



ICELAND

Lava Trek

4th - 8th September 2024

Adventure awaits you....



Brighter futures across the globe

About COCO

COCO is a UK registered charity, dedicated to providing sustainable sources of quality education to children living in poor and marginalised communities. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 98 million children don't have the opportunity to go to school. Whilst we might not have the power to change every child's situation, COCO always aims to have a huge impact on the vulnerable communities we are currently partnered with.

Informed by the belief that an **education provides children with the best possible chance of breaking the cycle of poverty**, we particularly focus on more vulnerable groups including women, girls and orphans, in hard-to-reach, often extremely rural locations. **We envision a world where every child everywhere has access to quality education.**

Since 2000, your support has enabled COCO to undertake 74 transformational programmes in 16 countries, positively impacting the lives of over 165,000 people through **small, sustainable, community-led initiatives** which **empower individuals to sustainably lift themselves and their communities out of poverty.**



Meet Mama Everlyne



Mama Everlyne is a 61-year-old widow, the only earner in her household with 8 grandchildren to look after. She told COCO how her life was very difficult. She worked on large farms for 50-70 KES per day (40p). Her grandchildren were not in school, as they were also working on other people's farms for food. Her family were getting sick from malaria because she could not afford to buy nets and malaria medication.

COCO provided Sustainable Agriculture Training for Mama Everlyne, where she learnt strategies for preventing soil erosion, and how to grow different types of vegetables like *suchaa*, *mirro*, watermelon, and onions, which are rich in nutrients for her family and have a good market value.

She now she earns 270 KES/day (£1.80), a 350% increase, which means she can pay school fees and buy educational materials for her grandchildren. Now, her family is happy as they eat 3 meals a day and no longer suffer from malaria. The community respects her as she gives them advice on how to enrol their children in school.

Meet Maisy



Maisy is in Grade 8 at Mercy Primary School. She was voted in as the school president by fellow students, who saw that she worked hard and treated others fairly.

She admires how much her peers value their education and that there are equal leadership opportunities for girls. Maisy likes how the teachers at Mercy are good at their job and help students to achieve their goals.

Maisy is a top student and wakes up at 5am to revise before school. She is very appreciative of her education and hopes to go on to study journalism at university. When Maisy starts secondary school, it will be her first time using a computer.

"Children are kind to each other no matter what they can eat/can pay for"

The challenge in a nutshell

We hope that you are excited for this once-in-a-lifetime Icelandic adventure!

Host to some of Europe's most incredible wildernesses, this Icelandic itinerary takes in thundering waterfalls, steaming lava fields, plunging fjords and spouting geysers. Crossing the phenomenal Landmannalaugar, the route goes through one of the most actively volcanic and alien landscapes in Iceland, providing awe-inspiring views at every step.

You will trek **58 km over 3 days** through one of the planet's most volcanic regions. Whilst this is a short challenge in terms of time commitment, the days of walking are long and the terrain is challenging, with steep climbs and rough descents.

In addition, you'll also be in charge of setting up and breaking down camp, making this a tough but incredibly rewarding challenge.

FAQ's

Am I experienced enough for this?

You don't have to be an experienced walker for this event. However, we suggest getting out over the next few months to prepare for the challenge and to get your fitness up for the journey!

Will it rain?

The weather in Iceland can be unpredictable all year round. Lots of light waterproof layers are recommended to prepare for every eventuality.



Costs and flights

This challenge is available for **self funding only**, meaning that you cover the cost of the trip yourself. This ensures that all of the fundraising you complete goes directly to the communities who need it most.

Book your own flights and do the challenge for COCO

All costs are paid directly to Charity Challenge as the trek provider. The only funds COCO will receive are from your fundraising.

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| £395 | + | £1,404 | = | £1,599 |
| Registration Fee (paid on sign up to the challenge) | | Trip Cost (paid 10 weeks prior to departure) | | TOTAL cost excluding flights |

Plus a £1,000 fundraising target for COCO

A note about flights

The costs advertised by Charity Challenge include flights from a London airport, departing on the morning of Wednesday 4th September. Flights home are on Sunday 8th September, to the same London airport you departed from. **We appreciate that this is not convenient for many of our supporters, and have arranged with the challenge provider that you can book your own flights if you wish.**

Once you are booked onto the challenge you can request to be **ground only** and take responsibility for making your own travel arrangements to and from Iceland. Charity Challenge will arrange to pick you up from central Reykjavík in the morning on Wednesday 4th September.

This might suit you if:

- A regional airport like Birmingham, Liverpool, Newcastle, Edinburgh or Glasgow is more convenient for you to fly from.
- You would like to extend your time in Iceland before or after the trek. You will be responsible for your own accommodation during any extension.
- You wish to use personal air miles to cover the expense of the flights.

Please get in touch with COCO and Charity Challenge before booking your flights to ensure that you will arrive in Iceland in time for the challenge, and that you don't depart before the end of the trek.

Note: If you would like to fly from London, Charity Challenge can arrange flights for you at an additional cost of £360. Please contact them directly to discuss this option.



Fundraising

By signing up for this trek, you are not only giving yourself an epic challenge and a chance to make memories to last a lifetime, but you are also committing to **raise funds for brighter futures across the globe...** go you! As the trek costs are fully covered by you, **100% of the funds you raise for COCO** will go to our overseas partnerships, maximising your impact. What's more, the fact that you are covering your own costs means your sponsorship might also be eligible for Gift Aid!

The fundraising target for this challenge is £1000 (excluding Gift Aid). This could provide vital learning resources for **40 vulnerable students** at one of our partner Schools For Life, ensuring that every child has an equal opportunity to learn in school; alternatively it could provide **Sustainable Agriculture Training for 13 mothers** in Bwayi, empowering them with the skills and tools to grow their own crops, so no family has to choose between feeding or educating their children! The average income increase after Sustainable Agriculture Training is an astonishing **725%**, and the women who get this training invest back into their local community, boosting the whole area. That's a ripple effect of brighter futures, thanks to you!

We find that the best way to raise funds is by setting up **an online fundraising page**. Our chosen fundraising platform is currently **Enthuse**, so be sure to check out [our guide to creating an Enthuse page](#). You can also collect sponsorship via social media, or a good old-fashioned paper sponsorship form - whatever works for you! Contact COCO for help and support for your fundraising, as **we are here to help you every step of the way**.

Thank you!



Preparation

Travel Insurance is a really important part of organising your journey and is definitely worth shopping around for. Whilst it is unlikely that anything will go wrong, it is important to have the right insurance policy as it can be very expensive if problems do occur. As well as the challenge please consider any other activities you may be taking part in if you extend your stay in Iceland.

UK Citizens do not require a visa to visit Iceland. You will however need your passport and it must be valid for at least six months from the end of your challenge. You may also be asked for proof of return in the form of your flight ticket.

The climate in Iceland is very erratic. Winter ends in mid-June, and even up until mid-July there may still be some snow up on the mountains. It is not uncommon for one day of the trek to have glorious sunshine and highs of up to 15-17 degrees, and the next to be rainy and overcast. You should definitely come prepared for all weathers, and above all bring good quality rain gear.

This trek has a **variety of challenging terrain** for you to trek through from rough roads, dirt tracks, river crossings, steep hills and rugged lava fields.

A full **kit list** will be provided by Charity Challenge ahead of the trek.





Day 1: Making the way to Landmannalaugar

If you are flying with Charity Challenge it is a short flight to Keflavik and then a four-hour transfer to your starting point. If you are making your own flight arrangements, Charity Challenge will pick you up from the centre of Reykjavík before collecting the rest of the team from the airport to begin the challenge together.

Drive through lunar-style landscapes, passing by Hekla – Iceland’s most famous active volcano. Your campsite is at Landmannalaugar, in the heart of southern Iceland’s thermal area. After dinner is the opportunity to bathe in the hot springs, perfect before settling down for a good nights’ sleep.



Accommodation is camping

Day 2: Landmannalaugar to Álftavatn

It’s a tough day, navigating through snow and mud which moves and slips underneath your feet. Near your highest point of 3,600ft you’ll pass Stórihver, a large hot spring. After a well-earned lunch, walk through glistening black obsidian rock fields with views over valleys, glaciers and snowfields. Follow the Jökultungur Ridge, descend over the scree and cross one final river before reaching the Álftavatn Valley and setting up camp.



Accommodation is camping



Approx. 10 - 11 hours of walking



Brighter futures across the globe



Day 3: Álftavatn to Emstrur

Leave the incredible rhyolite landscape and head into the glacial areas and fast-running streams of the Mýrdalsjökull ice cap. Here is probably the most intrepid part of the trip, wading through ice-cold streams in Bláfjallakvisi.

Heading down to the oasis at Hvanngil, the trek then follows through desert-like passes to your home for the night, the Emstrur Hut, where you will be camping next to a charming stream.



Accommodation is camping



Approx. 7 - 8 hours of walking

Day 4: Emstrur and Thórsmörk then transport to Reykjavik

Your final day's trekking offers amazing views of the Markarfljót gorge and the bridged Thjorsa fissure, as well as river crossings. Your awe-inspiring 58km trek climaxes with a steep drop into Thórsmörk, surrounded by gigantic glaciers and raging rivers. After some time to reflect on your achievement and take the obligatory photos, head back to Iceland's capital Reykjavík where the celebrations can begin in style.



Accommodation is a hotel



Approx. 6 - 7 hours of walking



Day 5: Reykjavík, the Blue Lagoon and return to UK

Enjoy exploring Iceland's capital Reykjavík, the world's most northerly capital, with a visit to the mineral rich, geothermal pool at the Blue Lagoon. Your aching limbs will thank you for the journey to this spa as you recharge before heading home. If you have booked flights with Charity Challenge, you will be departing back to London in the afternoon. If you have made alternative flight arrangements your fellow challengers will wave you a warm farewell as you all reflect on the wonderful memories made.

*Opportunity to take part in the Blue Lagoon trip will be dependent on your flight times.

**Thank you so much for
taking on this challenge
for COCO!**

For more information, visit the
COCO website:
www.coco.org.uk/icelandlavatrek
or contact hello@coco.org.uk



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