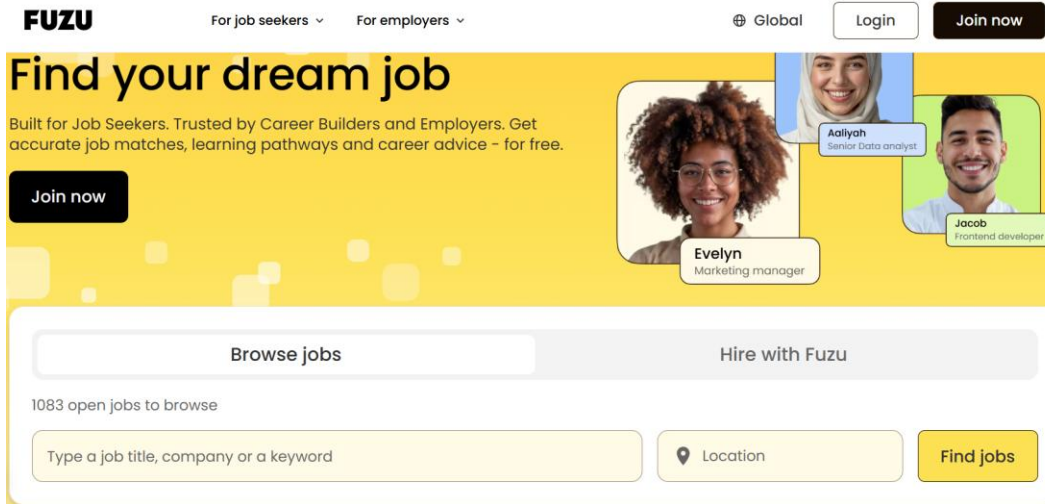
Job Market

- English-speaking
- Expats communities & networks (UN, Embassies, int.l schools, int.l NGOs, etc)
- Entrepreneurs (lots of creativity by Kenyans and non-Kenyans)



1. Nairobi Duty Station and Job Market: FYI – How do Kenyans look for a job?

- Check the website of the company for vacancies
- Job platforms on the internet:
 - [FUZU](#)
 - [Brighter Monday Kenya](#)
 - [My Job Mag](#)
- Professional Recruiting Agencies (high fee, e.g. \$1,500)
- CV -> interview -> selection result
- Photo on CV is not customary nor recommended
- Networking is important
 - Industry annual conferences
 - Social networks



The screenshot shows the FUZU website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'FUZU' logo, 'For job seekers', 'For employers', 'Global', 'Login', and 'Join now' buttons. Below the navigation, a yellow banner reads 'Find your dream job' with a subtext: 'Built for Job Seekers. Trusted by Career Builders and Employers. Get accurate job matches, learning pathways and career advice - for free.' There are three profile cards for 'Aaliyah Senior Data analyst', 'Evelyn Marketing manager', and 'Jacob Frontend developer'. Below the banner, there are two main buttons: 'Browse jobs' and 'Hire with Fuzu'. Under 'Browse jobs', it says '1083 open jobs to browse'. There is a search bar with the placeholder 'Type a job title, company or a keyword', a 'Location' dropdown, and a 'Find jobs' button.



The screenshot shows the Brighter Monday Kenya website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the 'brightermonday Kenya' logo, 'Job Seekers', 'Career', 'Employers', and 'Help Center' dropdown menus.

Explore and discover
the right job for you!

Any Job Functions ▾ Any Industries ▾ Any Locations ▾ Any Experience Levels ▾



1. Nairobi Duty Station and Job Market:

FYI – Expat-employing sectors in Kenya

- Technology & Digital Services
- Finance & Fintech
- Renewable Energy & Sustainability
- Hospitality & High-End Tourism
- Healthcare & Life Sciences
- Agribusiness & Agri-Tech
- Logistics & Supply Chain

Note: most expats working in these sectors came to Kenya with the job.



2. Networking opportunities

- InterNations (www.internations.org/nairobi-expats)
For expats and Kenyan professionals alike. Monthly social gatherings and activity-based groups for socializing and networking.
- Social networks in your residential area/neighbourhood
- [Learn Swahili at UNON](#) and practice with the locals.
- **UN Kenya Local Expatriate Spouse Association (UNKLESA)**
(www.unklesa.org)



3. Visa and work permit for UN Spouses

- A **Dependent Pass** will be issued to the UN spouse and dependents. Subsequently, UN spouse may apply for a **Work Permit**. There are different classes of Work Permit. (UNON Host Country Services Unit colleague will highlight this today.)
- However, same-sex spouses/partners may not be issued a Dependent Pass, and obtaining Work Permit may be difficult.
- Please see p.40-41 of the Staff Orientation Document called “[Karibuni Amazing Kenya](#)” for information for LGBTIQ+ colleagues and family.

KaribUNI Amazing Kenya 



LGBTIQ+ and Kenya as a Duty Station

UN-GLOBE is the UN system-wide group that advocates for the inclusion, rights, and equality of LGBTIQ+ employees and their families in the UN system. UN-GLOBE supports individuals with guidance on workplace inclusion, legal issues, and navigating life as an LGBTIQ+ employee or dependent.

Please feel free to reach out to UN-GLOBE Focal Points listed under Kenya, and for UN agencies such as UNEP, UN-Habitat Headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. Find the contacts of various UN-GLOBE members on the [UN-GLOBE website](#).

If relevant to you, we recommend you do so before accepting the job offer.

Legal Framework – Kenya on LGBTIQ+

Same-sex relationships and marriages are not legally recognized in

4. Integration to Nairobi Staff orientation document “Karibuni Amazing Kenya”

has practical information about living in Nairobi/Kenya (e.g. a list of international schools, hospitals, residential areas, shopping, electronic money, museums, importing cars...).

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UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE AT NAIROBI

HOST COUNTRY SERVICES UNIT (HCSU)

Work Permit Applications for Accompanying Spouses of UN Staff

A guide for UN staff spouses who wish to apply for work permits in Kenya.



Background

Spouses of UN staff
in Kenya are issued
with Dependent
Passes

A dependent pass
does not
automatically
authorize employment

To work legally in
Kenya, a work permit
is required

Legal Framework

Spouse work authorization in Kenya is governed by a clear set of legal instruments:

Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act, 2011

The primary legislation governing immigration and residency status for foreign nationals in Kenya.

Special Legal Provisions for Spouses of UN Staff

Specific provisions recognizing the unique status of UN staff dependants, including fee exemptions.

Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Regulations, 2012

Detailed regulatory framework implementing the Act, including work permit classifications and application procedures.

Work Permit Classifications

Kenya's immigration system provides a **comprehensive range of work permit classes**. Each class corresponds to a specific professional activity, investment type, or purpose of stay. Selecting the correct class is essential for a successful application.

Applications are processed online via the:
Kenya Foreign Nationals Service (eFNS) Portal.

<https://fns.immigration.go.ke/infopack/permits/>

Class A

Prospecting and Mining

Class B

Agriculture and
Animal Husbandry

Class F

Specific Manufacturing

Class I

Approved Religious &
Charitable Activities

Common Permit Classes for UN Spouses



Class C – Prescribed Profession

Issued to persons who are members of a recognized profession (e.g., medicine, law, engineering) and intend to practice that profession in Kenya.



Class D – Employment

Issued to persons offered **specific employment by a specific employer**. Requires a confirmed job offer and supporting contract documentation.



Class G – Trade / Business / Consultancy

Issued to persons who intend to engage in a partnership, specific trade, business, or consultancy arrangement in Kenya.



Class N – Digital Nomad

Issued to persons who work remotely within Kenya for a company registered outside the country. Ideal for spouses employed abroad.

WORK PERMIT FEES

KES 20,000
Processing Fee

Non-refundable, payable at time of application submission.

KES 500,000
Issuance Fee

Annual fee payable upon approval of the work permit.

Gratis
EAC Member States

Citizens of East Africa Community member states are exempt from permit fees.

Fee Exemption: Legal Notice No. LN35/2019

LEGAL NOTICE No. 35

THE KENYA CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION ACT

(No. 12 of 2011)

THE KENYA CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION
REGULATIONS, 2012

(LN. 64 OF 2012)

EXEMPTION

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred by regulation 54 of the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Regulations, 2012, the Cabinet Secretary for Interior and Co-ordination of National Government exempts spouses and dependants of UN staff serving in Kenya from payment of work permit fees.

Dated the 1st April, 2019.

FRED MATIANG'I,
*Cabinet Secretary for Interior
and Co-ordination of National Government.*

What the Notice Provides

Issued on **1st April 2019**, Legal Notice No. 35 was issued by Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i under the authority of Regulation 54 of the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Regulations, 2012.

It exempts spouses and dependents of UN staff serving in Kenya from payment of work permit fees — a significant benefit **that must be formally cited in every application.**

Key Application Requirements

Core Documents Required

- Valid job offer/Confirmed job offer
- Valid dependant/residence status
- Copy of spouse's passport
- Copy of UN staff member's passport details
- Proof of relationship (marriage certificate)
- Supporting documents depending on the Permit class e.g. Proof of marriage, contract etc

Spousal Work Permit application – Steps



Obtain a valid job offer



Prepare necessary documentation



Create eFNS account



Fill online permit application Form 25



Upload Legal Notice. No. 35 – to support waiver of work permit fees



Upload other supporting documents



Submit application

Common Mistakes

ITEM

01



Starting work before permit approval

Must not start working before permit approval

ITEM

02



Working on a dependent's pass

Assuming that the dependants pass allows a spouse to work

ITEM

03



Not checking notifications on eFNS

Regularly log in to the eFNS portal to check for application queries, document rejections or approval notifications

ITEM

04



Changing jobs on the same permit

Permit is tied to the employer and type of work. Any change in job requires a new approval

Resources

Legal notice No. LN35/2019

Foreign Nationals Service
(eFNS)

- <https://fns.immigration.go.ke/>
- <https://immigration.go.ke/passes-and-work-permits/>

Conclusion

While spouses of UN staff members benefit from special Immigration privileges, they are not automatically authorized to work.

THANK YOU



Introducing UNKLESA – United Nations
Kenya Local Expatriate Spouse Association

Supporting spouses and families as they
settle, connect, and grow.

Overview

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About UNKLESA

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Activities & Programs

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How Members Stay Connected

About UNKLESA



- Recognized Spouse Association at the Nairobi duty station
- Supports spouses and partners of UN personnel
- Works across UN agencies in Nairobi and neighbouring countries

Mission: To enhance members' well-being through personal and professional development and collaboration.

Reach: More than 150 members each year from 50+ countries, active mainly in Nairobi, and supported by UNKLESA activities.

Why Join UNKLESA ?

Joining UNKLESA helps spouses:

- Build a professional and social network
- Learn about job opportunities in Nairobi and within the UN ecosystem
- Participate in skills-building workshops and training
- Connect with other families experiencing a similar transition



Activities & Programs

1. Professional Development & Career Support

- Navigating AI – Careers, Research
- Project Management Session
- Inspira and UNV webinar

2. Safety, Security & Life Skills Training

- Women's Security Awareness Training by UNDSS
- First Aid Training / Emergency Life Support by JMS

3. Community Building & Social Networking

- Babel Café (language & cultural exchange)
- Diplomatic Mingle
- Online Town Hall

4. Social, Cultural & Recreational Activities

- Family Picnic and Farm Visit
- Kitengela Glass Studio Visit
- International Women's Day Celebration

5. Community Outreach & Volunteering

- Visit to the Orphanage and School
- World Prematurity Day Donation Drive (Maternity Hospital visit)



Support for Spouse Employment

UNKLESA supports this by:

- Sharing job leads and opportunities
- Hosting career development sessions
- Facilitating professional networking
- Connecting members with organizations and employers



Membership

Who can join?

Spouses and recognised partners of staff from UN agencies and other Diplomatic community in Nairobi.

Benefits of membership:

- Access to exclusive events and workshops
 - Professional and social networking
 - Community support system
 - Opportunities to contribute and grow
-

How to Join

Steps to become a member:

1. Visit the UNKLESA website, [JOIN US](#) page, or contact the UNKLESA office.

Our email - unon-unklesa@un.org

2. Complete the membership form.
3. Pay the annual membership fee.



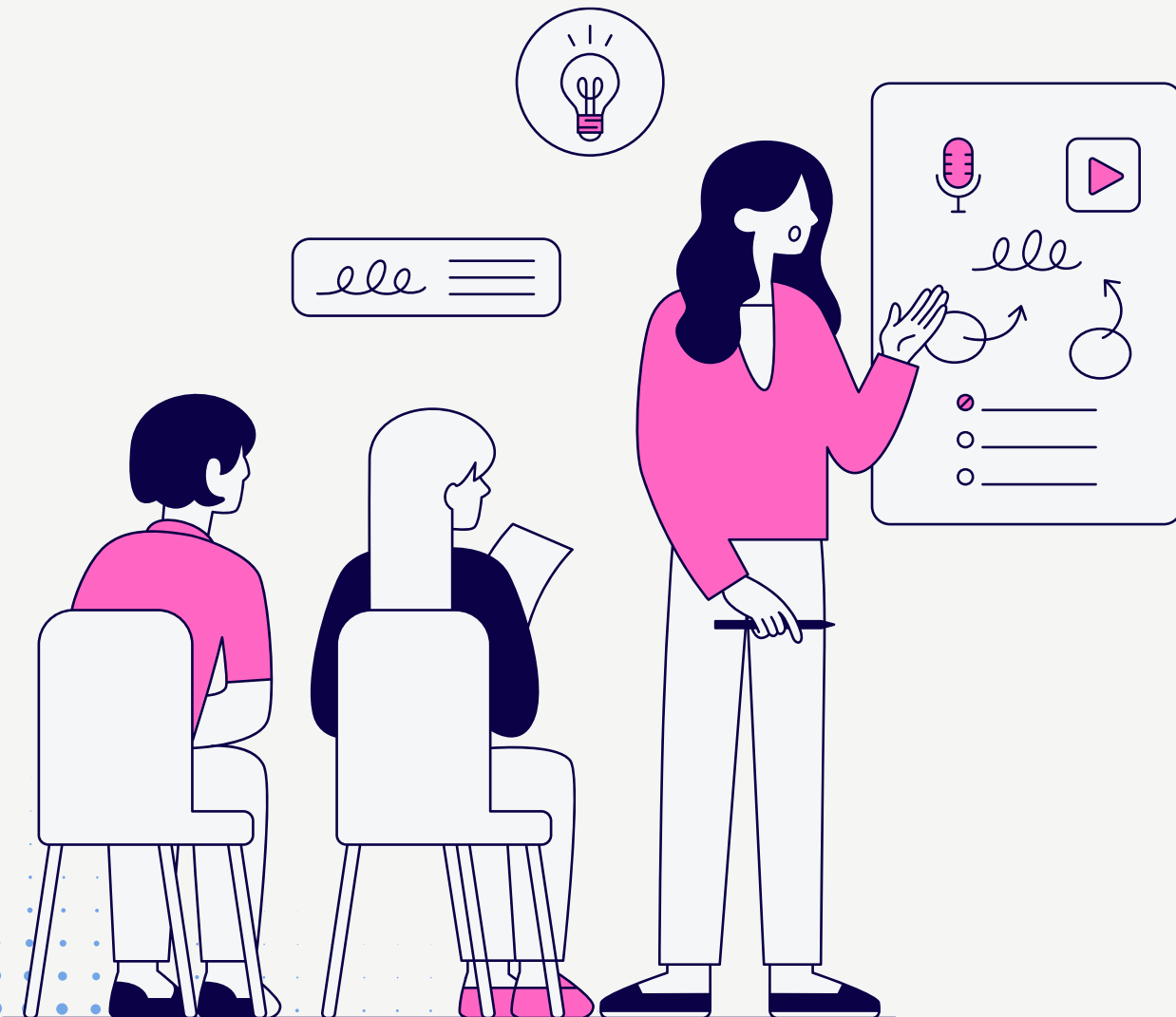
Get Involved

Members can also volunteer with UNKLESA, which is a great way to build experience:

- Become an office Volunteer
- Joining one of the 4 working groups (Communication and Outreach, Advocacy and networking, Training and Development, Family and peer support)
- Be a part of other UN agencies' events.
- Share your skills and ideas by facilitating a member-led event.



Stay Connected & Welcome



Stay connected through:

- Mailing list
- Website- [UNKLESA](#)
- Social media channels

We look forward to welcoming you to Nairobi and to UNKLESA.

Making your transition smoother, more connected, and professionally enriching.



Thank you

28 April, 2026

