Strengthening an African Partner Structure in the Framework of the African-German Youth Initiative

#AGYI
The AGYI is implemented in Germany and Africa. Engagement Global coordinates the overall initiative, in order to promote youth exchanges that are characterised by partnerships between African countries and Germany.

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), GIZ strengthens resources, competencies and capabilities in the African partner structures. The AGYI is aligned with the Agenda 2063 of the African Union, the Youth Charter (2006), the Action Plan of the African Youth Decade (2009-2018) and the national youth strategies of the pilot countries.

The GIZ programme, headquartered in Addis Ababa, works on a Pan-African level and in the three pilot countries Benin, South Africa and Tanzania. Implementation partners are the African Union Commission (AUC) and implementation structures in the three pilot countries. They all work together to promote exchange between young people from Africa and Germany, to continuously increase the number of participants and to promote the further qualitative development of youth voluntary services and exchange formats.

At mid-term of the pilot phase of the African-German Youth Initiative, this brochure gives an insight into so far realised achievements of the initiative and their effects. It also offers an outlook on the planned milestones up to the end of the pilot phase and the core outcomes of the initiative beyond that.

Connecting Horizons – Two years into implementation

The African-German Youth Initiative (AGYI) supports young people in developing their potential and participating in political and social development processes through youth exchange projects, voluntary services and returnee activities with a focus on sustainable development.
Training, Information, Encounter

The AGYI supports implementation structures in the three pilot countries Benin, South Africa and Tanzania in developing a range of services comprising further training, information and networking for sending and host organisations in the respective countries. The Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA), the Tanzania Youth Coalition (TYC) and the AGYI Benin Network, an association of 25 non-governmental organisations in Benin, have been implementing concrete measures in the areas of information, network meetings and training since the beginning of the pilot phase. The service offer initiates new partnerships and improves the quality of youth exchange formats. The African Union is integrating target groups and perspectives beyond the pilot countries into the initiative and is developing and disseminating guidelines and good practice examples across the continent. A Pan-African Dialogue on youth exchange and voluntary services promotes the further development of volunteer services on the African continent.

Graphic 1: Milestones Training, Information, Encounter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>540+</td>
<td>150+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>200+</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td># Organizations that have actively engaged in dialogue opportunities at the level of AGYI</td>
<td>Host and sending practitioners with increased capacity to implement youth exchange</td>
<td>Study trips encountering EG-programs</td>
<td>Guidelines published:</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td># African exchange practitioners that participated in activities of the AGYI service offer</td>
<td># Host and sending practitioners with increased capacity to implement youth exchange</td>
<td># Study trips encountering EG-programs</td>
<td>“Good Practice, Responsible Exchange &amp; Volunteering Guideline”</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>“Youth Exchange Programmes in Africa”</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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<td>“Inclusion in Youth Exchange”, in Vorbereitung</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

“AGYI’s work has had a positive impact on AFS’s profile in the NGO sector in South Africa. In particular, opportunities for networking with other South African organisations are a real asset to our operations.”

Image 1: AFS South Africa

Longterm Goals
Service structures for youth exchange in African countries:
• Sustainable service provision in pilot countries and at AU level
• Toolbox for Youth Exchange
Under the umbrella of the AGYI, youth exchange formats that are already supported by the BMZ such as ASA, ENSA, CHAT der Welten and weltwaerts, are being expanded both quantitatively and qualitatively. The focus lies on the sustainable strengthening of the African partner structure, for example by supporting regional associations and networks in the field of youth exchange. Those include the Southern African Alumni Network (SAAN) or the Southern African weltwärts Network (SAwN), a network of weltwärts sending and hosting organisations in Southern Africa. Building on the experience gained in Southern Africa, a similar process in East and West Africa is to contribute to the expansion of regional weltwärts networks.

The African Union supports pan-African exchange formats through a strengthening of networking between the African Member States. Formats such as the AU Ideation Dialogue and the AU-EU Youth Hub encourage the development of new innovative approaches to youth exchange at intercontinental level and promote young people’s skills and participation. The networking between organisations in Germany and on the African continent is also a core element. Thereby AGYI promotes the dialogue on quality standards as well as the initiation of new partnerships.

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**Digital Solutions to Increase Quality**

- **Initiation of New Partnerships**
  - 12 with organisations from Tanzania
  - Preparation of 15 partnerships with organisations from South Africa
  - 20 partnerships within the framework of a partner matching conference in Benin

- **AUC “Continental Volunteer Linkage Platform”**
  - Online platform for information and networking between different actors (state structures, civil society, youths) at different levels (continental, regional and national)

- **Volunteer Management System**
  - A digital open source software to improve management of volunteers within programs (application, selection, deployment and post-deployment journey)

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**Longterm Goals**

- Sustainable Weltwärts networks
- Continental Community of Practice

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**The following network structures are launched and offer activities for their members**

- **AGYI Benin Network**
  - 25 organisations

- **Southern African Alumni Network (SAAN)**
  - 44 active members

- **Southern African weltwärts Network (SAwN)**
  - 17 member organisations, 174 in the extended circle

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**Graphic 2: Milestones Networking**

- **2017**
  - AU-EU Youth Cooperation Hub

- **2018**
  - Launch of the Southern African weltwärts Network (SAwN)

- **2019**
  - Guidelines on Quality in Exchange and Quality Labels

- **2020**
  - Launch and strengthening of weltwärts networks in East and West Africa

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*“This is a good example for the opportunities offered by the AGYI Benin network: members benefit from the exchange and transfer of knowledge of resources within the network.”* — Marcel Batcho - Délegation Bénin Planete Urgence

*Image 2: Capacity Building of network members in Sokponta, Benin*
Alumni

After their exchange, volunteers have not only grown in terms of their intercultural competences and language skills, but also gained valuable personal and professional experience. The AGYI builds on these experiences and supports various measures to strengthen returned volunteers in their role as multipliers in the sense of global learning and local development. To promote creative commitment after returning home, the AGYI has set up an innovation fund which supports innovative project ideas from alumni both technically and financially. As part of a pilot competition in 2018, three projects are currently being implemented, among those the establishment of a library as a place of joint global learning for former and current weltwaerts South and North volunteers, situated at Masifunde in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. For 2019-2020 the aim is to support and implement a total of up to 50 projects.

The establishment of a Southern African Alumni Network (SAAN) was intensively supported by WESSA and the AGYI in an advisory capacity and has begun with the implementation of activities, including a capacity-building training for alumni in the area of workshop facilitation. Groups of alumni also meet in Benin and Tanzania and have started connecting with each other in view of a continental alumni network.

Image 3: Shavonne Samaai, self-advocate with an intellectual disability who took part in a group exchange between South Africa and Germany in the frame of weltwaerts Begegnungen

“Being part of an exchange with Germany has given me confidence and self-determination. After my return, I have shared my experiences as a person living with a disability participating in an exchange programme and encouraged others to apply.”

Graphic 3: Milestones Alumni

South-North participants equipped with new competencies and skills
Innovative Alumni Exchange follow-up projects to be implemented in the frame of the AGYI Innovation Fund
Incoming participants across exchange programs (ENSA, weltwaerts-Begegnungen, Weltwaerts South North) from AGYI pilot countries
75% of alumni stated that their opportunities to engage in sustainable development projects have improved
Young Africans who have benefitted from activities in the frame of the AGYI

Pan-African Youth Camp
Countdown 2030 Conference
Expansion and Best Practices of the Innovation Fund

Launch of the Southern African Alumni Network (SAAN)
Pan African Youth Forum
Continental Alumni Meeting

Longterm Goals
Alumni engagement as an integral part of exchange programmes
- Sustainable Alumni networks
- 50 projects have been implemented in the frame of the Innovation Fund
Partner-oriented framework conditions

With the aim of contributing to sustainable development goal 17, Global Partnerships, the AGYI promotes the exchange of young people from African countries and Germany. The AU acts as a bridge to the national governments of its member states and prepares the political ground for achieving the goal of the initiative in view of more equal partnerships.

The development of innovative approaches in the initiation of new partnerships is an important contribution to increase the number of exchange participants. Encounters between partners to initiate and consolidate their partnership have taken place in Tanzania, Benin and South Africa. Quality assurance is another important element in improving the overarching framework conditions. In a participatory process with other exchange actors, WESSA developed a handbook on quality in youth exchange. In Benin, quality standards are being developed together with German partners which form the basis for a national quality label in voluntary services. As part of the process, the African Union is subsequently planning a continental quality label in youth exchange formats on the continent.

Due to the strong demand, youth exchange formats in the area of skills development and vocational training are also being expanded within the framework of the AGYI, e.g. by harnessing the potential of existing town twinnings and vocational training partnerships.

"Good partnerships are based on trust, mutual respect and excitement. In addition, cultural acceptance and mutual learning are crucial."

Decision to strengthen voluntary services and exchange during the AU Summit (Feb 2019)

Continuous reinforcement of youth participatory practices and approaches across all activities

Promotion of inclusion of young people with disabilities in youth exchange formats in Africa

Study on the engagement of the private sector in German-African youth exchanges

Study on the engagement of the private sector in German-African youth exchanges

Longterm Goals
- New exchange format focusing on apprentice exchange
- 30 new exchange partnerships established
- Youth exchange programmes and voluntary service programs are more accessible and inclusive