



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND  
SOCIAL PROTECTION**

STATE DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL  
PROTECTION AND SENIOR CITIZEN AFFAIRS



## **CONCEPT NOTE**

# **INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER CELEBRATIONS AND THE VOYA (AWARDS) 2024**

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## 1.0 Introduction

Humanity, compassion, commitment and responsibility are some of the motives that have been driving individuals and corporate the world over to act in ways which work toward the betterment of oneself, other individuals, communities, and/or society. They volunteer themselves, their time, skills and resources as well as self for the well-being of others. Volunteering is the most fundamental act of citizenship and philanthropy in our society.

The volunteerism sector plays a crucial role in Kenya, contributing to economic growth of the country, offering services needed in marginalized and disaster-stricken areas, environmental conservation, and the education and health sectors as well as in peace building, conflict resolution and rehabilitation. Volunteerism contributes to achievement of the national, regional and global development agendas including the Millennium Development Goals and now the Sustainable Development Goals.

The State Department for Social Protection and Senior Citizen Affairs, through Executive Order No. 2 of 2023 is mandated to promote and coordinate activities of volunteerism sector in the Country as per the UN General assembly resolution 70/129 on "Integrating volunteering into peace and development: the plan of action for the next decade and beyond" . Every year the UN gives the member countries a theme for the International volunteer's day (IVD) but this year will be open for each country to choose their theme and so Kenya will be celebrating IVD under the theme: **Embracing Volunteerism as a Social Behaviour in Fostering Socio-economic Development**

Volunteerism is a basic vehicle by which youth, older persons, persons living with disability, families and other social groups participate in the cultural, economic and social life of nations. The social capital represented by volunteering plays a key role in economic regeneration. Volunteerism presents a tremendous opportunity in economic, social and political terms. There is a need for a long-term policy commitment to promote and establish the principle of volunteerism in the national consciousness to meet policy objectives, and reap the benefits from national volunteering programmes.

## 2.0 Purpose of Volunteer of the Year Awards (VOYA)

The purpose of the Volunteer of the Year Awards is to highlight and appreciate the extra ordinary actions and efforts of volunteers and institutions in building strong communities across the country through volunteerism, as envisaged in the National Volunteer Policy. The Awards aim to shine a light on the remarkable work of volunteers by celebrating them on a national platform.

## 3.0 Expected Outcomes

The Awards will recognize a total of 23 individual, institution or organisations' winners and runners-up in a number of areas including Education, Health, climate action, disaster response, community development, social protection to name a few. The awards will be placed under seven (7) broad categories namely: Individual Award, Organizations and Corporate, Learning Institutions, Government Ministries, Special Category, Volunteer Lifetime Achievement Award (VLAA) and Community Volunteer Project of the Year. Specifically, two age categories of under 25 and above 25 years, 2 International volunteers, 2 Volunteer Involving Organizations, 2 Companies with Corporate Volunteer Programs, 6 Educational Institutions, 2 Government ministries and agencies, 2 Lifetime Achievement Volunteers and 2 climate action 2 disaster response and 3 community volunteer projects.

## 4.0 VOYA Award Categories

The Volunteer of the Year Award 2024 will be awarded in seven categories. Each category has specific targets and criteria of selection as follows;

### Category A: Individual Award Category

#### 1. Volunteer of the Year Award

##### Qualifications

- i) A Kenyan national who is 25 years old and above
- ii) Giving his/her time and skills as a volunteer in a community, a community organization or in an organization working with volunteers
- iii) Served for a minimum of 2 years
- iv) His/her volunteer service has made a difference in the community

## **2. Youth Volunteer of the Year Award**

### **Qualifications**

- i) A young person between the age of 12-24 years
- ii) Giving their time and skills as a volunteer in a community or a community Organization or an Organization working with Volunteers
- iii) Having served a minimum of 1 year
- iv) His/her volunteer service has made a difference in the community

## **3. International Volunteer of the Year Award.**

### **Qualifications**

- i) A non-Kenyan citizen volunteering in Kenya
- ii) Served in that community/organization for a minimum of 1 year
- iii) His/her volunteering service has made a difference in the community

## **Category B: Organizations and Corporate Category**

### **1. Volunteer Involving Organization of the Year Award**

#### **Qualifications/Attributes**

- iv) A community based organization (CBO), Faith Based Organization (FBO), Non- Governmental Organization (NGO) or any other civil society organization
- v) Works in development with and through volunteers
- vi) Its work through volunteers has made a difference in the community or nationally
- vii) Has done volunteer work for a minimum 2 years

### **2. Corporate Employee Volunteering Scheme of the Year Award**

#### **Qualifications/Attributes**

- i) A company registered and operating in Kenya that has an employee volunteering scheme
- ii) Or that has a structure that allows its employees to give their time and skills to community development initiatives
- iii) The activities in which the employees have participated in, have made a difference to the community.

## **Category C: Learning Institution Category**

### **1. Tertiary Institution Volunteer Programme of the Year Award**

#### **Qualifications/Attributes**

- i) A learning institution i.e., polytechnic, college, university
- ii) Has a programme that allows its students to give their time and skills to community development initiatives
- iii) The students' volunteer service has made a difference in the community

### **2. Secondary Schools Volunteer Programme of the Year Award**

#### **Qualifications/Attributes**

- i) A school in Kenya providing secondary education
- ii) Has a programme that allows its students to give their time and skills to community development initiatives
- iii) The students' volunteer service has made a difference in the community

**NB.** There will be a special mention of contribution made by the group of students within the institution that enabled recognition to the institution.

### **3. Primary Schools Volunteer Programme of the Year Award**

#### **Qualifications/Attributes**

- i) A school in Kenya providing primary education
- ii) Has a programme that allows its students to give their time and skills to community development initiatives
- iii) The students' volunteer service has made a difference in the community

**NB.** There will be a special mention of contribution made by the group of students within the institution that enabled recognition to the institution.

## **Category D: Government Ministries Category**

Recognize the efforts by a Government Ministry that engages volunteers in a structured manner to advance its programmes and activities.

### **Qualification and Attributes**

- i) Has a volunteerism scheme that promote skills development, employability or community development
- ii) Evidence of impact from volunteer initiatives that have made a difference in the lives of individuals and communities
- iii) The volunteer programme has structures in place -e.g. policies and guidelines
- iv) The Volunteer scheme has been operational for over 3 years

## **Category E: Special Category**

### **1. Climate Resilience Volunteer of the Year**

#### **Qualifications and Attributes**

- i) Must have demonstrated leadership in developing or supporting projects that enhance the community's or environment's resilience to climate change
- ii) actively engaged the local community or relevant stakeholders in climate adaptation strategies
- iii) have had measurable long-term impacts on reducing vulnerabilities to climate risks
- iv) must have introduced or supported innovative approaches to building climate resilience

### **2. Disaster Response Volunteer of the Year**

#### **Qualifications and Attributes**

- i) Must have played a significant role in providing immediate disaster relief and recovery services
- ii) contributed to the coordination and execution of emergency response efforts
- iii) demonstrated the ability to act swiftly and effectively in response to a disaster
- iv) provided specialized support to vulnerable groups during the disaster response
- v) must have continued their efforts beyond immediate disaster relief by contributing to rehabilitation and rebuilding efforts

## **Category F: Volunteer Lifetime Achievement Award (VLAA)**

This is a recognition conferred to

- A. An individual volunteer who is a Kenyan citizen or a foreigner who has served as a volunteer in Kenya in an institution or individually long and the service has impacted the nation or a community or an institution

#### **Qualifications**

- i) Has been engaged in consistent volunteering activities for at least twenty (20) years;
- ii) Has attained national status and recognition in the field of volunteerism;
- iii) Has been a recipient of national and international recognition/awards;
- iv) Plays a significant role/contribution in promoting volunteerism and possesses the capability to mobilize others to support volunteer causes; and serves as a role model through a positive representation of volunteerism as a development resource.

## **Category G: Community Volunteer Project of the Year**

This is a recognition conferred to three successful volunteer projects which have had the greatest impact at community level. The winner and a runners up to receive support and awards to upscale the project beyond the community.

#### **Qualifications**

- i) A community volunteer project complete in the last 3 years
- ii) Has made an impact in the community
- iii) Has potential for upscaling beyond the community level

## 5.0 Criteria for Selection

1. **The applicant has identified a problem within their community and ways to confront it.**  
The Volunteer of the Year Award winners understand the issues facing the community they live in; have a thorough knowledge of the problem they are addressing and have designed clear and measurable methods to combat this problem.
2. **The applicant is passionate and committed to empowering the community in which s/he works.**  
Award winners have made significant long-term commitments to improving the lives of others in one of the five tracks of Health, Education, Sustainable Peace, Environment and Youth Entrepreneurship.
3. **The applicant has cultivated long-term and respectful relationships within his/her community.**  
Award winners are trusted and well-respected members of their communities and have worked hard to build and leverage long-term relationships by empowering and partnering with other community members.
4. **The applicant demonstrates that s/he has directly and individually powered the success of his/her work.**  
Award winners are the creators of programs and/or leading activists/advocates. Their involvement/leadership is integral to the success of their program/cause.
5. **The applicant has extensively and tangibly improved the lives of others.**  
Award winners have already created a substantial impact and tangibly improved the lives of others in measurable, concrete ways.
6. **The applicant has generated great awareness of his/her issue or cause.**  
Winners exhibit excellent communication skills, which they use to motivate and mobilize community members, promote their programs, and develop relationships with media, government, universities, other not-for-profits, individuals & funders.
7. **The applicant has a long-term vision for the growth and sustainability of his/her work.**  
Award winners have a clear growth plan for their work that ensures sustainability and continued impact.
8. **The applicant is confident and enthusiastic about being a leader.**  
Award winners are not reluctant heroes. They are confident, honest, and passionate leaders who take on challenges for the greater good.

### Strong Applications Include:

- **Detail.** An application that describes the nominee's **individual role** and impact in the organization, campaign or community initiative under discussion. What did the nominee do exactly? Why does the nominee care about that particular cause/issue/problem? What do this work and the Volunteer of the Year Award mean to the nominee?
- **The nominee's Story.** What was the nominee's inspiration? What obstacles did he/she encounter? How did they overcome them to make change?
- **Impact.** How many people has the project helped? Have people in the subject community contributed to the nominee's efforts? 100 people? 1000 people? 10,000 people? Even MORE? A personal story about someone the nominee helped is great to include, but it is important to include quantifiable data as well.

### Recommendation Letters:

Each nominee must have 2 recommendation letters from a beneficiary, community leader, supervisor, or partner. Letters from family members will not be accepted. Recommendation letters are intended to flesh out the application and give the judges more insight into who the applicant is, as a person. Recommenders should specifically write about their experience with the applicant and their thoughts about the applicant's work, impact, and collaboration with the community, if possible.

### Selection Process Who may

#### Apply/nominate?

1. Individuals and organizations may nominate or submit an application if they feel they qualify for any of the categories.
2. Any individual and heads of organisations including private sector, beneficiaries and/or partner organizations, local government units and national government agencies can nominate.
3. Members or colleagues may nominate someone within their organizations with the nomination endorsed by the head of the organization.

### What is the application/ nomination process?

Nomination/Application forms may be obtained from the following agencies

- ✓ Ministry of Labour and Social Protection Online Portal
- ✓ VIO Society Website and Facebook page
- ✓ Via weblink on Volunteer Involving Organisations -website and social media platforms

### Timelines

1. Call for nominations submissions deadline– **22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024**
2. Announcement and Conferment of Awards – **6<sup>th</sup> December, 2024**

### Incentives

1. Award winners will receive trophies and certificates and their names to be sent for consideration for the presidential decorations.
2. Runners-up will receive certificates of recognition and their names to be forwarded for consideration for presidential decorations
3. Community project winners and runners-up may receive certificates and cash awards for scaling up their project beyond the community level.
4. Recipients of Volunteer Lifetime Achievement Award will receive medals and certificates of recognition and the name to be forwarded for consideration for the presidential decorations
5. Award winners will be volunteerism ambassadors for one year until the next awards.

### Prohibition and Exclusionary Provision

1. Awardees of previous years are no longer eligible to be nominated except if they apply in a different category and they meet the requirements.
2. Selection Committee members and the Judging Panel are not eligible to nominate or be nominated.
3. Employees and officials of volunteer involving organizations are eligible to nominate or be nominated as long as they do not fall into the above 2 categories

Follow the link below to fill in the nomination form. You can nominate an individual or organization in up to three (3) categories.

Good luck

[Click here to Proceed with Nomination](#)

