



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY HON. WILLIAM
SAMOEI RUTO, PHD, CGH PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND COMMANDER-IN-
CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES DURING THE
GOLD AWARD PRESENTATION**

OCTOBER 17, 2024

STATE HOUSE, NAIROBI

1. I am honoured to welcome you all to State House today as we celebrate the exceptional achievements of the Gold Awardees who have excelled in the President's Award Scheme. In our country and throughout the world, we live in dynamic and challenging times, calling for extraordinary individuals with the discipline, skill, integrity, and tenacity to overcome hardship and seize opportunities. It is inspiring that you have shown such achievements can come not only from others around the globe but from ordinary people here at home applying themselves in remarkable ways.
2. Your achievements reflect the positive impact you have made, not only in your lives but also in your communities. Your stories embody resilience, determination, and the power of selfless service. You have consistently demonstrated a willingness to step out of your comfort zone and face various challenges, including outdoor expeditions, and, in the process, developed valuable skills that will serve you well in future leadership and service.
3. Without a doubt, these experiences have strengthened your character and empowered you to become leaders. You represent the finest of our young people who are motivated and equipped to carry the hopes of communities and actualise our nation's aspirations for a brighter tomorrow at a time when we all desire positive change.
4. I am pleased to share that the Government's transformation agenda aligns with the vision of empowering the youth through education and human capital development. We aim to cultivate a nation of well-educated, highly skilled, empowered, connected, and engaged young men and women who will drive Kenya's development now and in the future.



Recognising that our people are our greatest asset, we are committed to investing in both formal and nonformal education to equip every young Kenyan to thrive, contribute to shared prosperity, and support national development.

5. Through its commitment to preparing young people for the demands of the 21st century by fostering resilience, creativity, and leadership, the President's Award Programme complements our economic transformation agenda and aligns with the National Human Development Strategy. I cannot overstate the impact your work and achievements have made, and I will highlight a few outstanding contributions that reinforce our confidence in a promising future for Kenya's youth and our nation.
6. I begin by saluting the participants from the MPESA Academy. In October 2022, it guided 128 Gold Awardees in a project to construct a borehole to provide clean water to Friends School Shitirira in Kakamega County, benefitting pupils and staff alike.
7. Likewise, participants from Kapkoiga Girls High School joined the community to build classrooms to enable the community's young learners to receive Early Childhood Development and Education, which is integral in providing a solid educational foundation.
8. On the international stage, Ms Rose Poka, a 25-year old Award holder, was elected to represent Kenyan youth on the International Council of the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Association, taking the voice of our young people to a global platform.



9. Further, the programme and its awardees have provided remarkable support for the National Tree Planting Initiative. As a result, institutions such as Shikusa Borstal, Kisii University, and Maseno School are leading participants in Kenya's programme to plant 15 billion trees by 2032, thereby combatting climate change and promoting environmental sustainability.
10. Additionally, in Taita Taveta County, the Global Youth Mobilisation initiative has transformed over 300 lives by equipping young men and women with entrepreneurial skills and offering resources to support learning and livelihoods, especially to those affected by gender-based violence.
11. Finally, I must mention Award participants from the Kenya Medical Training Colleges, who organised medical camps, bringing essential healthcare to underserved communities. This health outreach activity is a welcome contribution to our Afya Bora Mashinani initiative aimed at bringing essential services to the people right at home.
12. We are grateful to the many selfless individuals who have supported the Award Programme. I am grateful to our private-sector partners, such as the World Health Organisation, Safaricom and the MasterCard Foundation, who have been instrumental in facilitating the consistent high performance and success of the programme.
13. Our commitment to youth development must extend beyond the classroom to the intentional creation of opportunities for employment, innovation and entrepreneurship.



14. More than ever, access to diverse learning opportunities is essential to enable young people to overcome challenges and seize opportunities in a dynamic, complex world. For this reason, non-formal education must be recognised as a viable means of equipping young people with critical life skills, helping them reach their full potential and become leaders.
15. I commend the Board of the President's Award for their efforts to harness the potential of our youth. This programme goes a long way to foster employability, creativity and innovation, preparing our young people to compete on a global stage.
16. Regardless of the challenges before us, Kenyan youth have demonstrated their readiness to overcome them with courage and contribute fresh perspectives to the development agenda. It is clear that the youth are not just the leaders of tomorrow; they are the champions of today.
17. This award ceremony celebrates those who have left a lasting impact on their communities and beyond and provides an inspiring platform to encourage other young people to pursue the path of self-development through discipline, service and contribution to the transformation of institutions, communities and the nation.
18. This event is a timely reminder that greatness knows no age and that, with our youth holding the torch of progress, Kenya's future is bright. The government remains committed to supporting this Award Programme.



We shall always do our part to ensure it continues to uplift, motivate and guide countless young men and women.

19. Congratulations to all our Gold Awardees and alumni. May you continue excelling in transforming your communities and touching lives across Kenya. I wish you success as you continue to learn, serve and work.

Thank you.

