



# Kenyan Paragliding History

## **Early 1990s – First Flights**

Kenya's paragliding potential was first discovered by general aviation pilots—who were also paragliding enthusiasts—while flying over Kijabe Hill, Katelembu, and the Kerio Valley.

For the next two decades, only a handful of foreign pilots flew in Kenya, mainly Kijabe Hill and then Kerio Valley.

## **2018 – A Turning Point**

Tragedy struck in 2018, when two pilots and a tandem passenger lost their lives in separate accidents during the Kerio Valley flying season. With many foreign witnesses present, the incidents received international media coverage.

The Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA), previously unaware of the sport's scale in Kenya, considered banning paragliding outright.

To protect the sport, local and foreign pilots came together to form the Paragliding Association of Kenya (PAK). Its mission was to self-regulate safety standards, register pilots, and liaise with the authorities. PAK quickly introduced annual competitions, licensing systems, and standardized safety practices, ensuring the sport could continue in Kenya.

## **2020 – Growth Through Tandems**

In 2020, commercial tandem paragliding took off north of Nairobi at Kijabe Hill. Initially led by foreign pilots, it soon created opportunities for trained Kenyan pilots to fly tandem passengers professionally. With PAK's safety framework in place, this development made paragliding more accessible to the public and fueled demand for pilot training.

## **Today – A Growing Community**

Today, paragliding thrives in Kenya. Kijabe Hill, only an hour from Nairobi, has become the home site for both training and leisure flights, often attracting visitors even during short stopovers in the capital.



- PAK now has over 60 registered members, with 20–30 active pilots flying regularly.
- Membership is diverse, including Kenyans, Germans, British, Americans, Swiss, French, Spanish, South Africans, Nepalese, Zimbabweans, Iraqis, and more.
- Kenya hosts annual competitions, and training programs that continue to grow the community.

The Paragliding Association of Kenya (PAK) now serves as the governing body for the sport, which liaises directly with the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA).

[www.paraglidingassociationkenya.com](http://www.paraglidingassociationkenya.com)