



HELINA 2013 Conference
Eldoret, Kenya, 7-8 October 2013
Evidence Based Informatics for e-Health in Africa
<http://conf13.helina-online.org/>

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

8th Health Informatics in Africa Conference 7th – 8th October 2013

Eldoret, Kenya

The attached pages provide helpful information to prepare you for your travel to Eldoret for the HELINA Conference.

Please read the information in this document carefully.

Should you have any questions or concerns about your participation, please contact Dr. Davies Kimanga (daviesomari@yahoo.com, Telephone +254-722-218-088)

We'll see you soon in Eldoret!

IMPORTANT:

We recommend you print your registration ticket(s) before traveling to bring with you.

You may also wish to print the attached letter of transit, or additional information about travel in Kenya and the HELINA event. Please consider the environmental impact of printing before printing unnecessary pages.



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Kenya Health Informatics Association (KeHIA)

Westlands

Waumini House, 2nd Floor

Nairobi, Kenya

RE: Transit to and attendance of 2013 HELINA Conference

To Whom It May Concern:

The bearer of this letter is a registered attendee of the 2013 HELINA meeting, a conference being held at The Noble Conference Centre in Eldoret, Kenya, from 7th October 2013 to 8th October 2013. The two day-long conference is sponsored by the Kenya Health Informatics Association (KeHIA) and the Pan Africa Health Informatics Association (HELINA).

During these two days, this individual will participate in plenary presentations and discussions, as well as relevant informatics related business meetings given that continental and global informatics experts will all be in once place. All events will be held at The Noble Conference Centre, who can be reached via telephone on +254-716-291-935. Participant accommodations have been booked through Starbucks Hotel, Cicada Hotel, The Boma Inn, and PineTree Gardens Hotel.

We hereby support any efforts to assist the bearer of this letter in travel to Eldoret and request your support in issuance of any travel visas that may be necessary. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Davies Kimanga

Deputy Chairman

Kenya Health Informatics Association
(KeHIA)

Dr. Ghislain Kouematchoua

Deputy Chairman

Pan Africa Health Informatics in Africa
(HELINA)



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WELCOME TO HELINA 2013!

Welcome to the 8th Health Informatics in Africa **Conference** (HELINA 2013)! This year, we're pleased to be in Eldoret, Kenya. Over the next several pages, we've gathered some important information for you to review before you depart for Eldoret. Please read it, and let us know if you have any questions about the event. Should you have specific travel-related questions, please contact your travel agent. We suggest you keep a copy of this document with you while traveling.

Our event this year will be held at the beautiful Noble Conference Centre. Noble has plenty of space for our group to meet, network, play, relax, and unwind. Take time to explore the facility while you're here and take advantage of everything it has to offer. And when the days get warm, you can even take a dip in the pool to cool down!

This year, we have a team of talented volunteers from the Eldoret & Nairobi areas to assist you with questions throughout the week. They've donated their time to be here to help us out — be sure to thank them for their efforts!

For those of you coming from outside Eldoret and particularly outside Kenya, thank you for making the journey. As you probably know, Kenya is still recovering from a recent terrorist incident and our presence here sends a powerful message of solidarity to Kenyans and supports their very important tourism-based economy. We've included information here on staying safe and secure during your visit, and staff and volunteers are ready to help you with any questions or concerns you have.

Let us know what we can do to make this week and this space one that helps you thrive. On behalf of our outstanding local organizing committee, the staff at The Noble Conference Centre, and your HELINA volunteers, welcome. Enjoy the HELINA 2013 Conference!

Dr. Kimanga & Dr. Kouematchoua



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HELINA 2013

The HELINA meeting will take place alongside the OpenMRS 2013 Implementers meeting which starts on 6th October, 2013 through to 11th October, 2013. Eldoret has sentimental attachment to the OpenMRS community as here sits the first implementation of OpenMRS nearly a decade ago.

The OpenMRS meeting organizers have been very kind to the HELINA meeting and have extended plenty of material assistance to us, and for that HELINA is most grateful. You are therefore requested to be respectful, cordial and courteous to the OpenMRS meeting arrangements that you will encounter during your stay in Eldoret.

More details about the OpenMRS 2013 meeting here - <http://events.openmrs.org/>

ELDORET, KENYA: GENERAL INFORMATION

Eldoret is a town in western Kenya. It is the capital and largest town in Uasin Gishu County. Lying south of the Cherangani Hills, the local elevation varies from about 2100 metres above sea level at the airport to more than 2700 metres in nearby areas (7000–9000 feet). The population was 289,380 in the 2009 census, and it is currently the fastest growing town in Kenya. It is also the 2nd largest urban centre in midwestern Kenya after Nakuru and currently the 5th largest urban centre in Kenya.

The name “Eldoret” is based on the Maasai word “eldore” meaning “stony river” because the bed of the nearby Sosiani River is very stony. The white settlers decided to call it Eldoret to make it easier for them to pronounce it. At the start of the colonial era, the area was occupied by the Nandi, before that by the Maasai and before that the Sirikwa. The town and surrounding North Rif Valley are home to champion distance runners. The region is well-known throughout the world for training distance runners due to its high altitude.

- **Time zone:** EAT (UTC+3)
- **Currency:** 1 US Dollar equals 87.40 Kenyan Shillings (as of 19 September 2013)
<http://www.centralbank.go.ke/index.php/rate-and-statistics/exchange-rates-2>
- **October climate:** Average high 22°C (72°F), average low 13°C (56°F), monthly precipitation 64 mm (2.5 in)
- **Communication:** GSM band 900 MHz & 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz 3G service available (see communication section)
- **Electricity:** Primary socket “Type G” British BS-1363, 220-240 Volts, 50 Hz. .
http://www.adaptelec.com/index.php?main_page=document_general_info&products_id=213



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- **Bus transportation from Nairobi to Eldoret:**
<http://www.easycoach.co.ke/nairobi-to-upcountry.html> and <http://northriftshuttle.net/>

TRAVEL

Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (NBO) in Nairobi is approximately twenty minutes from the main business district, and is the primary arrival point for visitors flying into Kenya. A large part of the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport has been recently destroyed by fire. Depending on construction schedules, you may be processed through a temporary international arrivals area within an adjacent parking garage, or you may arrive in the refurbished terminal. Please allow extra time and pay close attention to signs and directions while at the airport to understand rapidly-changing temporary arrangements.

Visas should not be not required to enter Kenya to attend HELINA 2013 for the following nationalities: The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Brunei, Burundi, Cyprus, Dominica, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, the Gambia, Grenada, Grenadines, Ghana, Jamaica, Kiribati, Lesotho, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Namibia, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Solomon Islands, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tonga, Trinidad & Tobago, Tuvalu, Uganda, Vanuatu, Zambia, Zimbabwe. *Visas are available for purchase on entry at international airports for almost all nationalities.* The current costs for tourist visas are US\$50/€40/GB£30 for a single-entry visa. There is a separate line at immigration for those who require tourist visas. Ensure that you are in the correct line at the airport to avoid additional wait. No photos are required, just cash for payment.

Nationalities from the following countries *are not eligible for visa on entry*, and must apply beforehand: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cameroon, Iraq, Jordan, Kosovo, Lebanon, Mali, North Korea, Senegal, Somalia, Syria, Palestine, Tajikistan.

Note: The previous paragraph was compiled from best available sources, but may not be accurate. Consult your travel agent or the Kenya Department of Immigration for specific details.

If you are interested in **additional tourism** during your stay in Kenya, please consult with your hotel's reception desk or contact our HELINA recommended travel agent, Endoroto Travel, by phone at +254-721-376-197 or by e-mail at endorototraveltd@gmail.com.

Ground transportation is provided between Eldoret International Airport and HELINA conference accommodations. Drivers will have a list of registered attendees and will be carrying



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official HELINA/KeHIA signs. A conference shuttle bus will travel between The Noble Conference Centre and official HELINA hotels morning and evening during the week. For questions about ground transportation during the week, contact your hotel's reception desk or the HELINA registration & help desk.

STAYING SAFE AND SECURE

The recent tragic attacks at a Nairobi shopping mall resulted in lost lives and injured people from all walks of life. The Kenya government responded quickly to the incident, and has stated that this is an isolated incident which has been brought under control. Normal tourist-related activities are going on in all parts of the country despite this grave and enormous challenge. However, the government has scaled up security in tourist and other social places throughout the country. You should plan for increased wait times and delays while in Kenya as a result. In solidarity with those affected this weekend, we are planning a HELINA blood donation drive in collaboration with OpenMRS and the Kenya National Blood Transfusion Services office in Eldoret. We'll share details about the blood drive at the beginning of the week.

The latest attack follows other violent attacks in the country over the past several years. As with many places around the world, there continues to be a high threat from terrorism, including kidnapping. Attacks have previously occurred in Nairobi, Coast Province including Mombasa, and North Eastern Province. As always, exercise heightened caution when traveling in foreign countries. Avoid carrying large amounts of cash and don't wear expensive watches, jewelry, or items of sentimental value. Leave your passport in the hotel safe and carry a photocopy for ID. Avoid walking around after dark, especially in isolated areas. If your travel takes you through Nairobi, for your personal safety avoid the Westlands and Eastleigh areas of the city, as well as dangerous low income areas including all township or slum areas. If you are attacked, don't resist. Only stay in accommodations with good perimeter security. If in any doubt, seek advice from your travel agent or the Kenya Tourism Federation, telephone+ 254-208-001-000.

Eldoret is a smaller city a half-day's drive from Nairobi, and is generally considered very safe. However, you should be vigilant at all times and follow any security advice given by HELINA staff, your hotel, or your employer/travel sponsor. Do not leave your hotel or the event venue alone; always travel in groups for your safety. The Noble Conference Centre has increased its security plans in light of the past weekend's events. Everyone entering the property will be checked against the HELINA event registration list and subject to search. Please wear your event name tag and carry identification (such as a photocopy of your passport) at all times. Uniformed security and police, including dog handlers, will be on patrol at the facility at all times.



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The Kenya Tourism Federation operates a safety and security tourist helpline that is staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, and can connect travelers with safety and security help as well as travel information. The helpline is available at +254-202-679-838 and is dedicated to receiving emergency and incident calls. Alternative mobile numbers are available: +254-738-617-499 and +254-722-745-645.

SHOPPING, BANKING, AND DINING

There are a variety of shopping and dining options in Eldoret. Message boards will be posted at the event to organize trips with other attendees. For your safety, do not travel alone. To learn more about nearby options in the area, stop by the registration and help desk.

Foreign currency can be exchanged at malls, banks, and authorized money exchange shops. For your safety, you should try to avoid carrying large amounts of currency. Some large shops accept major credit cards such as Visa and MasterCard. ATM's are available at banks throughout Eldoret to obtain Kenyan Shillings. Ask for details at the registration and help desk or your hotel's reception desk. Consult your bank in advance to learn what fees they may charge to access your money while in Kenya, and to ensure you have access to your bank account.

Food and drink at other times are available on-site at The Noble Conference Centre, or at restaurants nearby in Eldoret. Ask for details at the registration and help desk.

COMMUNICATION

Safaricom is the largest mobile network in Kenya. SIM cards and service credit are available for purchase at airports and will also be available at The Noble Conference Centre. After purchasing a starter SIM card, you should be able to access the Internet instantly if you have an Internet-capable handset, smartphone, or modem. However, when using your account balance to pay for access, the prices are steep. It is much cheaper to purchase a data bundle. See <http://www.safaricom.co.ke/personal/internet/data-bundles/prepay-databundles> for details. You may purchase the bundles by charging your account with scratch top-up cards and then dialing *544#. Be warned that once the data bundle is finished, the Internet access will be done by fallback method using your current account balance, which is much more expensive.

If you have trouble using your mobile phone with a Kenyan provider during the conference, please contact the registration & help desk for assistance.



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Free wireless Internet service at The Noble Conference Centre will be available for registered attendees. See the registration desk to obtain an access code. The venue where you are staying may also have free wireless Internet access. Contact your hotel's reception desk for details.

STAYING HEALTHY

Protect yourself from mosquitoes, as they carry numerous diseases such as dengue fever, malaria and yellow fever. If necessary, get expert advice on malaria preventatives. Guard against mosquito bites. Wear long sleeves and long trousers and apply an effective insect repellent, for example, one containing DEET. Use a bed net every night, and if you are unsure of how to use the net properly, ask the staff at your hotel for help.

All water should be treated, either by boiling or through purifying tablets or filters. This includes Nairobi as well as rural areas. Filtered water will be available at the Noble Conference Centre. If you are unsure, ask. Typhoid fever is a risk and, like malaria prophylactics, the vaccination is not 100% effective. All fruits and vegetables should be thoroughly washed.

If you get flu-like symptoms, including fever, consult a doctor immediately. There will be physicians onsite at the conference, and health care services are available in Eldoret. Contact the HELINA registration & help desk or your hotel reception desk for assistance.

Finally, remember to get enough rest, enough to eat, and drink plenty of fluids. We know you will be enjoying yourself with your friends and colleagues, but remember to take care of yourself so you can enjoy the week. Remember Eldoret is at a high elevation (8800 feet or 2700 meters) which increases the likelihood for individuals to experience dehydration, especially those who participate in exercise, so keep fluids on hand to drink throughout the day. A "quiet room" will be available if you need a calm place to relax. Ask for details at the HELINA registration & help desk.

Enjoy the Conference!!