



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**NATIONAL POLICY**

**ON**

**VOLUNTEERISM**

**April 2014**

**NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

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## FOREWORD

There is no gainsaying of the importance of volunteers and volunteerism to national development. The independence of Namibia itself, is a classical example where men and women tirelessly contributed their time, services and expertise to the cause of development without wavering and any expectation for compensation, The construction of the Tsumeb-Oshikango Railway line where proud and dedicated citizenry from all walks of life contributed their services is also a significant hallmark of promoting the noble spirit of volunteerism. The significant progress towards the eradication of HIV and AIDS, and improved organizational effectiveness due to the unwavering support of volunteers to name but a few, bear testimony to sacrifices made by many individuals and institutions, who freely and without coercion, for reasons other than financial gain and for the benefit of us all, tirelessly contributed in different ways.

What is crystal clear is that the spirit of volunteerism is inherent in human beings, and no society can survive if this spirit is lacking in the people. Volunteerism spirit in this context refers to the readiness of a person to assist or serve another person or the community without expecting a material reward. Thus, although it is hardly ever celebrated as such, volunteerism is an all-important driving force towards national development. As a government we have an obligation to create an enabling volunteering environment to ensure that volunteerism is effectively harnessed towards national development, especially towards achieving our Vision 2030.

Through the formulation of this Policy, the Government of the Republic of Namibia, in close collaboration with civil society and other partners, seeks to formally recognize the role of volunteerism and volunteers in our country. The country is utilizing the services of volunteers, who are making distinctive contributions towards national development and this policy seeks to create an enabling environment to re-double their efforts which in turn, will help the government to expedite development. The Policy takes into account the realities in our country and contains measures designed to promote volunteerism as a mechanism for promoting our national

development goals. The Policy defines a national approach to volunteerism and will, accordingly, provide the impetus for the adoption of the specific administrative measures and the introduction of the new laws necessary for giving effect to the Policy.

The process of the formulation of the Policy has been a long, thorough and widely-inclusive one. Since 2008, when the preliminary consultative meetings took place, the National Volunteering for Development Coordinating Committee (NV4D-CC), a body with representatives from Government, Volunteer Involving Organizations (VIOs) and international development partners, has led the process. In 2010, a study on the existing state of volunteerism in the country was undertaken. In the light of the findings from the study and with the benefit of the best practices, this Policy was drafted.

The draft was discussed in several consultative meetings across the country, as well as through the social media, and the inputs of various stakeholders – volunteers, VIOs and other citizens – were received. The draft Policy was duly revised in the light of comments and inputs made by these stakeholders. The Policy therefore reflects both the insights of experts in the field of volunteerism and the views, aspirations and preferences of Namibian people.

My special thanks goes to the NV4D-CC for successfully overseeing the process, and to the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme in Namibia for kindly providing technical and financial support all the way. I would also like to thank all members of the NV4D-CC who participated in the policy-making process. Finally, I would like to register my appreciation to all the individuals, too numerous to mention here, who participated in the consultative meetings, sent in their views, or otherwise contributed to the successful formulation of this Policy.

Mr. Tom K. Alweendo

**Director General**

**NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The introductory part, Part I, begins by explaining the concept, characteristics and types of volunteers. The Part continues with an overview of the state of volunteerism in Namibia: how volunteers are mobilized, where they work, and factors that motivate volunteers to do their work. The Part ends with an overview of the challenges confronting volunteerism in Namibia and the achievements it has recorded, including its contributions to national development.

The core of the Policy is contained in Part II. The Part spells out the overall goal of the Policy being to effectively harness the mechanism of volunteering in the cause of national development and the four specific objectives that are expected to lead to the attainment of the overall goal. It goes on to discuss the implementation strategies that will be used to achieve each of the four specific objectives. The four specific objectives are as follows:

- (a) To work towards reaching a common understanding and appreciation of volunteering;
- (b) To establish and nurture an enabling environment for volunteering;
- (c) To adopt a diversity of approaches to mobilizing volunteers and facilitating volunteering;
- (d) To ensure sustainable funding for volunteering.

For Objective 1 (“To work towards reaching a common understanding and appreciation of volunteering”), the implementation strategies are public sensitization on volunteerism and research into issues relating to volunteerism. The implementation strategies for Objective 2 (“To establish and nurture an enabling environment for volunteering”) are the endorsement of the traditional forms of volunteering and the cultural norms or beliefs on which they are based, the introduction of administrative measures and laws that encourage people to be more willing to volunteer while also protecting volunteers, and the public recognition and promotion of volunteerism through special events that involve leaders in Government and the traditional institutions.

While the implementation strategies for achieving Objective 3 (“To adopt a diversity of approaches to mobilizing volunteers and facilitating volunteering”) remain unlimited, the Policy identifies the following specific strategies. The first is the use of a diversified approach in mobilization schemes to encourage as many people as possible from various segments of the populace to volunteer, and the second is to build the capacity of volunteer involving organizations (VIOs) to effectively facilitate volunteering in different schemes.

For Objective 4 (“To ensure sustainable funding”), the implementation strategies are the providing of support for the common needs of VIOs through a National Fund for Volunteerism, the use, by Government, of volunteer-based activities as appropriate ways of implementing development programmes and the appropriation of funds for such activities, and the encouraging of the integration of volunteering into the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies of private sector companies.

Part III provides for the institutional framework for the implementation of the Policy. The framework consists of three main components: the Advisory Committee, the Regional Advisory Committees and the Secretariat. The Advisory Committee will be established under section 8 of the National Planning Commission (NPC) Act. The members of the Committee shall be drawn from various institutions, including relevant Government ministries and agencies, traditional bodies, VIOs and volunteers. The Committee shall advise and assist the Secretariat in the implementation of the Policy.

The Regional Advisory Committees (RACs), which shall be set up in each region, shall consist of representatives of the regional government, the Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (MRLGHRD) as well as VIOs and volunteers working in the region. The RACs shall promote harmonious relationships between VIOs and volunteers by doing its best to resolve in an informal and expeditious manner any complaints made to it.

The Secretariat, which shall be located within the National Planning Commission shall be responsible for the coordination of the day-to-day implementation of the Policy. The functions of the Secretariat shall include the following:

- (a) Compile and maintain a database of volunteers (including an indication of gender) and VIOs;
- (b) Integrate or mainstream volunteerism in development programming;
- (c) Measure and report on the contributions of volunteers to national development;
- (d) Develop, coordinate and implement volunteering programmes and projects;
- (e) Provide technical support on the integration of volunteerism in development programming;
- (f) Recruit and deploy volunteers;
- (g) Register community volunteer groups;
- (h) Administer the National Fund for Volunteerism;
- (i) Perform any other duties that may be required for the effective implementation of the Policy.

Each Government ministry or agency that works with volunteers or in collaboration with VIOs shall designate a particular officer as a Contact Officer. In performing its role, the Secretariat shall work closely with the Contact Officers.

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSO	Civic Society Organisation
ELCIN	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia
FBO	Faith-Based Organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MoHSS	Ministry of Health and Social Services
MYNSSC	Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sports and Culture
NANGOF	Namibian Non-Governmental Organizations Forum
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPC	National Planning Commission
NYC	National Youth Council
NYS	National Youth Service
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
NV4D-CC	National Volunteering for Development Coordinating Committee
VIOs	Volunteer Involving Organisations
VSO	Volunteer Service Overseas

## **PART I: INTRODUCTION AND SITUATION ANALYSIS**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Traditionally, most people volunteered for certain tasks quite informally, in their own local communities and on a part-time basis. This type of volunteering has been flourishing in various Namibian communities from time immemorial. Traditional forms of volunteering continue to thrive, and help support cohesive and sustainable living in various communities, in Namibia. These forms of volunteering are based on time-honoured cultural norms or beliefs. More formal types of volunteering developed later, with one example being the deployment, by Christian missionary societies from Germany and Finland, of volunteers to do evangelical work in Namibia. Today, many local and foreign organizations (in this Policy referred to as Volunteer Involving Organizations (VIOs)) as well as Government Ministries, Offices and Agencies formally mobilise and deploy national and international volunteers in various sectors and various places in Namibia.

### **1.2 DEFINITIONS**

In this Policy, unless the context indicates otherwise -

“**advocacy**” means the act of pleading for, supporting or recommending; it is the active espousal of an idea or a cause;

“**allowance**” means a sum of money granted to a person on a regular basis, such as for personal or general living expenses;

“**compensation**” means the total value of payments, which an organisation makes to a person in exchange for services rendered in respect of that organization or for expenses incurred, or a loss or injury suffered, in the course, and within the scope, of rendering such services;

**“participation”** means engagement, by members of society, in political or non-political activities and processes, which result in the improvement of the civic life of a community, and the development, by such members, of a combination of the knowledge, skills, values and motivation required to effect such improvement;

**“volunteer”** means a person who, out of his or her own free will, provides a service to, or for the benefit of, a community, without expecting to be paid for the services rendered, hence, the main characteristic acts of a volunteer are as follows:

- (a) offering of a service, rather than goods or money;
- (b) acting out of free will, and not out of compulsion; and
- (c) generally rendering services without expecting to be paid, even if he or she may expect to be reimbursed for the agreed or reasonable expenses he or she may incur in connection with the services rendered;

**“Volunteer Involving Organisation (VIO)”** means an organization, that accepts or mobilizes volunteers, and deploys them to perform tasks to enable the organization to achieve its mandate; and

**“volunteerism”** means a group of activities carried out by individuals, associations or legal entities for the common good of society, by free choice and without the intention of deriving a financial gain and volunteering has a corresponding meaning.

### **1.3 THE STATE OF VOLUNTEERING IN NAMIBIA**

1.3.1 There are various types of volunteers operating in Namibia, such as formal and informal, part-time and full-time, national and international volunteers.

1.3.2 Informal volunteers (mainly at the level of the local community) work without a set of formal terms and conditions relating to the work they opt to do. The procedures, which informal volunteers are to follow, and their rights and

obligations, are not defined. In contrast, formal volunteers operate under clearly defined terms and conditions.

1.3.3 Some volunteers receive a living allowance while serving on a part-time basis or on a full-time basis (up to 40 hours a week), in which case the line between a volunteer and an employee becomes blurred.

1.3.4 Many volunteers operating in the country are Namibian nationals or citizens and some are foreigners or international volunteers.

### **1.3.5 Motivation**

1.3.5.1 Although individuals, who become volunteers, are usually not motivated by an expectation of payment, each volunteer is motivated by one expectation or the other. Some are driven by the religious conviction that they need to render a selfless service in order to qualify for salvation or another spiritual benefit, while others are driven by the conviction that as citizens of a country or members of a local community, it is their civic duty to give some kind of selfless service to the country or the community. Some individuals volunteer in a given field in order to gain some work experience (and often, also, to receive training) which would help them to secure employment in a specific field, and others volunteer to work in a foreign country in order to gain international exposure and the experience of living in, and understanding the culture of, the foreign country.

1.3.5.2 The old tradition of informal volunteering, including by the poor and unemployed, continues to flourish in various communities, and most informal volunteers still provide services to the community without an expectation of financial gain. In respect of formal volunteering with various VIOs, however, a large proportion of volunteers now expect to receive material compensation in cash or kind or both. This expectation is based on the fact that many formal volunteers are poor and are also aware that there are other volunteers (national and international) who receive a living allowance or other forms of compensation.

## **1.3.6 Mobilization and deployment**

1.3.6.1 Currently, various types of institutions formally mobilize national and international volunteers in Namibia.

1.3.6.2 National volunteers are mobilized by and through the following institutions:

- (a) The Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN), through particular institutions such as the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sports and Culture (MYNSSC), Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) and the National Youth Service (NYS);
- (b) Civic Society Organizations (CSOs), mainly Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs); and
- (c) the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme.

1.3.6.3 In addition to the mobilisation of volunteers under the established or regular volunteer schemes of Government Institutions, such as the Youth Volunteer Programme of MYNSSC, volunteers are also accepted on an *ad hoc* basis in Government and Non-Governmental Organisations.

1.3.6.4 Some Namibians have proudly volunteered to contribute to the building of certain public and community infrastructural facilities, notably the Tsumeb-Oshikango railway line and the moulding of bricks at the ELCIN-Diakonia Multipurpose Centre at Havana in Katutura, Windhoek.

1.3.6.5 International volunteers are mobilized in a number of ways:

- (a) Through the UNV Programme;
- (b) Under bilateral agreements with other countries, such as with:
  - (i) the United States of America (Peace Corps);

- (ii) Japan (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers/Japan International Cooperation Agency); and
- (iii) the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Technical Aid Corps, TAC);
- (c) Through independent international VIOs, notably, the Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO); and
- (d) Through direct contact between a prospective foreign volunteer and a Namibian organization.

1.3.6.6 Some international volunteers are hosted by government Institutions and CSOs, and are generally deployed at the request of the host institution.

1.3.6.7 Unlike national volunteers, who come from all segments of the population, international volunteers are mostly persons who have received some form of higher education and possess experience in particular fields, and they receive monthly allowances from the VIO that mobilized them, and the host institution is usually expected to provide residential accommodation for them.

### **1.3.7 Shortcomings, challenges and achievements**

1.3.7.1 The following are some of the key problems confronting volunteering in Namibia:

- (a) **Lack of standards or general guidelines:** In the absence of a national policy or regulatory framework, volunteers and VIOs disagree on what should be done or what should not be done. This affects the morale of volunteers and reduces the level of success, which could be achieved in a volunteer-based project;<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Prior to the formulation of this Policy, some efforts had been made to put in place some guidelines that apply or are intended to apply to particular VIOs. For instance, the Namibian Red Cross Society developed a volunteers' policy, and the Namibian Non-Governmental Organizations Forum (NANGOF) prepared a draft Code of Practice for Civil Society Organizations Working with Volunteers. On the government side, the MYNSSC, in March 2010, released a draft Ministerial Policy on Youth Volunteerism, which is intended to apply to the youth volunteering programmes of the Ministry.

- (b) **Unfavourable legal provisions:** The provisions of certain laws have placed an undue burden on volunteers and on VIOs, which engage volunteers;
- (c) **Lack of coordination:** In the absence of coordination of volunteer-based activities, especially among VIOs, the stakeholders do not enjoy the benefits of synergy and learning through the sharing of experiences;
- (d) **Lack of a database:** As a result of a lack of a database relating to volunteer-based activities, the number of active volunteers in the country and their profiles (including gender) are not known;
- (e) **Economic context:** The prevailing economic conditions in Namibia adversely affect volunteering in a number of ways. Many people, being poor or unemployed, expect to be paid allowances for volunteering, and feel exploited if they receive little or no allowances. Some volunteers also feel frustrated if their volunteering does not result in employment;
- (f) **Negative perception:** Volunteering is widely perceived as something for those who are uneducated and unemployed, and this discourages many educated and employed persons from volunteering;
- (g) **Lack of private sector involvement:** Although there is growing interest from the private sector in promoting employee volunteering as an expression of corporate social responsibility, active encouragement of volunteering in the private sector is minimal. Private sector contribution to volunteerism could include:
  - (i) encouraging their employees to make time to volunteer;
  - (ii) accepting volunteers in their offices or manufacturing plants;
  - (iii) providing financial support for VIOs and volunteer-based activities; and

- (iv) integrating volunteer-based activities into their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies.

1.3.7.2 In spite of these shortcomings, the evidence indicates that volunteer-based activities have made significant contributions to the welfare of the people and the development of the Namibian Nation. The home-based care programme for people living with HIV/AIDS, relief for people displaced by seasonal flooding, railway construction, and tree-planting campaigns are but a few examples of programmes that have relied heavily on the efforts of volunteers.

1.3.7.3 In recognition of the importance of the role of volunteers, the Government, VIOs and volunteers as well as UNV have not only been marking International Volunteers Day (5 December) in the country, but have gone on to establish the National Volunteering for Development Coordinating Committee (NV4D-CC), which is tasked with identifying practical ways of using volunteer-based activities to make greater contributions to national development.

## **1.4 VOLUNTEERING AND THE CHALLENGE OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NAMIBIA**

1.4.1 Namibia's long-term vision for national development is articulated in the policy document referred to as Vision 2030. The goal of the Vision 2030 policy is that by 2030 *“Namibia has a population of healthy, well-educated, skilled, pro-active and financially-stable people with a broad range of talents, and display a positive attitude towards themselves, their fellow citizens, their country and global humanity.”*<sup>2</sup> Towards the realization of this broad long-term goal, specific development programmes are planned and implemented in four-year circles, the current plan being the Fourth National Development Plan (NDP4), 2012/2013-2016/2017.

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<sup>2</sup> Namibia Vision 2030, *Executive Summary*, p.15

1.4.2 The programmes of most CSOs rely heavily on the contributions of volunteers, and Vision 2030 envisages that increased and effective partnerships between Government and CSOs will enhance national development. Thus, the contributions of volunteers are important for the realization of the grand vision captured in Vision 2030. As stated in one of the provisions of the Vision 2030 policy, the aim is that:

*“Civil society, its individuals, groups and organizations are highly resourceful and cooperate with Government and its agencies at local, regional and national level; respect each other and strive to consolidate democratic ideals, and collaborate in social and economic development for the benefit of all.”<sup>3</sup>*

1.4.3 In recent years, the Government and other stakeholders have seriously considered how the possibilities offered by volunteering can deliberately and more comprehensively be harnessed towards the attainment of even better results in the implementation of development programmes.

1.4.4 The idea of volunteering for development is that as many people as possible should be encouraged to voluntarily contribute their time and services in aid of development initiatives, so that development goals can be more fully and speedily attained. Nearly everyone has something to contribute, and therefore can volunteer.

1.4.5 Advocates of volunteering for development suggest that a linkage between volunteering and development should be clearly established in development programming through the incorporation of plans to use volunteers in the implementation of projects, and through the involvement of VIOs in the planning process.

1.4.6 The contributions of volunteering in the development process are noteworthy. In economic terms, it reduces the cost of implementing projects, thus reducing the

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<sup>3</sup> Namibia Vision 2030, *Full Document*, Chapter 4, p. 132

pressure on State revenue. It also adds to the overall economic output of the country. In social terms, it helps to build more cohesive communities and foster greater trust between citizens. In various fields, volunteers can help to train personnel, thus contributing to national capacity building. International volunteers, in particular, can fill positions, which cannot immediately be filled by nationals, while also helping to transfer skills to nationals, who will subsequently fill those positions.

## **PART II: POLICY GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES**

### **2.1 POLICY GOAL**

- 2.1.1 The overall goal of this Policy is to facilitate the more effective harnessing of the mechanism of volunteering in the cause of national development in Namibia.
- 2.1.2 For the purpose of reaching this goal, this Policy seeks to achieve the four objectives set out in paragraphs 2.2 to 2.9.

### **2.2 OBJECTIVE 1: *To work towards reaching a common understanding and appreciation of volunteering***

*(The anticipated outcomes and indicators of achievement relating to this objective are set out in Table 1 of the Annexure to this Policy)*

### **2.3 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES IN RESPECT OBJECTIVE 1**

#### **2.3.1 Sensitising volunteerism**

- 2.3.1.1 Working with other stakeholders, the Government will organize, support or encourage a series of public discussions on volunteering, particularly on the meaning, and benefits, of volunteering, volunteering as a civic duty, and on how and where individuals may volunteer.
- 2.3.1.2 If it is considered necessary, some of these discussions may be facilitated by persons who possess special knowledge of the subject of volunteerism.
- 2.3.1.3 Efforts will be made to ensure that some of the discussions are widely broadcast or covered by the mass media so that the message can reach the general public.
- 2.3.1.4 Radio and television stations will be encouraged to introduce programmes (including panel discussions, phone-in programmes and other interactive programmes) which deal with volunteering.

- 2.3.1.5 Similarly, the print media houses will be encouraged to highlight stories relating to volunteering.
- 2.3.1.6 Schools will be encouraged to organize debates on issues relating to volunteering, and whenever possible, efforts will be made to ensure that such debates are covered by, or reported in, the media.
- 2.3.1.7 The Government will take a public stance on the value of corporate volunteering as an expression of social corporate responsibility and the private sector is urged to do the same.
- 2.3.1.8 The Government will make development cooperation agencies aware of the potential of volunteerism in relation to development and such agencies are urged to support volunteer efforts.
- 2.3.1.9 In order to facilitate greater understanding on the ethos of volunteerism, advocacy materials will be translated into local languages.

### **2.3.2 Research and documentation**

The Government will cooperate with other stakeholders to support or encourage research into, and documentation of findings on issues relating to, volunteering. This may include research into:

- (a) the contributions of volunteers to the gross domestic product (GDP), which contributions could help increase public understanding of the economic benefits of volunteering;
- (b) ways of measuring the organizational capacity of VIOs to effectively mobilize, support and retain volunteers with the aim of utilising the measurements to improve the ability of VIOs to manage volunteer-based programmes.

**2.4 OBJECTIVE 2** *To establish and nurture an enabling volunteering environment*

*(The anticipated outcomes and indicators of achievement relating to this objective are set out in Table 2 of the Annexure to this Policy)*

**2.5 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES IN RESPECT OF OBJECTIVE 2**

**2.5.1** Creation and implementation of a favourable policy and conducive regulatory framework consisting of -

- (a) the endorsement of the traditional forms of volunteering and the cultural norms or beliefs on which they are based; and
- (b) policy and legislative measures, which encourage people to be more willing to volunteer while also protecting volunteers

2.5.1.1 The Government will continue to:

- (a) endorse these traditional forms of volunteering as a legitimate part of the rich menu of volunteering;
- (b) work closely with other stakeholders to consistently identify and put in place administrative and legislative measures, which would encourage people to volunteer, while also protecting volunteers.

2.5.1.2 The strategies referred to in paragraph 2.5.1.1 will necessarily be continuous exercises as policy and legislative measures are introduced or amended from time to time, and it is important to examine the prospects of volunteering in the light of new or evolving measures.

2.5.1.3 Nonetheless, for now, the Government will take, or encourage, the following measures:

**(a) Enable volunteering through the reform of laws and policies:**

The Government will take steps to secure appropriate changes to existing laws and policies, which discourage volunteering or make it burdensome to become a volunteer or to be accepted as a volunteer. In pursuit thereof, the Government will, among other things:

- (i) Undertake studies aimed at identifying such pieces of legislation and policies; and
- (ii) Organise dialogue meetings with different stakeholders.

**(b) Measures to promote the welfare of volunteers:**

VIOs are urged to observe the following guidelines when engaging volunteers:

- (i) Any VIO, which accepts a person to serve for the VIO as a volunteer for more than a week, will give the volunteer a written statement spelling out the terms of volunteering, including terms relating to:
  - (aa) whether an allowance is payable to the volunteer;
  - (bb) reimbursement for expenses which a volunteer incurs for the purpose of the relevant volunteer activities;
  - (cc) hours of work;

- (dd) breaks;
  - (ee) leave;
  - (ff) duration, and termination, of services;
  - (gg) dispute resolution;
  - (hh) utilization of financial and other resources of the relevant VIO;
  - (ii) communication with third parties and confidentiality;
  - (jj) health and safety; and
  - (kk) liability in respect of damage, loss or injuries suffered, or caused, by the volunteer.
- (ii) If a VIO engages a volunteer for longer than six months, it will not require or permit the volunteer to work in excess of forty (40) hours in the course of one week, unless the VIO pays an adequate allowance for such work.
  - (iii) VIOs will endeavour to adequately equip volunteers with the training, tools and other items, which they need to do their work (including, where appropriate, warm clothing, shoes and bags).
  - (iv) Any VIO, which engages a person as a volunteer, will reimburse the person all agreed or reasonable expenses incurred in connection with his or her work as a volunteer, unless the volunteer elects not to claim such reimbursement after the VIO advises him or her of his or her right to be reimbursed.
  - (v) A volunteer will:

- (aa) communicate his or her decision not to claim reimbursement to the relevant VIO through a written statement signed by the volunteer and witnessed by a person, who is not a member, staff or officer of the VIO; and
- (bb) include in, or attach to, the statement confirmation that he or she is able and willing to bear the expenses.
- (vi) VIOs will periodically appraise the performance of volunteers, and endeavour to demonstrate recognition and appreciation of good performance.
- (vii) Tokens of appreciation may include the award of medals and issuance of certificates.
- (viii) VIOs will ensure that the volunteers' rights to a healthy and safe environment are protected;
- (ix) Volunteers should be protected in the event of damage, loss or injuries, which they may cause, or suffer, while acting in the course, and within the scope, of rendering their services; and
- (x) The Government will develop a code of conduct for both volunteers and VIOs, the application of which will be monitored in a manner determined by the Government.

**2.5.1.4 Measures to encourage VIOs to be properly established and well-managed:**

- (a) The successful mobilizing of volunteers and the proper channeling of their efforts towards the attainment of the goals of development projects invariably require that VIOs are properly established, and well-managed.

- (b) The Government, therefore, encourages VIOs to be properly established in line with any applicable legal requirements, to put in place proper organizational structures and procedures, and to follow transparent processes in the management of their organizations and in their relationships with volunteers.
- (c) Towards this end, VIOs are urged to establish a code of conduct for VIOs in accordance with internationally accepted standards and promote compliance with such code.

**2.5.1.5 Measures to encourage assistance to unemployed volunteers:**

- (a) The Government and other stakeholders recognize that, while the high incidence of unemployment in the country has ensured that there is a large pool of potential volunteers, who can commit plenty of time to a volunteering scheme or a VIO, unemployment is also a long-term threat to the practice of true volunteering.
- (b) The Government, therefore, encourages VIOs to design schemes aimed at assisting their volunteers, who are unemployed, to progress towards obtaining employment.
- (c) Such schemes may include the hiring of volunteers, who are qualified to fill any vacancies, which become available in the organization, direct training of the volunteers in particular crafts or trades, assisting volunteers to be placed as apprentices or learners in companies, trade schools or skills acquisition centres.
- (d) The Government will facilitate discussions between trade unions, employers and VIOs on ways of ensuring that the placement of volunteers as apprentices in private institutions is conducted in a manner which does not undermine their rights under any law.

- (e) The Government will encourage private sector companies, especially very large industrial or commercial undertakings, to enter into development partnerships with their host communities to plan development projects and implement them with the significant participation of volunteers from the community.

**2.5.1.6 Measures to encourage employee volunteering:**

- (a) The Government has noted a growing interest in the private sector in promoting employee volunteering as an expression of corporate social responsibility.
- (b) Employers are encouraged to allow staff to volunteer for specific non-profit organisations with which the employer has a collaboration agreement.
- (c) If employees volunteer during working hours, the time spent should be considered as work hours. In such cases, the employer is bound to pay the minimum wage, and other related provisions ensuring protection for employees.
- (d) Employers are urged to establish institutional policies to encourage and facilitate employee volunteering. However, it is important that the policies provide adequate protection for employees, while avoiding the uncertainty, which may prevent employers from encouraging participation of their staff in voluntary activities.
- (e) Namibian labour related legislation should also encourage employee participation by allowing employees to take sabbatical leave from work to serve on a voluntary basis, without prejudice to the employee's rights under his or her contract of employment.

**2.5.2 Public recognition and promotion of volunteerism through special events, which involve leaders from various sectors:**

2.5.2.1 Working with other stakeholders, the Government will organize or support special events aimed at demonstrating public recognition and appreciation of volunteering.

2.5.2.2 These special events will include the celebration of the International Volunteer Day (IVD) on 5 December, and will involve the participation of leaders in Government, the traditional authorities, VIOs and civil society as a whole.

2.5.2.3 In addition to the IVD, the Government will declare one day in a year on which all individuals and institutions will be encouraged to volunteer their services to the community.

2.5.2.4 At these events, Government will honour volunteers who, and VIOs which, render outstanding service.

**2.6 OBJECTIVE 3:** *To adopt a diversity of approaches to mobilize volunteers and facilitate volunteering*

*(The anticipated outcomes and indicators of achievement for this objective are set out in Table 3 of the Annexure to this Policy)*

**2.7 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES IN RESPECT OF OBJECTIVE 3**

**2.7.1 Use of a diversified approach in mobilization schemes to encourage as many people as possible from various segments of the populace to volunteer:**

2.7.1.1 Due to differences in peoples' experiences, preferences, and the circumstances under which they live, individuals may decide to volunteer on-line while others may volunteer on-site, some may be available only

for short-term assignments while others may cope with long-term assignments, and some may be able to work directly at the community level, yet others may prefer to perform administrative or other support functions. Each individual can make a contribution to a development initiative in accordance within the context of his or her circumstances or preference.

2.7.1.2 Stakeholders are urged to promote the use of a diversity of approaches in the mobilization of volunteers so as to encourage as many people as possible from various segments of the populace to volunteer.

2.7.1.4 As far as possible, opportunities for volunteering will be designed and organized in such a way that they will appeal to a wide range of people.

2.7.1.5 Furthermore, the Government will set up schemes to encourage Namibians to volunteer their services to other countries in the world.

**2.7.2 Develop, among VIOs, the capacity to effectively facilitate volunteering in different schemes:**

2.7.2.1 Even when an adequate number and types of volunteers are mobilized, their efforts can contribute to the success of the programme only if the VIO which deploys them has the capacity to manage them efficiently.

2.7.2.2 The Government will work with other stakeholders to provide support and encouragement to VIOs to develop and maintain the capacity they need to work efficiently.

**2.8 OBJECTIVE 4:** *To ensure sustainable funding*

*(The anticipated outcomes and indicators of achievement for this objective are set out in Table 2 of the Annexure to this Policy)*

## **2.9 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES IN RESPECT OF OBJECTIVE 4**

### **2.9.1 Support for the common needs of VIOs:**

- 2.9.1.1 The Government will endeavour to establish a fund to be called the National Fund for Volunteerism.
- 2.9.1.2 With the aim of realising the establishment of the said Fund, the Government will take the following steps:
- (a) Carry out a comparative study on how such funds are set up and administered in other countries;
  - (b) Conduct a feasibility study and consultations with various stakeholders on the feasibility of establishing such a fund;
  - (c) Evaluate, and, to the extent possible, act upon, recommendations made by the stakeholders consulted.
- 2.9.1.3 Contributions to the Fund will be sought from, among others, the Government, the private sector as well as local and international donors.
- 2.9.1.4 From the Fund, provisions will be made for the support of the common needs of VIOs, especially in respect of the training of VIOs in the management of volunteers, sharing of volunteer experiences and information, the establishment and maintenance of infrastructure for on-line volunteering and paying volunteer allowances, among others things.
- 2.9.1.5 Grants will be made to support outstanding capacity building programmes of particular VIOs.
- 2.9.1.6 The allocation of grants will follow clear guidelines as well as transparent processes.

**2.9.2 Accept volunteer-based activities as appropriate ways of implementing development programmes (especially medium and long-term plans) and seek fiscal appropriation for such activities:**

2.9.2.1 In development planning and programming, the Government will accept volunteer-based activities as appropriate ways of implementing development programmes, including medium and long-term plans, and will, accordingly, seek fiscal appropriation for such activities.

2.9.2.2 VIOs, which display efficiency and a good track record, and which Government engages in its development planning and programmes, can expect to receive funding support over the period of the plan in respect of which they are engaged.

**2.9.3 Encourage the integration of volunteering into the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies of private sector companies:**

2.9.3.1 The Government will encourage private sector companies to integrate volunteerism into their CSR policies.

2.9.3.2 This will deepen the impact of programmes implemented under such policies, and build greater goodwill for the companies.

2.9.3.3 The Government will endeavour to offer rewards for private sector companies, which provide for volunteering in their CSR policies.

## **PART III: INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The institutional framework for the implementation of this Policy will be as follows:

### **3.1 THE NPC**

3.1.1 The NPC will be responsible for the implementation of this Policy on behalf of the Government and will review the present structure of its Secretariat for the purpose of enabling it to carry out the responsibilities of the NPC under this Policy.

3.1.2 The NPC will ensure the implementation of this policy by, amongst other things:

3.1.2.1 coordinating the activities, which require coordination for the purpose of the implementation strategies under this policy;

3.1.2.2 providing an advisory service to Government and other stakeholders in respect of the implementation of this Policy;

3.1.2.3 facilitating cooperation arrangements and communication amongst all stakeholders;

3.1.2.4 facilitating the establishment of the National Fund for Volunteerism and the allocation of funding from such Fund; and

3.1.2.5 facilitating the reform, or enactment, of laws affecting volunteerism.

### **3.2 NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

3.2.1 The NPC will establish a National Advisory Committee under section 8(1) of the National Planning Commission Act, 1994 (Act No 15 of 1994) (in this Part referred to as “the Act”) for the purpose of advising the NPC on matters concerning volunteer services.

3.2.2 The members of the Committee will be appointed from amongst persons who, or organisations which, are stakeholders in relation to volunteerism.

3.2.3 In terms of section 8 (2) and (3) of the Act, the Committee will -

- 3.2.3.1 consist of at least one member from NPC and not more than three other persons; and
  - 3.2.3.2 be chaired by a person appointed by the NPC.
- 3.2.4 The members of the Committee will select from amongst their number, and at the first meeting of the Committee, a deputy-chairperson, who is not a member of the NPC.
- 3.2.5 The Committee will regulate its proceedings and meet at least once after every three months.
- 3.2.6 The Committee will, amongst other things:
- 3.2.6.1 Advise the NPC on the strategies for, and other aspects of, the implementation, of this Policy;
  - 3.2.6.2 Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the implementation of this Policy;
  - 3.2.6.3 Assist the NPC to put in place mechanisms and instruments, which are necessary to ensure the efficient and sustainable use of the volunteerism modality as a national development asset;
  - 3.2.6.4 Advise the NPC on the promotion of volunteerism and this Policy;
  - 3.2.6.5 Provide technical advice to the Secretariat of the NCP;
  - 3.2.6.6 Liaise with the Regional Advisory Committees in connection with matters relating to the implementation of this Policy in the regions; and
  - 3.2.6.7 Perform any other functions, which the NPC may assign to the Committee from time to time in respect of the promotion of volunteers and volunteerism for the purpose of national development.

### **3.3 REGIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

- 3.3.1 The NPC will establish, in respect of each region in Namibia, a Regional Advisory Committee under section 8(1) of the Act for the purpose of advising the NPC on matters concerning volunteer services at the regional level.
- 3.3.2 The members of the Committees will be appointed from amongst persons who, or organisations which, are stakeholders in relation to volunteerism in the respective regions.
- 3.3.3 In terms of section 8 (2) and (3) of the Act, the Committees will -
  - 3.3.3.1 consist of at least one member of the NPC and not more than three other persons; and
  - 3.3.3.2 be chaired by a person appointed by the NPC.
- 3.3.4 The members of the Committees will select from amongst their number, and at the first meeting of the Committees, a deputy-chairperson who is not a member of the NPC.
- 3.3.5 The Committees will regulate their proceedings and meet at least once after every three months; and
- 3.3.6 The Committees will, in relation to the region for which they are responsible, respectively, amongst other things:
  - 3.3.6.1 Advise the NPC on the strategies for, and other aspects of, the implementation, of this Policy;
  - 3.3.6.2 Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the implementation of this Policy;

- 3.3.6.3 Assist the NPC to put in place mechanisms and instruments, which are necessary to ensure the efficient and sustainable use of the volunteerism modality as a regional development asset;
- 3.3.6.4 Advise the NPC on the promotion of volunteerism and this Policy;
- 3.3.6.5 For the purpose of promoting a harmonious relationship between VIOs and volunteers in the regions -
  - (a) receive and document complaints from volunteers; and
  - (b) take action to resolve, in an expeditious manner, any complaints they receive.
- 3.3.6.6 Provide technical advice to the Secretariat of the NCP;
- 3.3.6.7 Liaise with the National Advisory Committee in connection with matters relating to the implementation of this Policy in the regions; and
- 3.3.6.8 Perform any other functions, which the NPC may assign to the Committees from time to time in respect of the promotion of volunteers and volunteerism for the purpose of regional development.

#### **3.4 SECRETARIAT**

- 3.4.1 In terms of section 10(1) of the Act, the Secretariat of the NPC will be the Secretariat of the Advisory Committee.
- 3.4.2 The Secretariat will be responsible for the coordination of the day-to-day implementation of the Policy, which will include the following:
  - 3.4.1.1 Compilation and maintenance of a database of volunteers (including an indication of gender) and VIOs;

- 3.4.1.2 Integration of volunteerism in the planning and execution of the Government's development programmes;
- 3.4.1.3 Measurement and evaluation of, and reporting on, the contributions of volunteers to national development;
- 3.4.1.4 Development, coordination and implementation, of volunteering programmes and projects on behalf of the Government;
- 3.4.1.5 Provision of technical support on the integration of volunteerism in the Government's development programming;
- 3.4.1.6 Recruitment, and deployment, of volunteers for the purpose of participating in the Government's development programmes;
- 3.4.1.7 Registration of community volunteer groups;
- 3.4.1.8 Administration of the National Fund for Volunteerism; and
- 3.4.1.9 Performance of any other functions, which may be required for the effective implementation of the Policy.

### **3.5 GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES**

- 3.5.1 Each Government Ministry, Office or Agency, which engages volunteers or in collaboration with VIOs, will designate one of its officers, respectively, as a Contact Officer.
- 3.5.2 In performing its functions with regards to this Policy, the Secretariat will work closely with the Contact Officers, more particularly with the Contact Officer in the National Planning Commission.

## ANNEXURE

### RESULTS FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The tables below outline the expected outcomes and relevant indicators in relation to the four objectives of this Policy:

**TABLE 1**

<b>Objective 1: To work towards reaching a common understanding and appreciation of volunteering</b>	
<b>Anticipated Outcomes</b>	<b>Indicators of achievement</b>
Citizens and decision makers understand volunteering and its benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and types of public meetings (including school debates and other discussions) on volunteering</li> <li>• Number of media programmes or reports on volunteering and meetings on volunteering</li> <li>• <u>Number of members of the general public and other stakeholders, who attend the above-mentioned meetings and discussions</u></li> </ul>
The development of a deeper understanding of issues relating to volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and types of research projects on issues relating to volunteering conducted, and the research findings made available</li> </ul>

	to the public
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**TABLE 2**

<b>Objective 2: To establish and nurture an enabling environment</b>	
<b>Anticipated Outcomes</b>	<b>Indicators of achievement</b>
Laws and procedures, which discourage volunteering, are identified and <u>the reform thereof is carried out</u> , while new laws and procedures, which encourage volunteering, are introduced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of studies made;</li> <li>• Number of dialogue meetings and decisions made;</li> <li>• Number of changes or amendments to existing laws and procedures made;</li> <li>• Number of new laws and procedures introduced.</li> </ul>
Volunteers work under conducive conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers have written terms of volunteering;</li> <li>• Volunteers are trained for the tasks, which they are to perform;</li> <li>• Volunteers have the tools or other items, which they need to do their work;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VIOs reimburse volunteers for all agreed or reasonable expenses;</li> <li>• <u>Volunteers are protected in the areas of health and safety</u></li> <li>• <u>Limitation of liability for damage, loss or injury caused by volunteers in the course, and within the scope, of rendering volunteer services</u></li> <li>• Increased number of people volunteering.</li> </ul>
<p>VIOs assist unemployed volunteers to progress towards obtaining employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of qualified volunteers, who become employees in VIOs;</li> <li>• Number of volunteers, whom VIOs directly train in particular trades or assist to be placed as apprentices or learners in other establishments.</li> </ul>
<p>There is public recognition and appreciation of volunteering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of special events involving leaders at which volunteering is recognized and appreciated;</li> <li>• Number of volunteers honoured at special events involving leaders.</li> </ul>

**TABLE 3**

<b>Objective 3: To adopt a diversity of approaches to mobilizing volunteers and facilitating volunteering</b>	
<b>Anticipated Outcomes</b>	<b>Indicators of achievement</b>
VIOs use a diversity of approaches to mobilize volunteers from various segments of the populace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and types of approaches used by VIOs to mobilize volunteers;</li> </ul>
VIOs have the capacity to effectively facilitate volunteering in different schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent to which project objectives are achieved in volunteer-based projects.</li> </ul>

**TABLE 4**

<b>Objective 4: To ensure sustainable funding</b>	
<b>Anticipated Outcomes</b>	<b>Indicators of achievement</b>
Support for meeting the common needs of VIOs is available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparative Study on the administration of Volunteer Funds conducted;</li> <li>• Meetings conducted and decisions made on the setting up of a National Fund for Volunteerism;</li> <li>• A National Fund for Volunteerism is established;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Fund provides support for the common needs of VIOs, notably in respect of capacity building, information sharing, and the maintaining of infrastructure for on-line volunteering;</li> <li>• Number of volunteering groups benefiting from the Fund.</li> </ul>
<p>Government accepts the use of volunteer-based activities in development programmes and makes fiscal allocations for such activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development planning documents <u>of the Government</u> expressly endorse the use of volunteer-based activities in its development programmes;</li> <li>• VIOs and volunteers are involved in the development planning processes <u>of the Government</u>;</li> <li>• Fiscal allocations for volunteer-based activities are made in medium and long-term development plans <u>of the Government</u>.</li> </ul>