

KENYA VOLUNTARY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

“Development against Dependence”



**DETAILED INFO SHEET FOR THE EQUALITY FOR CHANGE EVS
PLACEMENT IN KENYA 2015 TO 2016**

“KVDA welcomes you to come and witness the circumstances that dictate the current global systems and in a little way offer an assisting hand to foster real change in the lives of fellow human beings with humility, compassion and utter determination to enhance social justice.”

HOSTING PROJECT: MSICHANA EMPOWERED KURIA

CODE: KVDA/ EVS/2015/16

COUNTY: MIGORI, SOUTH WEST KENYA, KURIA REGION

DURATION: 2 MONTHS FROM 5TH NOVEMBER 2015 TO 3RD JANUARY 2016

ARRIVAL TO KENYA: 5TH NOVEMBER 2015

ORIENTATION: 6TH NOVEMBER 2015

TRAVEL TO THE PROJECT: 7TH NOVEMBER 2015

PROJECT CLOSING CEREMONY: 2ND JANUARY 2016

TRAVEL BACK TO NAIROBI: 3RD JANUARY 2016

DEPARTURE FROM KENYA: 4TH JANUARY 2016

KENYA: COUNTRY PROFILE



CAPITAL: Nairobi
REGIME: Republic
PRESIDENT: Uhuru Kenyatta
DEPUTY PRESIDENT: William Ruto
CURRENCY: Kenyan Shilling (KES)
BORDERING COUNTRIES: Tanzania, Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia
LAND AREA (KM²): 571,466
POPULATION (MILLION): 39.4
DENSITY (POP/KM²): 67.7
URBAN POPULATION (%): 21.0
OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English
NATIONAL LANGUAGE: Kiswahili

MAIN TRIBES: Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Kalenjin, Kamba, Miji Kenda

MAIN RELIGIONS: Christianity, Islam

TOTAL FERTILITY RATE: 4.6

INFANT MORTALITY RATE: 52.0

LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH: 58.9

HIV ADULT PREVALENCE (%): 6.3

(Source: Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2008/09)

★ Project location (approximate)

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE SUMMARY

Kenya Voluntary Development Association (**KVDA**) has the pleasure to forward this detailed information sheet as a confirmation that the preparations for **KVDA/ STV/ EVS/2015/16** that will run from **5th November 2015 to 3rd January 2016** at **Msichana Empowered Kuria** community based organization situated in South West Kenya are complete.

KVDA has since **1962** been an active partner in community development and has afforded the youth from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas opportunities to serve other society members by investing their time, skills, knowledge and money to render voluntary services in the most remote and usually inaccessible parts of Kenya where poverty levels are extremely high.

We hope that through your support and that of other like-minded humanity, we can mobilize human and material resources to enhance active participation of those recipients to development programs to significantly address the problems that hinder human and environmental friendly development approaches so that we sustain our collective efforts to eradicate poverty.

KVDA calls upon all volunteers to reflect upon their contributions in this worthy sector and harmonize our visions to make a tangible impact. We reiterate our commitment to assist you while in Kenya to the best of our abilities and as always, do welcome constructive criticism that is fundamental in the overall objective of ensuring that we all play our rightful roles in society.

PROJECT INFO-SHEET

ORIENTATION

Orientation will be conducted on the **6th November 2015** from **10.00 am** at the **KVDA Residence** in Kilimani-Nairobi and all the volunteers must attend in order to initiate the much-needed teamwork. It will entail, introduction, team building and group formation, visit to residential estates for both privileged (the elite) and the under-privileged (slum dwellers) to grasp and understand poverty levels in global south, psychological preparation and set out possible interventions.

PROJECT PROFILE

The inhabitants are Kuria speaking people residing in the South West of Kenya. Their main economic activity is farming, where farmers grow tobacco, maize, beans, sweet potatoes and other horticultural crops for sale. Cattle and goat trade also take place but the volume of trade has gone very low owing to the incessant cases of cattle rustling between the Kuria people and the Maasai and Kipsigis of the neighboring Trans Mara district. The area has low levels of literacy especially among people aged from 35 years and above.

MSICHANA EMPOWERED KURIA ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

Postal address: P.O BOX 290-40413, Kehancha, Kenya

Telephone contact: +254712692292.

PROJECT LOCATION: The EVS volunteers will be hosted at Ikerege-Bukira Central/Ikerege Ward, Kuria West Sub-County, closer to the Kenya-Tanzania border of Isebania.

MAIN GOAL

The main goal of Msichana Empowered Kuria is to use community based activities and initiatives to empower women and girls from marginalized communities to foster sustainable development.

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to live in a just world without gender inequality and abject poverty. To this end, Msichana Empowered Kuria will foster sustainable development in Kuria through socio-economic empowerment and advocacy.

MISSION STATEMENT

It is our mission to empower disadvantaged women and girls from marginalized communities to improve their lives sustainably through use of innovative, practical initiatives.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. Empowering women and girls to take control of their own development through education and advocacy.
2. To train girls on important life and vocational skills.
3. To foster healthy community relationships and bridge gender divide.
4. To provide sustainable solutions to the Millennium Development Goals through advocating for women empowerment and gender equality.
5. To work in collaboration with women and youth to facilitate sustainable economic and social development.
6. To give women educational tools for development in three main areas
 - Health
 - Income generation
 - Environmentally sustainable development

REGION: Kuria West and Kuria East Sub counties

BENEFICIARIES: Exclusively women, children and youth from marginalized communities.

Projects-Women, girl and children empowerment and poverty eradication initiatives.

Msichana Empowered Kuria is currently involved in three main projects working closely with community members.

-“Elimisha Msichana Initiative”(Educate a girl initiative); a campaign on girl child education in Kuria, that includes a mentorship and sponsorship program to allow girls go to school and fight Female Genital Mutilation(FGM). This project also allows girls from poor backgrounds to learn vocational skills like how to make homemade reusable sanitary towels that they sell to others to earn some income. This is also an after school activity for the girls in the program. The project is currently implemented in four schools; Nyabokarange, Robarisia, Ikerege and Kugitura Primary schools.

Msichana clubs- is a mini project in the Elimisha Msichana Initiative. It is particularly special in this way, the girls are grouped into five a then each girl gets to save KES 5 each day put in a “piggy bank” at the patron’s office at the end of the month each girl is able to have saved up to KES 150 and collaboratively purchase basic essentials like body lotions and undergarments at a cheaper price. This is away for them to learn independence at a young age.

-“*Hamasha Mama Initiative*”(Enlighten a mother Initiative); a capacity building project that was set to empower women in the community on their various rights as women and human beings and advocate for proper sanitation to prevent spread diseases and access to information on sexual and reproductive health services.

-“*Chakula kwa Mtoto* “(Food for the child); this is complementary feeding initiative to bridge the nutrition gap of infants; malnutrition, delayed development. The main focus will be in mothers living in poverty from marginalized communities like the Kuria community.

Our plan for the future is to better utilize the resources we have to be able to provide large scale training services using incorporating technology for women in the field and on campus location. Currently we are continually training in the field and with little to no equipment. We would like to incorporate more partner programs to reach out to more women, children and youth.

We work on voluntary basis. Currently having five amazing youth volunteers’ three women and two men working, implementing and monitoring the organizations projects.

OVERVIEW ON KURIA

Kuria District is an [administrative district](#) in the [Nyanza Province](#) of [Kenya](#). Its capital town is [Kehancha](#) (sometimes spelled as *Kihancha*). The district has a population of 256,086 (2009 census) and an area of 581 km². It is inhabited by [Kuria people](#).

Kuria district was split into two in December 2007, Kuria West district with Kehancha as the district capital and Kuria East district with Kegonga as the district capital.

Kuria West covers three administrative divisions namely Kehancha, Maberu and Masaba Divisions while Kuria East spans the two administrative divisions namely Kegonga and Ntimaru.

However one peculiarity is that the two District's have only one local authority and Kehancha municipality. There are two constituencies ,Kuria West and Kuria East . Kuria West is headed by Mathias Robi Nyamabe as of 2014 and Kura East is headed by Shadrack Manga. Kuria District is divided into five administrative divisions

Administrative divisions

Division Population* Urban pop.*

Headquarters

Kegonga 57,044 27,098 Kegonga

Kehancha	62,260	29,267	Ikerege	
Mabera	44,782	7,213	Suba	
			Kuria	
Masaba	38,550	9,342	Masaba	
Ntimaru	53,450	18,513	Ntimaru	
<i>Total</i>	<i>256,086</i>	<i>91,433</i>	-	*2009 census. Sources: [1] , [2] ,

PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

Volunteers will work for together with members of the local community for six hours daily from Monday to Friday. Below is the outline of project activities:

MANUAL WORK AND INTER-CULTURAL ACTIVITIES:

- **Teaching:** Teaching women and girls how to make home made reusable sanitary towels
- **Girl empowerment workshop:** Empower young girls from Kuria to attain better health and brighter future
- **Gender sessions:** To sensitize young girls about the concepts of gender and sex and how it is related to their own lives
- **Trainings and workshops:** Focus on goal five of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Gender equality, Women and Girl child empowerment
- **Inter-cultural learning:** interaction with school children coupled with home visits and exposure to development challenges

EVS PROJECT THEME: GENDER SENSITIVITY: FOCUS ON FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

- Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a strong tradition in this community. It is illegal. But still more than one third of the women are circumcised and each and every young woman is subjected to the cut.
- The church has preached against FGM for decades but in spite of the deep devoutness the priests do not have enough power over the souls.FGM has nothing to do with religion; it is a so-called culture and tradition in certain groups.
- The practice is deeply rooted in views on chastity, transition to womanhood, “purity” for marriage and basically a wish to control women sexually. In certain areas the survival and fertility of the local community is assumed to be threatened if the girls are not circumcised. Many brave young girls who refuse FGM are regarded as “unmarriageable” and become outcasts.
- It is a brutal act, painful and has led to the spread of HIV/AIDS.
- This project will equally provide the platform for the implementation of concrete actions developed from the research undertaken in the framework of the Equality for Change Project thanks to the Erasmus plus program in which CAPEC-Cameroon, CESIE-Italy, KVDA-Kenya, Lindenberg-Netherlands, PiNA-Slovenia and TYCEN-Tanzania have dedicated themselves to implement from 2015 to 2016
- The project will keenly focus on gender issues with the view to strengthen the capacities of both men and women in the ever-changing global scenario aware of the obtaining challenges where the women are more marginalized in the local community

- This grass roots cooperation with local partners will provide an added value to the project and will encourage also the local realities – often without access to the international dimension – in being involved in a large scale project where they could share knowledge and skills and to ensure an enduring and visible impact of the work done.

GENDER ROLES

The local Kuria community of is characterized by traditional family values and clear gender roles. Men and women have different responsibilities attached to household, reproduction and income generating activities. A man is generally considered as the head of the household and bread winner of the family, with clear authorities attached. The main responsibilities of women are to care for children and carry out various household duties.

Polygamy is traditionally practiced in the community

The different roles of men and women are, to a large extent, inherited by the young boys and girls. While the main duty of the boys is to help looking after the cattle, girls have, just as their mothers, a large span of responsibilities attached to the household.

Gender is not a topic commonly talked upon in the community, and gender roles rarely questioned. The division in roles and tasks are commonly explained by both biology, traditional customs (inherited mainly through parents), and practical reasons. When asked what the differences between boys and girls are in the community, school pupils answered as follows (not exactly quoted):

“Boys are strong, girls are weak”

“Boys wear trousers and don’t have breasts”

“Boys can marry, girls get married.”

“Girls can look after children, but boys could not manage, especially not small children”

A change in gender norms can however be sighted in the area. As an example, young girls express that there are several things they are allowed to do that their mothers where not, such as going to school, driving a car, and earning their own money.

Furthermore, the dreams of boys and girls in the area strike as very similar. A great majority of both boys and girls express a wish to continue with higher studies in order to have a good job in the future.

GENDER CHALLENGES

According to various stakeholders interviewed in the community the main challenges associated with gender are women being financially dependent on men, teenage pregnancies, girls dropping out of school, female circumcision, early marriages and the spreading of HIV.

The HIV prevalence is higher in certain rural communities in Kenya compared to the national average, with 7.9 % of the adult population being infected. As in the rest of the country the prevalence is higher among women than among men. According to the KDSH 2008/09 the knowledge about HIV is generally lower among young women than young men in Kenya, and in Rift Valley Province 45 % of men support the statement that contraceptive use may cause women to become promiscuous.

There have been some awareness raining activities about HIV/Aids in Kuria and the surrounding areas, and the topic is officially included in the curriculum for both primary and secondary school. The emphasis has however been limited to the promotion of abstinence, and to some extent to the potential link between FGM and HIV spreading. Strongly impacted by the Catholic Church, condoms are not promoted openly and there

is a strong taboo associated with talking about sex as well as family planning in general. In most secondary schools in the area, especially boarding schools, male and female students are separated.

One reason commonly given for this is the attempt to prevent students from involve in “immoral behaviour”, with potential teenage pregnancies as a result. Both female and male students that we have met tend to support this division for the same reason. Some of the girls in the primary school says that boys their own age are generally “bad” and not to be trusted.

There is no information available on the matter of gender based violence in the community. According to the KDHS 2008/09 as many as 42 % of women (age 15-49) in Rift Valley have ever experienced physical or sexual violence committed by their own husband/partner. Based on this figure one can only assume that this problem is evident also in Kuria, but not to what extent.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), as defined by the World Health Organization, comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The gravity and the scale of the practice vary between different regions and ethnic groups. Also the rationales for the cutting tend to differ and include a mix of cultural, religious and social factors within families and communities. Some of the reasons most commonly cited are:

- FGM as a social convention, with social pressure from the community
- FGM as a cultural tradition, associated with celebration
- FGM as a necessary part of raising a girl and preparing her for adulthood and marriage
- FGM as a means to reduce women’s sexual drive and immoral behaviour
- FGM as a measure to assure hygiene and cleanliness
- FGM as a way to uphold local power structures and authorities

FGM has no known health benefits, but it harms girls and women in many ways. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue, and interferes with the natural functions of girls' and women's bodies. Procedures can be extremely painful and cause infections, severe bleeding and problems urinating, as well as later, sexual problems and complications related to childbirth, in the most severe cases leading to deaths and stillbirths.

FGM is often associated with the passage from childhood to womanhood and the preparation for marriage.

Therefore girls tend to drop out of school and be married off short after being circumcised. This brings along other negative consequences for the girls such as early pregnancies, lack of education and financial dependence.

The human rights framework provides strong support to the abandonment of FGM and several treaties explicitly recognizes FGM as a violation of fundamental human rights.

As FGM is nearly always carried out on minors it is a violation of the rights of children.

The practice also violates a person's rights to health, security and physical integrity, the right to be free from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, and the right to life when the procedure results in death.

According to the KDHS 2008/09, 27 % of all Kenyan women aged between 15 and 49 years were circumcised.

This shows a steady reduction since the survey was carried out in 1998 (38%) and 2003 (32%). Young girls are also found to be circumcised to a lower extent than older women.

The extent and practice of FGM vary substantially between different ethnic groups in Kenya. While it is practically non-existent among Luo and Luhya women, as many as 73 % of Maasai women and 96 % of Kisii women were found to be circumcised in 2008.

The type of FGM most commonly found in the Maasai community is called *Clitoridectomy*, including partial or total removal of the clitoris.

In 2001 the practice of FGM was criminalized in Kenya through the Children's Act no 8. Article 14 states that:

"No person shall subject a child to female circumcision, child marriage or other cultural rites, customs or traditional practices that are likely to negatively affect the child's life, health, social welfare, dignity or physical and psychological development."

The penalty for subjecting a child under 18 years of age to FGM is 12 months imprisonment, a fine of 50 000 Kenyan shillings or both. Although caregivers, forcing their girls to undergo FGM, risk imprisonment, only a few local cases have been taken to court to this date. According to the Trans Mara Division Children's Officer, the reason is mainly related a low readiness to report cases of FGM, explained partly by cultural barriers and stigma, and partly by lack of trust for and knowledge about the legal system. Traditionally most circumcisions are carried out, in secrecy, during the first weeks of December, when the schools are closed.

To what extent FGM is still practiced in Kuria remains unknown, but there have been several cases where girls have escaped FGM and early marriages. Some of these girls have managed to continue their schooling at local boarding schools with support from external donors. The challenges faced by these girls are however many, and associated with trauma and shock, as well as stigma and lack of coherence. As most families turn their back to these girls they are left financially dependent on the good will of sponsors, such as NGOs and churches.

Thanks to previous awareness raising activities carried out by churches and NGOs in the area, girls and boys in Kuria region, as well as their teachers, tend to be well informed about the complications associated with FGM. Among the most commonly recognized complications are excess bleeding, spread of infectious diseases and HIV, delivery complications, and reduced pleasure of sex.

TIMING

Considering the fact that the months of November and December is the time when most of girls undergone FGM, it serves as a good time to organize activities on FGM.

Internationally recognized dates, such as the International Women's Day, may also serve as opportunities to raise issues related to gender, FGM

Other days that may be relevant to celebrate are the International Day against FGM (6th of February), World Health Day (7th of April), International Youth Day (12th of August), International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (28th of November), and the World AIDS Day (1st of December).

It is, however, important to acknowledge that changing traditions and customs, such as those related to FGM and gender roles, ultimately involves transformation of individual as well as group attitudes and behaviours.

This is a complex and lengthy process that needs continues recognition and time for open discussions and reflection. Sensitisation and awareness raising activities should therefore not be isolated events on specific dates, but rather implemented repeatedly throughout the year.

PROFILE GUIDE FOR RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS FOR THIS PROJECT

- Be an emotionally stable and mature person with a sincere interest in participating in community service program.
- Highly motivated and self-driven person with the capacity to be immersed in another culture and manage to confront the emerging challenges
- Knowledgeable on gender related issues
- Keen to learn and translate non-formal education methodologies as a tool to empower local people to manage their own affairs
- Posses good analytical skills, training skills and be willing to learn and have time to invest in this program.
- Proficiency required: using Microsoft products, the Internet, and email.
- Experience in youth work, basic knowledge and experience of community development and basic services delivery methodologies that would include the use of forum theatre as a tool to engage with the local people

PROJECT LANGUAGE: English

EXCURSIONS AND FREE TIME ACTIVITIES:

Volunteers will have the opportunity for excursions:

- There are possibilities for group excursion during the EVS project and especially over the weekends and these will be done at an extra cost borne by the volunteer.
- Such excursions should be organized in consultation with the community leaders and the KVDA Secretariat.
- The possibility to visit the historic sites like Hippo Point on the expansive Lake Victoria in Kisumu, the renowned Kakamega Rain Forest, the Equator Point at the Maseno University, among other spectacular sites of interest. It is important to note that these will be done mostly during the weekends and it is not included in the project budget.

DRUG ABUSE AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE :

Drug and substance abuse in is a major hindrance to development. All categories of the population, from the youth to the old, men to women are affected. There is for instance widespread abuse of **cannavis Sativa**. Recently the use of **Mandraz** and morphine derivates by students is on the increase. **Chang'aa** drinking and tobacco smoking is also on the increase among the youth. This has impacted negatively on education, social behaviour and health. It has also led to low levels of engagement in positive economic activities.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

- ❖ EVS Volunteers will travel from Nairobi to the project situated approximately 400 kilometers on the morning of 7th November 2015 for the eight hour trip by public transport.
- ❖ The EVS Placement will end on 2nd January 2016 and the volunteers travel back to KVDA Residence in Nairobi on 3rd January 2016
- ❖ Transport to and from the project will be organized by KVDA.

AIRPORT TRANSFER:

Transfers on arrival at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi and departure from Kenya will be done by KVDA. Flight confirmation SHOULD be done by e-mail with

full flight details provided. On arrival volunteers will be taken to KVDA Residence situated along Kirichwa Road House No. 77(1), **Kilimani**, Nairobi where they will be accommodated before travel to the project. We kindly remind everybody that during the project won't be accepted exceptions like late arrivals (not in the scheduled arrival day) or early departures (before than the scheduled departure day).

MEALS

- ❖ Volunteers will share the meals with the host family and this will entail breakfast, Lunch and dinner.
- ❖ Most of the foodstuffs provided will be Kenyan but with flexibility to include non Kenyan foodstuffs due to cultural diversity
- ❖ There will be provision for a cultural day for each nationality represented to showcase their food culture and other spectacular cultural practices

INSURANCE COVER

- ❖ KVDA does not provide insurance cover and the participants should ensure that they have insurance cover for the entire duration of their placement at the EVS project.

VISA APPLICATION PROCESS

- ❖ Effective from September 2015 there is a new directive from the Immigration department that will outlaw the issuance of visa on arrival at the airport and this will require the participants to make online application for visa or obtain the visa before travelling to Kenya and the information can be obtained from the nearest Kenyan Embassy or consulate in your country. In case participants require more documents to support the visa application, kindly do not hesitate to contact KVDA.

CURRENCY:

- ❖ Kenya Shillings is the common currency used in Kenya with denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500 and the largest denomination of 1000
- ❖ One Euro currently is exchanging at Kshs. 100 and over
- ❖ Exchange rate against the US Dollar and Euro fluctuates
- ❖ Volunteers are advised against **Travellers Cheques** in Kenya as the Kenyan financial institutions do not honour them due to persistent fraud.
- ❖ Kindly beware that it is expensive to change your money at the Airport
- ❖ You will be advised by KVDA at the most convenient Forex Bureau where you can change your money with good value.
- ❖ Do not carry with you large denominations as this can expose you to robbery as is the case in major cities in the world.

BAN ON PUBLIC SMOKING IN KENYA:

Volunteers should beware that Public smoking is banned in major urban centres in Kenya and notable is in Nairobi where the Nairobi City Council is enforcing the by-laws. There are smoking zones designated at various spots in Nairobi and public smoking can attract heavy penalties and we advise the volunteers to comply with the Laws of Kenya.

WHAT TO CARRY:

- Working clothes, light clothes during working hours and warm clothes especially during campfire.
- Gloves
- Mosquito net and mosquitoes repellent
- Musical instrument {optional}
- Sleeping bag, mat and a pillow.

- Torch or flash light
- Water purifiers {optional}.
- Personal effects {i.e. soap, toothpaste, toiletries}
- National flag, common artifacts of your country
- Traditional foodstuffs from your country which you will prepare to be shared among the participants during the cultural day for your country.
- Donation of your choice preferably children books, pens, toys, balls, crayons, etc.
- A happy and positive attitude.
- Personal first aid kit is essential
- Please carry along anything you feel can introduce your culture and make your stay enjoyable.

ACCOMODATION:

- The local community will provide accommodation in a homestead. There are both pit latrines and flush toilets in the homestead, and bath-shelters for use within the hosting community.
- We strongly advice volunteers to be flexible and easily adapt to the provision of other cultures within the local environment and appreciate their uniqueness.
- Volunteers will share double rooms with two single beds.
- Water for domestic use will be drawn from the borehole but it is advisable to boil drinking water or simply use bottled mineral water for drinking
- This opportunity offers hands-on experience on the complex development challenges and the volunteers will be expected to climb down to the level of host community, be guided on the customs and conduct and should not strive to portray living standards beyond their means.

CULTURAL SHOCK:

Volunteers from the North are advised to come with an open mind and to be highly flexible to avoid falling prey into guilty traps that could easily dehumanize. Over-industrialization development and globalization have deprived the Industrialized World of human contact and happiness and the less industrialized World has the moral obligation to offer guidance. North-South cultural, socio-economic, political imbalances should not be the basis for intercultural tolerance and understanding

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

There are more fears today in the world than never before and the situations has been complicated by the thorny issue of terrorism that remains a major drawback to efforts to accelerate sustainable development. This has led to some foreign Governments to issue negative travel advisories against their citizens from travelling to Kenya with perceptions that Kenya was insecure and vulnerable to terror attacks. KVDA reiterates that Kenya in calm and safe and just like any other county in the world, every visitor should be conversant with safety and security measures and the challenges experienced within the Eastern African region like the Somalia conflict should not be used to generalize on the issue of security in Kenya.

Volunteers should seek for guidance from KVDA on extra activities they wish to undertake while in Kenya and always have the courtesy to share with KVDA information about their involvement in Kenya as volunteers and later as travellers.

It is forbidden for volunteers from other countries to ride a bike, motor cycle or a car while serving on KVDA projects. This measure may seem extreme but is meant to safeguard the safety of the volunteers while in Kenya.

DRESS CODE:

The Kuria speaking community enjoys great cultural heritage and are averse to permissive customs that would compromise their dignity. Female volunteers should beware that wearing shorts and trousers, as this would expose them and depict them negatively out of cultural misrepresentation. The fact is further compounded by the reality that members of the local community are religious and the elderly could easily misinterpret the intentions of the volunteers due to inappropriate dressing that does not conform to the local culture. Ladies are advised to wear skirts or long dresses and avoid as much as possible long trousers or shorts that could send wrong signals. In addition, male volunteers should be cautious against exposing their bare chests or wearing revealing shorts as this would be an affront to the local culture.

LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY:

MENTORING

- **MENTOR FOR THE VOLUNTEER FROM THE HOSTING ORGANISATION:** KVDA will designate its staff to play the role of mentoring and this is the vital link between the volunteer and the organization. The Mentor has the responsibility to enable the volunteer to efficiently execute their tasks with diligence.
- **FUNCTION OF MENTOR:** advise, educate, be a role model to the volunteers; providing problem solving, collaborative support, positive and non evaluative feedback and emotional support for volunteers; to provide comfort, exposure, visibility and challenging assignments which directly support the volunteer's personal and professional development; to provide counselling and friendship to support the volunteer's self-image and competence and thus to listen, guide, advice, teach and offer professional support to the volunteers
- **THE MENTOR** will be available for the volunteer as a constant supporting person. However, he/she should not be directly involved in the daily work of the volunteer.
- **MENTOR'S EXPERIENCE WITH INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS:** More than 3 years experience with international volunteers

DOS AND DON'TS OF VOLUNTEERING

- Do and try learning some basic Kiswahili/local language. Even greetings will be highly appreciated.
- Do show an active interest in learning about the life in the community, and be open-minded especially with the cultural difference in the community.
- Do and try to be yourself despite the difference you may have with the community members e.g. going to church etc.
- Do keep promises e.g. visiting someone's home or family they will be waiting for you and may get disappointed if you fail them.
- Do not make it difficult for future volunteers by giving out a lot of gifts or money. This is not the role of volunteers and we don't want the community to rely or depend on you and neither should they perceive volunteers in this negative way.

- Always be cautious and nurture true friendship in your endeavour to support the needy.
- Do uphold the principles of volunteerism.
- Do live in accordance with the Laws of Kenya and KVDA regulations
- Do work alongside the local community members/project staff /institution in the spirit of complementation and co-operation.
- Do not get disappointed if things do not work out, remember change is a gradual process and every bit of impact will go a long way in make a difference for the community.
- Remember it's all about learning from each other and not basically helping the local people.

ENTERTAINMENT:

The Kuria speaking community is known for its unique culture as seen during cultural rites of passage like traditional marriages; etc., where traditional dances are performed to colour the event. Famous traditional dances that have a strong and captivating impact to the community. There will be the possibility of lighting the camp fire where the volunteers will enjoy the beautiful African sky full of twinkling stars and its important to note that this is symbolic as volunteers seating around the camp fire will be expected to share and discuss burning issues of the day with significance with the contemporary world. Village elders and sages could be invited to grace certain occasions and cultural nights will also feature as part of informative, educative and entertainment.

SUPPORTING THE NEEDY:

KVDA as a developmental organization invests heavily in development education, empowerment and capacity building for community based organizations through its philosophy of “**DEVELOPMENT AGAINST DEPENDENCE**”. We discourage communities from always being at the receiving end of development program but strive to employ own strategies to achieve true development and restore their own cherished human dignity.

Human centered development is the key focus of **KVDA** intervention strategies and **KVDA** has the commitment to mobilize resources in partnership with development partners. **KVDA** will ensure that the right procedures and systems are put in place and development should not be a tool of the “**haves**” to suppress the “**have-nots**”. If you have the capacity to offer a donation to the needy community, **KVDA** welcomes your humanitarian gesture that will complement our efforts to tackle issues that stifle efforts by the community towards sustainable development. Please feel free in case you may require more information on a specific area that interests you and especially if you wish to support a long-term project at the local community.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION:

KVDA advises volunteers to seek for information from the right source and openly raise issues that are burning to avoid speculation that could compromise their dignity. **KVDA** as the host organization is well placed to guide and advise volunteers on real situation in Kenya and we caution our guest against falling prey to “cheap” offers e.g. hotels, tours etc, for when a deal is too good think twice. Kindly entrust **KVDA** to assist you during your stay in Kenya and have a memorable fulfilling stay.

EDUCATIONAL TOURS

KVDA Organizes tours to spectacular sites and the fees charged is all inclusive of meals, accommodation and tour guiding. This can be held before the start of the work camp or after the project and those willing to participate must apply the same at least two weeks before arrive to enable KVDA put its acts together. 10% of the income from the Educational Tours is used to support community projects.

Below please find the charges for the KVDA Educational tour:

3 days tour to Masaai Mara National Park – **350 Euros**
4th day tour to Lake Nakuru i.e. (after masaai Mara) an extra **150 Euros**
Nairobi National Park (One Day): **150 Euros**

Detailed educational tours information is available on request

EMERGENCY CONTACTS:

Below are contact details for KVDA personnel that will be available to support the volunteers:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (Oneka): 0721 650 357
REGIONAL COORDINATOR (Rose): 0722 710 663

CONFIRMATION OF FLIGHT DETAILS:

Confirmation of flight details should be done by the partner organization at least two weeks in advance for conventional purposes.

Looking forward to a good working cooperation and please feel free to seek for clarification.

For more information please contact:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
Kenya Voluntary Development Association,
Kirichwa Road, off Argwings Kodhek or Ngong Road next to Nairobi Women Hospital,
Adams Arcade,
House no. 77(1), Kilimani, Nairobi,
P.O. Box 48902-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
TELEPHONE +254-20-721650357
EMAIL: kvdakenya@yahoo.com, munanairika@hotmail.com,
WEBSITE: www.kvda.or.ke.