African-German Youth Initiative (AGYI)

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

Objective

Conditions are improved for African partners and young people to play an equal role in designing African and German youth exchange programmes and voluntary services in the context of sustainable development.

The Challenge

Africa is the youngest continent in the world. Around 70 percent of the population in sub-Saharan Africa is under the age of 30. Young people play a key role in shaping sustainable political, social, economic and environmental development on the African continent. However, a large proportion of young men and women do not yet have access to high-quality, skills-oriented (vocational) education, or to employment opportunities that provide them with a secure livelihood. They are therefore excluded from social and economic participation.

In their Agenda 2063, the African Union (AU) Member States have set the goal of providing Africa's youth with better access to education, training, skills development, employment and economic opportunities as well as leisure and cultural activities.

Educationally sound youth exchange programmes and volunteer services can enable young people to expand their personal horizons, acquire life and employment skills, and participate in sustainable development processes. However, exchange between young people from Africa and Germany has often taken place against a background of structural and economic inequality.

Dialogue forums and strategies for inclusive youth exchange programmes and volunteer services that enhance skills are still underdeveloped on the African continent. There is not yet an adequate framework in place to enable African partners and young people to play an equal role in designing African -German youth exchange programmes and volunteer services that will support sustainable development.

Through the AGYI, partners in Germany and on the African continent will be supported to strengthen and set-up structures that foster a sustainable, mutual and partnership oriented exchange between young people from Germany and African countries.
Our Approach

The African-German Youth Initiative (AGYI) is being implemented in Germany and Africa. Engagement Global is coordinating the establishment of the initiative, which is designed to support partnership-oriented interactions between young people in African countries and Germany. On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), GIZ is strengthening the resources, skills and capacity of the partner structures. Headquartered in Addis Ababa, the technical cooperation component of the Initiative is initially working in three partner countries (Benin, South Africa and Tanzania), and is aligned with the AU’s Agenda 2063, the African Youth Charter (2006), the African Youth Decade 2009–2018 Plan of Action and the pilot countries’ own national youth strategies.

AGYI’s advisory services are strengthening the professional skills and the planning and management capacities of the AU Commission’s Department for Human Resources, Science and Technology and the three civil society implementing organisations in the partner countries. These are: Young Beninese Leaders Association (YBLA), Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA) and Tanzania Youth Coalition (TYC). The implementing organisations will take on coordinating and supporting tasks such as promoting, coordinating and supporting international youth exchange programmes. As such they will offer supporting services for African host and sending organisations. They will also act as entry points for other organisations and institutions in the region that would like to implement exchange activities.

The technical cooperation component of the AGYI is working in three interrelated fields of activity:

- Expanding the availability of pan-African volunteer services and youth exchange programmes that focus on skills development;
- Strengthening professional skills as well as planning and management capacities in implementing organisations in the three pilot countries. The aim is to support skills-enhancing African-German (as well as trilateral and multilateral) volunteer services and youth exchanges, and to promote participation and networking;
- Encouraging networking among African and German partners involved in volunteer services and youth exchange programmes.

AGYI is helping young men and women to develop their potential and participate in political and social development processes through youth exchange programmes, volunteer services and returnee activities that focus on sustainable development.