



# AGYI Learning Paper



**giz** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH





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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

AGYI	African German Youth Initiative
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Comission
Bezev	<i>Behinderung und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit e.V.</i>
BKJ	<i>Bundesvereinigung Kulturelle Kinder- und Jugendbildung</i>
BAFzA	<i>Bundesamt für Familie und zivilgesellschaftliche Aufgaben</i>
BFD	<i>Bundesfreiwilligendienst</i>
BMZ	<i>Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung</i>
BMFSFJ	<i>Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend</i>
CdW	<i>CHAT der WELTEN</i>
CSO	Civil Society Organisatization
dsj	<i>Deutsche Sportjugend</i>
EG	Engagement Global
ENSA	ENSA Development Policy School Program
FV	<i>France Volontaires</i>
GIZ	<i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i>
IO	Implementing Organization
IVCO	International Volunteer Cooperation Organizations
KDAJ	<i>Koordinationsstelle Deutsch-Afrikanische Jugendinitiative</i>
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NOREC	Norwegian Agency for Exchange Cooperation
OBSVJ	<i>Office Béninois des Services de Volontariat des Jeunes</i>
PSA	<i>Programmsteuerungsausschuss (Program Steering Committee)</i>
Quifd	<i>Agentur für Qualität in Freiwilligendiensten</i>
RAB	<i>Réseau AGYI Bénin</i>
RAVIES	<i>Réseau des Anciens Volontaires Internationaux pour l'Echanges et la Solidarité</i>
SAAN	Southern African Alumni Network
SAwN	Southern African <i>weltwärts</i> Network
TYC	Tanzania Youth Coalition
WAwN	Western African <i>weltwärts</i> Network
WESSA	Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa
WS	Workshop
ww	<i>weltwärts</i> Volunteer service
wwB	<i>weltwärts</i> exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030
YALI	Young African Leaders Initiative



# PREFACE

## CONTRIBUTORS AND MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

This Learning Paper is a truly collaborative project. It has been jointly developed by the members of the Steering Committee of the African German Youth Initiative (AGYI). The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) has been compiling the different contributions and is responsible for the official publication of the document.

The document has been developed through the contribution of a broad range of different actors: Tanzania Youth Coalition (TYC), Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA), Réseau AGYI Bénin (RAB – AGYI Benin Network), the Youth Division of the African Union (AU), GIZ, the coordination unit of the AGYI within Engagement Global (EG), the different programs of EG (ASA, *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030, ww, ENSA, *CHAT der WELTEN*) and the Bundesvereinigung Kulturelle Kinder- und Jugendbildung (BKJ – Federal Association for Cultural Child and Youth Education).

Considering the variety of the different contributions this paper aims to present different perspectives and lenses. As the paper reflects a range of different perspectives, not all arguments, information and aspects presented in the paper are necessarily shared by all contributors. This diversity of perspectives and experiences is perceived by the contributors as the main strength of this document reflecting the complexity of the youth exchange and volunteering sector in the framework of German development policy programs.



# SUMMARY OF KEY TAKE-AWAYS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 1/2



**1.**

(New) partnerships and exchange programs need to strive for equal, fair and reciprocal cooperation and framework conditions, taking into account structural challenges



**2.**

Continue to lobby on the important structural barrier of visa issues in the framework of youth exchanges



**3.**

Create more balance in financial support mechanisms, considering and activating different partner contribution capacities and increasing transparency of the repartition of funds.



**4.**

Define and put in place a clear mechanism to finance and encourage South-South exchanges (under the lead of the African Union)



**5.**

Strengthen and enhance the role and representation of South Partners in program steering and program and quality development processes



**6.**

Appreciate and support needs in terms of preparation and alumni support equally in Germany and partner countries.



**7.**

Placements and Matching need more attention. Appreciate different lenses and expectations and use more digitalized, participant-driven and supported approaches for partner-matching



## SUMMARY OF KEY TAKE-AWAYS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 2/2



**8.**

Ensure more transparency, professionalism and inclusion in the relationship between hosting and sending organizations and volunteer placements by encouraging dialogue opportunities between German and African partners



**9.**

Make programs and partnerships more inclusive (participants, language, gender, access, communication, level of education; urban vs. rural; complexity of application procedures)



**10.**

Support network formation and dialogue opportunities for more cohesion in the African context of exchange at a national and continental level.



**11.**

Put in place a flexible, independent and network-based coordination mechanism embedded in the European-African partnership to take African-German Youth exchange to the next level



**12.**

Look at hard (employment/career-oriented) and soft (personal, interpersonal & intercultural) skills components within programs, support participant learning journeys and create a skills-based exchange format for apprentices and young professionals



**13.**

Take the COVID 19 crisis and Climate change impact as an opportunity to further explore and strengthen innovative formats based e.g. on virtual and youth-led approaches quality development processes





# 1. THE AFRICAN-GERMAN YOUTH INITIATIVE: A MULTI-ACTOR PARTNERSHIP

The African-German Youth Initiative (AGYI) is a multi-lateral initiative of the German federal ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the African Union Commission (AUC). It aims at **enhancing youth exchange and mobility between African countries and Germany in the context of education for sustainable development.**

The initiative was launched in June 2016 by the German Federal Minister, Dr. Gerd Müller and the African Union Commissioner, Dr. Martial de Paul Ikounga with the intention to contribute through youth exchange to the development of essential competencies and skills of young people from African countries and from Germany in view of a 'global citizenship'. AGYI also aimed at fostering a differentiated image of African countries on the German side, and of Germany on the African side.

The Initiative is implemented in Africa and Germany. For the project pilot phase in Africa from January 2017 to December 2020, Benin, **South-Africa and Tanzania have been selected as pilot countries**, based on the BMZ funded youth exchange programs as well as a geographical and linguistic balance amongst African Union (AU) member states.

## AIMS OF THE AGYI

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

The AGYI facilitates mutual learning and exchange between young people and aims at:

- Enhancing existing and supporting new partnerships through joint youth exchange and volunteering projects between African countries and with Germany.
- Building the capacity of partner structures in African countries and within the African Union Commission to play a coordination role and provide information, networking opportunities and training at a national and regional level to exchange and volunteering hosting and sending organisations.
- Offering dialogue opportunities and capacity building to organizations in Germany and African countries that want to promote new approaches of youth exchange and youth participation through partnership-based cooperation and by focussing on global citizenship and on differentiated images on Africa and Germany.
- Supporting Alumni activities and projects.



The AGYI contributes on a global level to building and strengthening global partnerships for sustainable development (SDG / Agenda 2030, Goal 17). On the African side the AGYI contributes to furthering the visions and objectives of African Union’s Agenda 2063, the African Youth Charter (Art. 10/11), the African Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (APAYE 2019-2023) and the AU 1 Million Youth Initiative, as well as regional and national youth policies in African countries. The AGYI Multi-Actor Partnership

## THE AGYI MULTI-ACTOR PARTNERSHIP

The Initiative was based on the current BMZ funded youth exchange programs administered by Engagement Global (EG), notably the *weltwärts* Volunteer Service (ww)<sup>1</sup>, *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030 (wwB), the ASA Program – a learning and capacity building program on development policy –, as well as ENSA school exchange and CHAT der WELTEN virtual exchange, which are two programs on development policy education. In 2014, the BMZ commissioned the set-up of a project office (KDAJ) within but not part of the programs of EG to build and coordinate the overall AGYI. (For reasons of facilitated reading KDAJ will in the following text be referred to as EG). EG is thereby responsible for the overall coordination of the AGYI as well as the implementation of measures and networking on the German side. EG programs and the coordinating project work closely with the AGYI strategic partners, **Bundesvereinigung Kulturelle Kinder- und Jugendbildung** (BKJ – Federal Association for Cultural Child and Youth Education) and **Deutsche Sportjugend** (DSJ - German Sports Youth).



To support the capacity building on the African partner side, the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)** was commissioned in 2016 by BMZ to implement the project ‘Strengthening the African partner structure for the African-German Youth Initiative’. It supports the African partner side with capacity building, dialogue opportunities and organisational development.



**The African Union Commission**, as a continental body with 55 member states, through its Youth Division at the Department for Human Resources, Science and Technology coordinates and supports with dialogue opportunities, information and policy guidance governmental and non-governmental volunteering and exchange actors across the continent.



<sup>1</sup> To simplify the *weltwärts* Volunteer Service will be referred to as *weltwärts* in the rest of the paper.





Within the three pilot countries, three implementing **civil-society structures (IOs)** act as entry points for other exchange organizations and institutions in their region, and different program specific and alumni networks. In Benin, the African partner structure has been expanded since 2018 via the **AGYI Bénin network (Réseau AGYI Bénin - RAB)**, which consists of 25 civil society organisations active in the field of youth exchange and voluntary service. In South Africa, the **Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA)**: People caring for the Earth is the implementation partner of the AGYI. The **Tanzania Youth Coalition (TYC)** leads the implementation of AGYI in Tanzania.



## JOINT STEERING MECHANISMS OF THE INITIATIVE

To further enhance the efficiency and transparency in the cooperation between the key political and implementing partners a joint Steering Structure was piloted. Through this structure African and German partners were able to jointly develop, steer and monitor the initiative.

Six-monthly **Steering Committee** meetings reunited all AGYI technical steering partners (AUC youth division, EG, GIZ, WESSA, TYC, RAB) on a rotating basis in each of the implementing countries. It provided strategic guidance and oversight of the implementation and allowed partners to jointly develop and plan activities and exchange on technical challenges and good practice examples. Since 2018 a **Sounding Board** brought together German strategic partners and exchange programs to advise the AGYI from the perspective of German stakeholders.

On a yearly basis, the political partners of the AGYI (BMZ, AUC HRST, national government representatives) met with the steering partners at the **AGYI Partner Meeting** to provide guidance and a common vision to the overall initiative. Since 2019, a Sounding Board member has also taken part in Partner Meetings.

The initiative was monitored through a set of **joint indicators (Annex 1)**. Those were jointly developed by all AGYI steering partners and then contextualised in each country. GIZ supported the joint monitoring system through quarterly reviews

## 2. LEARNINGS OF THE AGYI PILOT PHASE

This learning paper is the attempt to compile and capitalize the learnings, challenges, recommendations, outputs and results that have been experienced during the AGYI pilot phase during the period (2017-2020). Furthermore, this compilation illustrates the wish that the learning experiences of the AGYI pilot phase can be built upon by different actors in the African-German exchange sector with regards to future scenarios (EG programs, BMZ, AU, host and sending organizations on both sides, wider interested public).

The paper describes how in the course of the AGYI pilot phase framework conditions for increasing the quality and quantity in international voluntary services and youth exchanges have been improved. It also highlights the challenges. Finally, it aims to define recommendations on the future viability and sustainability of African-German Youth Exchange.

### METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH OF THE LEARNING ANALYSIS

This paper is based on a first version that has been collectively developed by the AGYI partners by the end of 2019. It reflects the learnings critically by integrating the perspective of further relevant actors (e.g. Germans Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and exchange programs) as well as recommendations articulated during the AGYI Results Workshop in June 2020.

The common AGYI objectives and indicators and the **IVCO (International Volunteer Cooperation Organisations) Global Standards for Volunteering for quality** have been used to establish a joint framework for the analysis of learning experiences in the process of building support structures and services in the African partner countries and Germany in the context of AGYI. While the IVCO Standards primarily respond to volunteering formats, they still also cover important aspects of youth exchange such as partnerships, preparation, management of participants and evaluation. The idea of that framework is to look at credible objectives and international standards of volunteering, showing AGYI's relevant contribution to their objectives and through that illustrate the added value and evidence of the AGYI pilot phase. The structure follows the logic of volunteering and exchange cycles from their preparation, the actual exchange to monitoring and evaluation. Along the objective of the pilot phase the focus is put on the improvement of relevant framework conditions.

The defined objectives, standards and indicators of AGYI and IVCO represent the starting and reference point for each analysis chapter. From that starting point and based on the experience within the AGYI through various capacity assessments and partner dialogues, a set of challenges have been identified. The analysis of the impact intends to illustrate “why” and “how” the described measure improved framework conditions of the different parts of volunteering and exchange as well as to show the limits of the implemented activi-



ties in response to the described challenges. Based on successful measures implemented during the pilot phase and their impact, recommendations for the future have been elaborated. Those are addressed to different involved actors and are intended to show a way to improve African-German Youth exchange beyond the pilot countries and the pilot phase. Even if this paper presents the overall experience of AGYI, country-specific highlights have been pointed out. Furthermore, recommendations aimed to be made and clarified for specific contexts and target groups in order to give adequate advice (e.g. program specific).





## 2.1 QUALITY IN EXCHANGE

### A. INDICATOR: DESIGN AND PLANNING OF JOINT PROJECTS THAT INVOLVE VOLUNTEERS

#### REFERRED STANDARDS AND OBJECTIVES (IVCO)



Build a strong relationship between partners to ensure strong capacity and local presence.

- Due diligence procedure for partners.
- Partners and donors mutually develop and sign an agreement outlining each other's contributions, expectations, responsibilities and accountabilities – both locally and, where relevant, internationally.

### ▷ CHALLENGES

In the framework of international exchange, mutual understanding, reciprocity and an equal relationship between partners is a key aspect to ensure the quality of the exchange experience for all actors. While building strong relationships is in all actors' intention, there are still challenges with regards to the development of a joint meaning of a youth exchange project and between project partners. The following explains in more detail, in which areas of cooperation these challenges arise.

#### PARTICIPATION IN THE PARTNERSHIP

#### WELTWÄRTS • VOLUNTARY SERVICE

— > Since 2008 *weltwärts* has been implemented by around 175 German implementing organisations and even more partner organisations in 160 BMZ Partner countries. In the North-South component of the *weltwärts* program the level of participation of the South and North actors in a partnership differs from one case to the other. While some experiences of partnerships (in all formats) might show long-term equal participation of both partners, other cases of partnerships show a lack of equal participation in the joint design of projects, selection of volunteers or setting of common objectives. While the *weltwärts* voluntary service program for example has set up standards for quality volunteering that include aspects of equal partnerships, it still has to be considered that the *weltwärts* program is a civil-society-based format originating from civil society engagement. Therefore, partnerships are shaped individually between partners, and the level of participation can depend on individual engagement. Those inequalities in par-





ticipation can also stem from unequal appropriation of relevant information about programs: E.g. if in a format the German partner needs to apply for funding he is obliged to know all details of the application and project design process (e.g. also certification). Often the Southern partners lack those information. If both partners do not actively try to surpass this information gap it can lead to a lack of a common understanding and vision in the exchange project.

The quality requirements for the North-South component of the *weltwärts* program foresee the conclusion of written agreements on funding policy that provides full transparency for all parties involved and a specific educational plan for a development volunteer service. However, those are handled very differently in various partnerships. Furthermore, the standards demand the partner organization (from the Global South) provides specific description on the place of assignment (profile, goals, tasks) for the volunteers and that selection criteria are mutually agreed between the partners. The quality standards also recommend that the host organization provides a written form of a profile of the place of assignment including goals and tasks for the volunteers and that selection criteria are mutually agreed by both partners and selection being done jointly. The German implementing organization consults with the partner organization on this matter and has overall responsibility for the qualitative preparation. And at the end of the cycle, the organizations in the Global North and Global South are asked to evaluate the volunteering experience together. However, the shared experience of partners in the pilot countries describes that those standards are not always implemented systematically.

The *weltwärts* joint operation (*Gemeinschaftswerk weltwärts*) is currently working on a new catalogue of quality standards that will be mandatory for both, the North-South and the South-North Component of the *weltwärts* program. The catalogue is scheduled for December 2020 and will then be gradually implemented.

A concrete specific experience of challenges that has been reported from actors in South Africa within *weltwärts* has been the set-up of partnerships through ‘agents’<sup>2</sup>. In those cases, hosting organizations in South Africa deal with a South African agent and have little to no communication with the German partner per se. The same happens if a South African organization sends outbound youth through an agent, there has been experiences of little to no control on the experience of the youth. There is a ‘cooperation’ with the agent, but it is no partnership. The partnership is built between the agents and not the organizations which finally leaves the South African sending organization quite detached from the benefits of engaging in an international cooperation for enhanced youth development.

#### ASA • PROGRAM

➤ A main component of the ASA program is a project phase at one or two partner institutions. Participants of the ASA program work on a specific project taking place in a country in Africa, Asia, Latin America or South-East Europe and partly also in Germany, either alone or in teams. Every cycle, institutions and individuals are invited to propose projects for the coming year. In order to provide reciprocal learning spaces the program offers a global format where German

<sup>2</sup> An ‘agent’ can be understood as a coordinating placement organization or agency. In this case the partnership exists between the sending organization and the agent, while there is no direct link between the sending organization and the actual hosting organization.



partner institutions from civil society, enterprises or universities can submit project proposals together with their international partner institutions. The projects are carried out in both countries by two participants from the partnering country and two participants from Germany. The proposals can be handed in in English, Spanish or French and it is required that both partners sign the forms. The selection process for the participants from the partner country is organized by the corresponding local partner institution in consultation with their German partners. The selection process for the German participants is coordinated through the program structure itself and German partner institutions are invited to participate.

#### ENSA • PROGRAM

➤ ENSA tries to address structural problems at the application stage: Only schools and NGOs from Germany are eligible to apply, but they must submit a letter of support for the planned project of their partners and plausibly explain in the application how the planning of the project has worked or should work in partnership and which goals their partners (presumably) pursue. Although this does not change the cooperation structure, it may already lead to the German side reflecting on the objectives/desires/motivation of its partners.

### PARTICIPATION IN STEERING STRUCTURE

#### WELTWÄRTS • VOLUNTARY SERVICE

➤ In the *weltwärts* voluntary service program there is currently no systematic approach for a direct participation through presence of South actors in the Program Steering Committee (PSA). The PSA is currently meeting biannually and shares its agenda beforehand and a summary of its decisions after the meetings in four languages. Furthermore, the rules of procedure for the PSA define the following:

- Adequate involvement of partner organizations from the *weltwärts* partner countries before and after the PSA meetings must be ensured (e.g. by appointing persons responsible for ensuring partner involvement).





- A representative group of partner's organizations (at least 10) can put forward items for the agenda. These should be addressed to the coordinators.
- All relevant program stakeholders, including the partners, shall be informed in a suitable form of final decisions taken, provided it has not been agreed that they should be kept confidential.

However, this partner involvement is still lacking with no formal structures of partner involvement and representation in place. The objectives of specific exchange programs (in this case the *weltwärts* program) are sometimes not jointly understood and shared by implementing/partner organizations. At the same time, the question of financial contribution of South partners comes in when aiming at an equal participation in program steering.

In *weltwärts* program annually up to five international partner conferences are held to strengthen partnership between stakeholders in the Global South and the Global North, to inform about news and updates regarding the program and to provide a direct exchange between members of the PSA and present partner organizations. Moreover, current topics of the program development are discussed and ideas as well as outcomes taken into account.

During the Pilot Phase South Actors have been indicating a need to connect and integrate the objectives of national youth policies into exchange and volunteering frameworks and formats as they feel a lack of South perspectives in the objectives of the *weltwärts* program objectives. However, the German government is making great efforts to advance the communication processes with civil society actors from all regions. Program objectives have been decided by the German government as the funder and therefore lack the inclusion of objectives from a partner side. In response to that the Gemeinschaftswerk has jointly developed impact assumptions for the program, involving diverse stakeholder of the program (2019). In addition, an impact structure has been created on the basis of these assumptions, which comprehended a participatory process involving experts from the South partner organisations. The results are currently being incorporated into the revision of the funding guidelines for *weltwärts* voluntary service. Nevertheless, as the South Partners are an important and very diverse group (from different countries and continents) it is a challenge to create a legitimate structure that ensures adequate representation. In its December meeting 2020 the PSA will resume the topic of direct participation of partner organizations in the Global South in PSA-meetings and further working groups on the steering level of the *weltwärts* program. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the topic could not be discussed earlier in 2020.

#### ASA • PROGRAM

➤ ASA does not offer institutionalized participation for partners from Germany and from other partner countries.

#### ENSA • PROGRAM

➤ ENSA does not offer institutionalized participation for partners regarding its program objectives.

## FINANCIAL ASYMMETRIES IN PROGRAM SET-UP

The fact that German exchange and volunteering programs are funded by the BMZ and that German CSOs or schools are the actors to apply for those funds and are held accountable



for them contributes to creating an unintended inequality of involved parties. This creates the key issue that German partners generally administer the funds and leave their southern counterparts with small budget parts to be transferred to them - this leads to power asymmetries in the partnership framework. The different actors (CSOs, Programs) are aware of that challenge and try to minimize these inequalities through the common conceptualization of the projects. Southern CSOs often do not see themselves capable of mobilizing financial resources. Nevertheless, set-ups of exchange and volunteering programs would be more equal if involved parties could contribute financial resources equally, as financial means are closely linked to decision-making and therefore power.

The question of reducing asymmetries also needs to put a stronger focus on the responsibility of African governments. To reduce asymmetries African governments should also be regarded as potential funders of youth exchange. With exchange and volunteering programs being already defined and financed by the German side, African governments might be reluctant to provide financial assistance. In this case, the different formats might have to be designed together right from the beginning and would need to align to the different national youth and education policies to ensure creating clear 'benefits' on each side. It should also be asked where partner governments see the value of youth exchange programs to motivate them to set up their own programs and engage in existing ones.

**CHAT DER WELTEN PROGRAM**

➔ BMZ funds Chat der Welten (CdW) as a German in-country program, thus CdW does not fund southern partners. This may only happen if third parties apply for funds. As the CdW team is not set up for grant management at a larger scale, it is difficult to manage projects at eye level.

## ☑ MEASURES AND IMPACT

Structural asymmetries are an important challenge that could not be systematically tackled but the different dialogue formats in the frame of the AGYI provided opportunities for exchange and discuss those challenges from different perspectives.

### PARTICIPATION IN PARTNERSHIPS

#### MEASURES OF IMPROVEMENT PROVIDED BY AGYI



- ☐ **Dialogue formats** (continental and intercontinental): **Thematic forums on key topics**, such as partnerships, global learning and inclusion involving African and German actors
  - Stakeholder dialogue to identify general challenges and entry points for new opportunities for youth exchange and volunteering (Benin)
  - Dialogue formats on partnerships to identify challenges and opportunities for equal partnerships and cooperation (Tanzania)
  - Thematic Forum - Partnerships for youth exchange and global learning in the context of education for sustainable development (South Africa)
- ☐ **Symposium on European- African Youth Exchange** - Making the Case for active citizenship and solidarity. The symposium was carried out in cooperation with France Volon-





taires (FV) and the Norwegian Agency for Exchange Cooperation (NOREC). It provided a space for conversations about the landscape of youth exchanges and voluntary services between agencies of the African and the European continent. (Germany)

- Introduction of the *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030 funding line (Germany) to promote more reciprocity in partnerships through joint applications.
- Development of **Partner-Matching** conferences as a tool/format which supports organizations and their staff in getting to know each other in person, fostering dialogue and the building of trust (Germany, Benin, Tanzania and South Africa).
- Development of accessible **program information** (e.g. Step-by-step guides)
- Translation and relaunch of ENSA website into English as well as upcoming relaunch of multilingual *weltwärts* website (Germany)

The different dialogue opportunities encouraged an eye-level discussion between German and African partners in view of developing a mutual understanding of concepts and approaches. The implementing structures in the respective pilot countries were able to use the major learnings of these exchanges to advise exchange practitioners in order to improve their partnerships and participation. Through that, dialogue formats became an important catalyst to enhance quality in partnerships.





The introduction of the new group exchange format **weltwärts exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030** shows how the structure of programs can enable more equal partnerships. Similar to the school exchanges formats (ENSA and CdW), the inherent aspect of reciprocity within *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030 requires for a common design process of the project with mutual contributions from both partners. The implementing organizations have been experiencing that in comparison to the *weltwärts* volunteering format – which has North-South as well as a South-North component but where reciprocity is not mandatory. The *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030 format provided more space to develop a common understanding and a common vision of the exchange experience between the partners.

The *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030 format was promoted in the framework of Partner-Matching conferences/workshops in all pilot countries with the aim to bring together organizations from Germany, Tanzania, South Africa and Benin in order to develop new partnerships . These formats have been a first-time opportunity to bring together a larger group of new potential partners to develop new exchange projects, discuss about partnerships and develop a common understanding of objectives.

While partnerships often come to exist through individual connections (e.g. through teachers for school exchange or already existing partnerships between CSOs who want to further develop their collaboration), the more systematic approach of Partner-Matching can be an opportunity to engage new stakeholders. At the same time, it has to be considered that the Partner-Matching formats request a significant amount of resources in terms of time, finance and engagement and may not lead to a hundred percent success rate. The research for new potential partners, the long preparation process for the actual meeting, the costs of flying actors across continents (economically and ecologically) and continued follow-up support after the conference are all very resource intensive. Still, it needs to be considered that the investment of resources is relative to a short-term or long-term cost-benefit calculation. Sustainable and qualitative partnerships are mostly being developed over a longer period and don't necessarily need to culminate directly in a short-term exchange experience to show a relevant impact. The Partner-Matching format is a channel to build trust between new partners and to enhance quality in partnerships, but it leaves space for improvement with regard to the input-output calculation.

## PARTICIPATION IN STEERING STRUCTURE

### MEASURES OF IMPROVEMENT PROVIDED BY AGYI



- AGYI **supported *weltwärts* partners to form networks**: Formation of *weltwärts* networks in Southern (SAwN) and Western Africa (WAwN). These networks encouraged the transfer of information not only within African countries but also between these countries and Germany. Also, networks were able to cluster concerns of individual organizations which facilitated understanding and communicating collectively experienced, thus structural challenges, to steering structures.



Supporting networks on the African side can strengthen the visibility and representation of African Partners and through that their relevant position in a partnership framework. The exchange between several actors provides the opportunity to identify systematic challenges and opportunities for change. As it was described above, it is challenging for programs such as f.i. *weltwärts* to build a representative channel for south participation into their steering structure as this channel must reflect the diversity of south partners. The formation of regional program networks is a response to that and can facilitate the opportunity for German partners to get access to the perspectives of a broader range of southern partners, as well. SAwN has started to involve other *weltwärts* Networks in Western Africa, Latin America and India to develop a concept for representation in the PSA. However, a fully developed representational concept still needs to be outlined and validated.

There is still more work to be done to live up to the expectation of building bridges between German and African partners.

## FINANCIAL ASYMMETRIES

### MEASURES OF IMPROVEMENT PROVIDED BY AGYI



- **Fundraising Workshops (WS)** to train and exchange on approaches to fund the 25% of exchange or volunteering programs (Germany, Benin, South Africa, Tanzania)

The Fundraising measures provided significant information and knowledge about funders, donor relations, proposal writing, crowd funding, sponsoring and organizational development to South Partners but also German actors. They furthermore brought together tandem partners of the Partner Matching process to jointly develop a financing strategy for the missing 25% of their project budget. Each participant first received an in-country training, this was followed by a joint training with partners which included applying what has been learnt to a practical project. Finally, individual coaching was available to accompany the joint activity.

Further on, the different dialogue opportunities which included the partner governments raised the awareness amongst partner governments on the importance of financial contribution. In Benin, a giant step has been taken by the *Office Béninois des Services de Volontariat des Jeunes (OBSVJ)*, which became more aware of the issue through study visits and joint dialogue, by additionally allocating financial resources for exchange opportunities with Germany to their annual budget. In the other pilot countries, opportunities for financial contribution have to be further explored.



## ☆ RECOMMENDATIONS

### PARTICIPATION IN PARTNERSHIP

#### IN GENERAL



- The format of *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030 shows concrete examples on how to enhance more mutual partnerships as it considers previous challenges in its approach and structure. Therefore, the opportunities presented by this format should be further strengthened.
- To consider to further strengthen dialogue opportunities between partners as e.g. Thematic dialogue fora, Partner-Matching support to provide space for exchange to build stronger and equal partnerships.

#### TO AFRICAN SENDING AND HOSTING ORGANISATIONS



- AGYI encourages African exchange practitioners (including 'agents') insisting on upholding standards within your partnerships as your partners are being held accountable for this in existing Quality management documents. It is recommended to insist on MoUs as it is part of the quality standards and it will lead to improvements in the clarity of objectives and procedures in the relationship with your partner.
- AGYI has seen many innovations around volunteering formats and suggests more visibility for your innovations, so you get the benefit and the recognition out of them.

#### TO PROGRAMS



- To use regional and national networks as a channel to share more information about quality standards for partnerships and to actively involve them in the further development of those standards.





## PARTICIPATION IN STEERING STRUCTURE

### TO WELTWÄRTS



- *weltwärts*: The new development within *weltwärts* to make quality standards apply to the south-north component is welcomed.
- **PSA and *weltwärts***: To create more opportunities for joint development of quality standards with representative structures of Southern partners (which have to be developed), e.g. during partner conferences or initiated by quality associations involving partner networks.
- To further enhance the role and the representation of South Partners in program steering and development processes; e.g. representation of *weltwärts* South Partners in PSA, e.g. based on the proposal developed by SAwN, WIN and WAwN.
- Programs and standards should ideally be developed jointly with equal representatives from both sides. The collaboration with the **regional *weltwärts* networks** on that topic should be further strengthened.

## FINANCIAL ASYMMETRIES

### IN GENERAL



- Value is not always a currency: Efforts should be made to break the lock-in to this perspective as it is one way of moving to more equally appreciated partnerships even in the absence of financial “sameness”. Investing human capital or knowledge are examples of alternative resources that should receive a stronger recognition in budgeting and planning. This will not solve the challenge of financial asymmetries but can contribute to a better appreciation of each partner’s contribution.

### TO THE BMZ



- **Project Financing 25%**: It should be clearly defined between the partners how the 25% should be divided. There is a need for discussion on how human capital and e.g. existing infrastructure can be allocated to the budget, this could enable partners to contribute human capital instead of financial capital. The bilateral technical and financial support of youth exchanges on the German and African sides is a core element in making youth exchanges more partnership based. Joint control and definition of exchange formats would be a further important step towards tackling structural and financial imbalances.
- **Government Participation on the African side**: Exchange should be included into government to government consultations and negotiations in order to facilitate open dis-

cussions on new programs and contributions by partner governments. Proposed activities need to be linked to priorities and National Development Plans of the respective countries, as well as the Agenda 2063. However, at the same time, advocacy efforts to convince governments of the added long-term value of youth exchange and volunteering need to be continued. A more visible and better facilitated skills focus (on relevant skills that young volunteers gain) may create new avenues for a stronger government participation (South Africa). The observation is shared with German civil society that asymmetry in partnerships is often rooted in funding modalities. More affirmative action is recommended in terms of more equal funding of activities at the African partner side and negotiation with African governments, AU and the international donor community to get engaged in funding of exchange program expenses on the African partner side (e.g. preparation, trainings of trainers, return-seminars, etc.).

- BMZ should consider to make available funds for the CdW's southern partners for technical and pedagogical accompaniment.





## B.

### INDICATOR: DELIVERY OF THE PROJECT, MANAGING VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORT – BUILD ENABLING SPACES

#### REFERRED STANDARDS AND OBJECTIVES (IVCO)



- Provide project management that ensures a safe and successful working environment for everyone involved.
- Ensure there is continued involvement and input from members of the community.
- Create role descriptions that are based on the needs assessment and that clarify the support available – volunteers/young people are clear about their tasks and the expected outcomes of their placement.
- Provide professional and personal support to all volunteers.

#### ▷ CHALLENGES

On the African partner side, in the respective pilot countries, assessments within the AGYI have revealed a lack of shared quality management systems. Most organisations work very individually and lack a point of reference as networks and access to guidelines or tools for quality management. While the different aspects and related standards of quality have been developed and defined on the German partner side<sup>3</sup> (e.g. *Agentur für Qualität in Freiwilligendiensten (Quifd)* for *weltwärts*), there has not been a comparable structure and engagement on the African partner side. This also applies to training contents, communication strategies and guidelines for volunteer management. Meanwhile the examples and experiences on the African partner side are obviously present, but support systems for quality enhancement – peer-support, training and contextualized guidance – on the African partner side were lacking. There is considerable interest in improving conditions for exchange but there is little guidance on examples and methodologies. While a lot of resources fostering and improving exchange exist on the African continent, these are often not available to a lot of organisations.

To enable mutual exchange of perspectives and to develop a common sense on quality standards, quality support systems (guidelines, quality certification) on both partner sides are an important vehicle.

<sup>3</sup> The standards have emerged from the evaluation and follow-up of the North-South component in 2012/13. External agencies (Quifd and the RAL Quality Assurance Association) in turn were contracted to translate them for regular review.





## MEASURES AND IMPACT

### QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

#### MEASURES OF IMPROVEMENT PROVIDED BY AGYI



- Development of a **Quality Certificate** for youth exchange and volunteering under the leadership of the National Volunteer Agency in Benin – OBSVJ
- Impact Assessment of Youth Exchange Programs in Africa and Recommended Practices Guideline (AU)
- Development of a digital **Volunteer Management System** tool to help organizations manage volunteers at scale (AU)
- Development of **Continental Standards** for Volunteering and Exchange (AU)

The participatory development of a quality certificate in Benin provided the opportunity for multiple stakeholders in Benin (CSOs, International Stakeholders, Government institutions) to mutually discuss and co-develop the relevant aspects and standards of quality for volunteering and exchange in Benin. The certificate has been developed as a supportive tool for different national actors to reflect upon and improve their volunteer management approach as well as to support new actors in the field to strengthen their approaches for volunteer management. The pilot phase of the certification process enabled the OBSVJ to identify the relevant challenges that CSOs are facing in the sector and to initiate a support and advisory strategy process within their structure. Additionally, the quality standards developed in Benin have served as a source of inspiration for the development of the Continental Standards of the AU.







The participatory development of continental standards for volunteering African Union provide a continental policy framework that can inform national volunteer policies and their attached standards. The Volunteer management system translates those in a concrete digital management tool and thereby enables African volunteering actors to implement their volunteer programs along the quality standards.

## QUALITY SUPPORT SYSTEMS

### MEASURES OF IMPROVEMENT PROVIDED BY AGYI



- ❑ Development of a **Guideline for Responsible Exchange and Volunteering** in South Africa
- ❑ Development of a **Good Practice Guideline for Volunteering** in Benin
- ❑ Development and management of a **Pan-African coordination mechanism** for continental stakeholder dialogues and support to AU member states in the area of volunteering (AUC)
- ❑ Development and management of a **Volunteer Linkage** platform to host knowledge, partner networks and tools
- ❑ Mutual **capacity building and peer-to-peer exchange** in Benin (*Réseau AGY Bénin*) and SAwN (at the occasion of their Annual general assemblies)

The participatory, or co-development approach for the South African Guidelines led to extensive exchange between exchange practitioners on quality in managing volunteers. The best practice guideline is an important tool as it provides context relevant knowledge. The process of peer-creation can also be seen as an indirect capacity building of participants by their peers. Similar processes engaged exchange actors in Tanzania and Benin to develop their manuals for trainers and quality good practice guides.

The quality processes also increased awareness of quality processes in German programs and strengthened the role of networks (e.g. SAwN) to lobby and represent their members in those debates. As all processes and tools in all three pilot countries are based on the experience and knowledge of the respective local/national actors they provide context-adequate support and represent an important and complementary counterpart to the German Quality Management structures.

Further on, the building of peer-communities through the continental volunteering coordination mechanism of the AUC or virtual communities of practice represent an important channel for exchange on volunteering management tools and practices and to harmonize practices across the continent. The continental volunteer linkage platform enables leaders of the sector across the African continent to share their experience with their peers as well as new actors to easily get access to relevant tools, policies and information.



## ☆ RECOMMENDATIONS

### TO PROGRAMS



- ❑ Define joint processes to develop quality criteria – aiming at joint criteria and standards but acknowledging different contexts and specifications.
- ❑ Further support and collaborate with quality associations/ networks on African partner side (e.g. SAwN, WAwN, TYC, RAB, AU continental volunteering coordination platform) for stronger peer support.
- ❑ Share information for all partners on program websites (quality guidelines developed by German partners, but also those by African partners).

### TO BMZ/EG:



- ❑ As IVCO uses global volunteering standards to improve volunteering and to make it more visible as a political tool towards SDG achievement, EG should be encouraged to actively participate in global platforms and debates on quality in international volunteering.





## C.

### INDICATOR: SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION – BUILD INCLUSIVE SPACES

#### REFERRED STANDARDS AND OBJECTIVES (IVCO)



- Provide the protection and support needs required by the individuality and diversity of volunteers/young people and those with whom they come into contact
  - Organizations ensure equality, equity, inclusivity and diversity at all stages of project design and delivery.

Understanding youth means to recognize the diversity of youth as a social group. The social status of a young person is complex and related to a multiplicity of relations, categories and power structures. Volunteering and youth exchange and the access to those formats in an international context are highly affected by this. For this reason, AGYI has made inclusion and youth engagement/participation a priority in its activities and processes.

#### ▷ CHALLENGES

The diversity in formats for volunteering and youth exchange implies different accessibility to different target groups. As such, school exchanges might depend on the available resources of schools (financially as technically) and could therefore be reserved to schools which dispose of the necessary infrastructure (e.g. digital infrastructure in the case of virtual exchange). In the ASA and *weltwärts* voluntary service context most of the participants have a high-school degree, which raises the question of greater accessibility and inclusion. In the partner side context, the *weltwärts* and ASA program participants are mostly from an academic background, and the geographical outreach of information is sometimes also linked to urban areas (e.g. in Benin and Tanzania). It needs to be pointed out that *weltwärts* has put a strong focus on the topic of inclusion and created a competence center on the topic. In that framework 3 partner workshops<sup>3</sup> (Mexico, Ghana, India) on inclusion have been organized between 2012 and 2014.

“Consideration of participant diversity” is one of the selection criteria of *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030. As associations play an integrating role in society and organize the encounters between youth groups, it leads to more inclusion of diverse participants (social or international background, age and level of education). On the other hand, the financial contributions that are necessary to co-finance the project, can be an excluding factor.

<sup>4</sup> For more information, please find the report here: <https://www.weltwaerts.de/en/document-centre-organisations.html>



The barriers for example in terms of available technical support remain high. Very often placements only happen amongst organisations being active in the inclusion-space.

Youth can play an important role in facilitating and self-organising exchange. However, the financial contributions that organizations need to mobilise, can be an excluding factor for youth associations.

Reports on gender equality within the programs suggest that more young women\* are participating in the North-South components of the programs than young men\*. However, for the South-North components as well as regarding a deeper analysis on gender equality no information are available.

In the context of francophone countries, such as Benin, the language barrier is an important issue, with evidence in weak numbers of exchange opportunities emerging between Germany and Benin.

Safety concerns have been rising and affecting the opportunities for partner countries to participate in exchange. While some African partner countries are affected by security issues and cannot receive German volunteers in all their regions anymore (e.g. Partial travel warning in Cameroon), there are also increasing security issues in some German regions/towns due to e.g. right-wing extremists' movements.

## ☑ MEASURES AND IMPACT

### MEASURES OF IMPROVEMENT PROVIDED BY AGYI



- ☐ RAB organized a **Dialogue format on inclusion in youth exchange and volunteering** aiming to discuss different perspectives and contextualize concepts, including developing recommendations for more inclusive youth exchange and volunteering. In general the network has developed a stronger focus on inclusion (Benin).
- ☐ **Guideline on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Exchange Programmes** (AU)
- ☐ Development of a **Manual for volunteering for youth with special needs** (Tanzania)
- ☐ Youth participation in events (youth mainstreaming)
- ☐ **Conference Countdown 2030, 2063 and beyond**, a youth-organised and youth-led conference with youth participants from Southern and Western Africa and Germany
- ☐ Translation of inclusion and diversity checklist into French (Germany)
- ☐ Development of **policy brief for the development of a skills-based youth exchange format** targeting apprentices and young professionals

## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

In the activities of AGYI the participation and engagement of young people has been a major area of innovation. AGYI provided opportunities to young people to participate, engage and





take the lead in several dialogue and exchange formats. By supporting young people in the preparation of enabling dialogue spaces developed by the youth and for the youth (e.g. Continental Youth Summit, Countdown 2030, 2063 and beyond!) innovative youth inclusion formats were developed. The initiative of a continental alumni conference that had been started by alumni in Southern Africa shows the enabling and supportive spaces that have been built for alumni to play a stronger part in shaping volunteering and exchange on a continental level.

## INCLUSION

Specific dialogue formats on inclusion have risen the awareness on the importance of inclusion and diversity amongst traditional stakeholders of youth exchange. While barriers and power structures will not be deconstructed within a conference, the recommendations being developed through these dialogues have affected and influenced further processes and discussions (e.g. Quality standards and Guidelines in Benin). The developed manual for the inclusion of young people with disabilities (Tanzania and AU) are an important tool for exchange practitioners to strengthen their capacities in terms of inclusion.

## SKILLS

The inclusion of exchange participants from a technical and vocational background through a stronger skills-focus in exchange has led to the development of a policy proposal for a skills-based youth exchange format. Indeed, such a skills-focused exchange, understood as technical skills goes beyond the existing exchange formats' approach and target group of Global Learning. The exchange experience in the framework of cultural education however shows that a mixture of both, soft and hard skills, is possible by providing learning opportunities in the context of cultural productions.

## ☆ RECOMMENDATIONS

### TO SENDING AND RECEIVING ORGANIZATIONS



- Ensure more **transparency and professionalism when it comes to inclusion**
  - Effective networks or communities of practice can positively impact on transparency, professionalism and inclusion. As an individual organisation, one can feel disconnected, and even unaware of these challenges, but through the networks and communities, awareness and practical ways of more inclusiveness in youth exchange can be shared and promoted.

### IN GENERAL



- Make exchange and volunteer programs (ENSA, *CHAT der WELTEN*, *weltwärts*, etc.) between Germany and French-speaking countries more accessible through **documentation (targetting South partners) available in French** and visibility actions



- **New, more skills orientated formats** that respond to different education backgrounds of African youth could be developed to expand opportunities and to improve the impact and the inclusiveness of exchange (while *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030 might already allow access to a broader range of youth, other exchange programs have a stronger focus on youth with an academic educational background). In that framework, opportunities to collaborate with the private sector to create more exchange opportunities and improve the impact through adequate skills matching need to be identified.
- Develop new **communication strategies for exchange opportunities** for a more inclusive reach-out to youth. The engagement of *Behinderung und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit e.V.* (bezev) on inclusion within *weltwärts* voluntary service represents an important example on this, as e.g. the new *weltwärts* website is available in Leichte Sprache (easy read language).
- **Learn from the providers of Arts Education in Germany** who have access to a relatively diverse target group, as they usually operate in a low-threshold manner in the most diverse social contexts. Out of this experience, the *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030 format represents an example for a more inclusive youth exchange format.
- When dealing with the subject of diversity, alibi inclusion (e.g. one representative of each sub-group) should be avoided (e.g. disability) and **awareness on intersectionality** needs to be raised. The idea of diversity should be interpreted broadly and acknowledge most different ways of being diverse. The most important aspect is therefore not to exclude people from the outset, to make offers transparent and low-threshold and to keep the doors open for (voluntary) participation for all.





## D. INDICATOR: INDICATOR : PREPARATION, TRAINING, LEARNING AND EXPECTATION MATCHING

### REFERRED STANDARDS AND OBJECTIVES (IVCO)



- Agree realistic expectations between partners before the volunteer's placement to ensure partners are clear about each other's roles and responsibilities
  - o Volunteers/Young people receive detailed induction and training [relevant to their specific context].

## ▷ CHALLENGES

### EXPECTATION MATCHING - PLACEMENT

In the period of the pilot phase, the topic of mismatching of expectations between the different actors (partners, host and sending organizations and volunteers) has been a recurring topic. The results of the Pilot South-North Volunteer Survey show that the majority of South-North Volunteers is satisfied with their placement (The report has not yet been published yet). However, the Matching (within *weltwärts*) has been identified by the AGYI partners in the pilot countries as an area that sometimes under-delivers against personal aspirations for south-north participants<sup>5</sup>.

Some of these discrepancies could be explained by a lack of understanding of the many different definitions or intentions behind the purpose and design of the of volunteering and exchange programs offered by EG.

#### WELTWÄRTS • VOLUNTARY SERVICE

→ The *weltwärts* program for example is not career-related and encourages placements outside of participant's field of expertise, while internship programs – a counterexample here is ASA which provides a more technical learning space places – volunteers according to their field of academic or practical expertise.

One issue identified is the selection of placement. On the African partner side, the South-North participants can mostly not select their placement (it is hardly depending on the partnership between sending and hosting organization) while German applicants can search for projects that suit their interests. This can lead to a mismatch between the host organisation (regarding the profile and skills of the participant) and the participant. On the African partner side, many participants expect that the acquired skills will support them in their career. In this

<sup>5</sup> It needs to be pointed out, as the this contradicts the known results of the *weltwärts* survey, that these experiences on the mis-matching of the aspirations of volunteers occur out of an individual and long-term exchange and engagement with Alumni within the pilot countries.



regard, also the post-exchange support in view of career opportunities is considered crucial. Aspirations and placement realities are sometimes disconnected and potentially under-optimising the experience for the participant as well as the host organisation. Having this in mind, the website of the *weltwärts* program website is currently being relaunched in multiple languages (which was as well the case before) to make it more accessible to partners and will include a so-called “market for placements” (*Einsatzplatzbörse*) that would allow interested parties to see in which kind of sector (Schools, Kindergarden, Culture, Sports, Institutions for people with disabilities) organizations are usually offering placements in Germany.

This mis-matching effect is even more strongly perceived when South to North participants rely on a “placement agency” which results in disconnect between the original sending organization (who knows the participant and should be involved at all levels of support to the participant) and the hosting organization. While host organizations might ask for specific skills so that the volunteer can adequately support the organization, the sending organization might only focus on the personality of the volunteer which then leads to challenges for all sides.

Expectation matching and negotiations depend in the case of *weltwärts* as a civil society-based format on the individual negotiation between partners, as there is no centralized structure responsible for that. Further, the organizational structure of the South to North *weltwärts* program is different to that of the North to South component, which makes it more challenging for the hosting organizations to identify the specific placements well ahead of time.

#### ASA PROGRAM

➤ In the global format of the ASA program international partners choose their participants in consultation with their German partners. The final selection for international participants is made by the German partner in consultation with their partners. There is no partner matching, a partnership has to have been established prior to the application with ASA.

#### ENSA PROGRAM

➤ ENSA, the Development Policy School Exchange Program, promotes educational offers and funding in the field of partnerships between schools from Germany and schools from countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and South-East Europe. ENSA does not select participants, match partners or act as a broker. The partnership must either already exist in order to conduct so-called learning exchange visits or be in the process of being established (which can be done through so-called initiation visits). A pedagogical accompanying program helps participants reflect upon their expectations towards the exchange visit. From 2020 onwards, this program is imparted through three conferences over the course of the year. At least of one the conferences, if starting in 2021 possibly all three, is conducted for Southern and German partners together through virtual means.

## PREPARATION OF AFRICAN VOLUNTEERS

While preparation on the German side across all programs is very structured and well organized, currently, there is no systematic funding structure for preparation seminars of South volunteers. Preparation seminars are developed individually by sending organizations (e.g. SAGENet, TYC, CREDI-ONG) and often rely on the engagement of motivated individuals. While some sending organizations are highly engaged in assuring a proper preparation and





post-exchange experience for their volunteers to prepare them adequately for their experience in Germany and show them opportunities once back in their country, other sending organizations might not be able to provide those spaces because of a lack of financial and technical resources. As preparation is a crucial part of the pedagogic journey of volunteering and exchange, the lack of it can highly affect the impact of the exchange experience of young people.

Additionally, in the African partner countries an agreed pedagogical approach and assurance of quality in preparation of young participants is lacking. This makes it challenging for new partner organizations to receive support in order to prepare young people accordingly.

## ☑ MEASURES AND IMPACT

### MEASURES OF IMPROVEMENT PROVIDED BY AGYI



- Partner-Matching Conferences in all three pilot countries
- Development of a skills learning framework (South Africa)
- Translation of “Respect Guide” into French and English (Germany)
- Study Tour of South Partners to Germany
- Development of a Practitioner’s Guideline on Good Practice, Responsible Exchange and Volunteering (South Africa)
- Trainers Exchange Workshop in Addis Ababa
- Trainer’s Wiki and Community of practice (AU)
- Training of Trainers Workshops in Tanzania
- Development of Training Manual in Tanzania and Benin
- Setting up of a Trainer Pool in Benin
- Energizer collection (Benin, Germany)

## EXPECTATION MATCHING - PLACEMENT

The aspect of expectation-matching and placements has been raised at multiple occasions during the AGYI pilot phase by the African partner side. Exchange formats as ENSA, *CHAT der WELTEN* and *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030 provide space for joint project development and thus space for the expectation management of the partners. A similar space needs to be developed within the *weltwärts* format as actors are aware of the challenges. It needs to be taken into consideration that *weltwärts* started historically only with a North-South component and as the South-North component is set up in



a different way (e.g. Cooperation with the *Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend* (BMFSF), *Bundesamt für Familie und zivilgesellschaftliche Aufgaben* (BAFzA) and with the *Bundsfreiwilligendienst* (BFD)) to understand why those structural changes take time.

The Partner-Matching methodology has been an example how to increase the awareness for different needs and expectations amongst partners. The partner-matching dialogues provided a space for partners to meet each other at an eye-level and to jointly define their vision and objectives for their exchange project.

Related to placements, the question of skills development by participants has been especially worked on by AGYI partners, in particular in South Africa.

As such, the advisory services by WESSA allowed to: Listen to and understand from youth who have exchanged/volunteered what their highlights and lowlights were [and in this context – which role the placement match played]; Listen to and understand what organizations feel is enabling or limiting in terms of cooperation and matching; Create opportunities through workshops, capacity development initiatives, dialogues etc to raise the importance of strong matches and challenges that can come with mis-matching; Contribute to addressing this through interventions related to “stronger partnerships, new partnerships, and stronger networks and associations” that can continue to work towards improved matching for outbound youth.

To increase the awareness on the skills topic South African partners have developed a learning framework to strengthen the learning journey of South-North volunteers. Through different dialogue opportunities, AGYI draw the attention to the hard skills aspect and created an enabling environment to integrate the question of skills in the dialogue on quality.

## PREPARATION OF AFRICAN VOLUNTEERS

In the course of the AGYI pilot phase all pilot countries have developed good practice and trainer manuals. As the development of manuals and the set-up of trainer pools is recent, they will only unfold their impact on the preparation of South-North volunteers in the future.

The development processes of training and support manuals have included important stakeholder consultation and co-creation workspaces. Those approaches increased mutual understanding and awareness of commonalities and different perspectives amongst trainers participating on national and international levels (e.g. Trainers’ Exchange amongst German and African trainers). The participation of IOs in trainings in Germany strengthened the awareness amongst programs for South perspectives. They also provided an opportunity to transmit German perspectives and approaches to African stakeholders.

The processes around harmonization and capitalization of training experiences in the pilot countries strengthened the capacities of trainers and provided the opportunity for a more



network-based approach to improve quality in the preparation frameworks. The trainer Wiki as an exchange platform for trainers will further strengthen the dialogue and learning opportunities between the different contexts if it is sustained beyond the pilot phase. Mutual exchange amongst trainers and the development of learning content corresponding to each context will ensure more harmonization and quality in volunteer preparation.

## ☆ RECOMMENDATIONS

### EXPECTATION MATCHING - PLACEMENT

#### IN GENERAL



- ❑ **Matching needs more support** to appreciate different lenses and expectations; more digitalized, participant-driven and open approaches can be used.
- ❑ Matching needs more support on both sides to accompany partners in their journey together and support with finding suited partners and assisting in the process of the development of a joint project.
- ❑ Look at **hard/formal and soft/informal skills components** within programs: **Self-driven learning journeys** can be better framed and incorporated into exchange and volunteering and be combined with mentoring. The onus of the learning is on the participant and they have the ability to align it to their personal and/or professional aspirations. Consider more strongly the role and positioning of online learning opportunities.

#### TO HOST AND SENDING ORGANIZATIONS



- ❑ Hosting organizations: Continue to check if southern volunteers in Germany can take classes during their year in Germany or get mentored in a way that they can develop themselves meaningfully in regard to skills development.
- ❑ Sending organizations: **Better expectation management and more transparency** with regards to placements and matching
- ❑ **Enhance the profile of skills transference and learning journeys** through exchange [within *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030 this can be incorporated more effectively if the partners work from day one with the “skills” as a focal point and build it into their project development]. Create an enabling and supportive self-learning environment for African youth using the “Skills in Exchange and Learning Journeys Framework” (access to internet, show an interest, provide some “study time” for them as part of their volunteer schedule if necessary)



#### TO PROGRAMS



- ❑ Put a stronger **focus on the aspect of placement matching** for South volunteers,. The engagement of individual South partners shows that it can fundamentally change the meaning and relevance of the experience if together matching receive attention and organisations try to place youth in organizations that speak to their personal and professional aspirations.

#### TO WELTWÄRTS



- ❑ Put a stronger focus on the aspect of **placement matching for South volunteers**. Encourage CSOs – as the responsible entity – to appreciate, mentor, and monitor existing soft and hard skills components within the *weltwärts* program and align placements more strongly. This would not mean denying the importance of Global Learning in the program.
- ❑ Strengthen effective selection and matching to facilitate more skills learning by participants
- ❑ *Weltwärts* to familiarise themselves with the South African “**Skills in exchange and learning journeys framework**” and encourage German host organisations to support youth engaging with the framework.

#### TO WELTWÄRTS (TO PSA)



- ❑ Ensure equal access to opportunities and application process on the website for German and South partners and participants. Encourage organizations to inform about available placements/profiles. (This is partially work in progress with the upcoming relaunch of the *weltwärts* website in which organizations can indicate to South participants in which sector/field of work they can offer placements)
- ❑ Address the issue of **expectation matching with regard to skills** in PSA structures through a stronger South representation.

#### TO BMZ



- ❑ **Partner matching needs a more digitalized, participant-driven and open approach** - also for South-North *weltwärts* volunteers. Further develop and make equally accessible (languages) a digital platform which puts the South participant more actively at the center of attention where they collaborate on the decisions as to where they will go and what they are likely to expect.
- ❑ Explore more opportunities for promoting **hard skills development within existing and new programs**.





## PREPARATION OF VOLUNTEERS

### IN GENERAL



- Use **digital tools** for a better learning journey and support mechanisms for participants. Digitization can also serve as a community builder through all phases of the exchange (e.g. with participants and alumni)
- Make available **equal funding lines and structures for preparation and follow-up training measures** on both sides. Do not assume that a preparation upon arrival in Germany can replace a thorough preparatory process in the country of origin. On the African partner side hardly any funds are available for preparation training – neither nationally, nor internationally. This heavily contributes to the imbalance in training and mentoring offers. Awareness on this and how to access other funds for preparation needs to be raised.
- Establish and maintain a **pool of trainers and mentors in the South**. This reduces the cost effect of trainings and ensures that the right level of competence for training is maintained. Existing, strong, knowledgeable and relatable human resources are available in active alumni networks.
- **Empower alumni** to play a strong role in preparation and return. While training is hugely beneficial, having like-minded, empathetic support and guidance through preparation and homecoming by alumni, can alleviate some of the pressure where training is not strong and is not likely to receive substantial financial support in near future.
- Review **training versus mentoring needs** of both southern and northern volunteers – some find mentoring more helpful – support on the spot when it is needed and combine mentoring topics with training during the cycle including topics that have come up during mentoring.
- Foster **continuous exchange amongst trainers** and sharing of training content/ manuals between Germany and African partner country trainers, f.i. through continued support to the wiki that has already been created.

### TO BMZ



- Review how **funding lines for preparation, follow-up and alumni** work are allocated and distributed between the German and the African partner side.



## E. INDICATOR: INDICATOR : DEBRIEFING, EXIT AND ONGOING ENGAGEMENT – CREATE SUSTAINABLE IMPACT

### REFERRED STANDARDS AND OBJECTIVES (IVCO)



- Provide comprehensive and effective operational and personal debriefing for volunteers/young people.
- Provide volunteers returning from long-term placements remote from their home community with formal and informal resettlement support.
- Support and encourage volunteers' continuing learning and their ongoing engagement with the wider context of development.



### ▷ CHALLENGES

The relevance of providing orientation and post-exchange opportunities for volunteers and exchange participants has been stressed by alumni in all three pilot countries. Especially for long-term volunteers (e.g. *weltwärts*) the reintegration process is an overwhelming personal and professional challenge which needs support. Furthermore, alumni expect a space for further engagement in their communities.

At the beginning of the pilot phase, in all three pilot countries there were no Alumni structures and no systematic support for the reintegration of young people. There are examples of organisations (e.g. TYC, SAGENet) providing support to their Alumni individually as an organization, but a lot of Alumni don't have the same opportunity.



This lack of structures leads to a missed opportunity to foster engagement of alumni to capitalize their exchange experience. Besides supporting Alumni structures in the partner countries, the most important challenge is sustaining them, as they are self-managed without any systematic financial support.

## ☐ MEASURES AND IMPACT

### MEASURES OF IMPROVEMENT PROVIDED BY AGYI



- ☐ The formation of the **Southern African Alumni Network** (SAAN) has been supported and advisory services for their further development have been provided (South Africa)
- ☐ **Change Action Workshops for Alumni** (South Africa)
- ☐ **Alumni App** has been developed.
- ☐ Youth Mainstreaming through Alumni-led workshop on **Alumni engagement** (Bonn, May 2019 during EG conference)
- ☐ A collaboration between the Beninese Alumni Network *Réseau des Anciens Volontaires Internationaux pour l'Echanges et la Solidarité* (RAVIES) and the *Réseau AGYI Bénin* has been initiated/put in placed. (Benin)
- ☐ **Capacity Building Trainings for alumni** on Alumni have taken place (Benin).
- ☐ **Post-Countdown 2030 support** for Alumni (Benin).
- ☐ An **Alumni Network in Tanzania** has been set up. (Tanzania)
- ☐ **Pan-African Youth Camp** (Tanzania)
- ☐ **Alumni Toolkit** has been developed (AU)
- ☐ **Continental Youth Summit** - "Amplifying Youth Voices" a youth led, youth implemented summit in South Africa for 65 alumni from 9 African countries (AU, South Africa)
- ☐ **AGYI Innovation Fund** has supported alumni projects, with alumni applying for funds and implementing activities around themes relevant to youth exchange. (AU, All)
- ☐ **Engagement of youth exchange alumni in dialogue formats** to identify challenges and opportunities for improving exchange from the perspectives of young people. (All)

Throughout the AGYI pilot phase alumni structures and engagement on the African partner side have been strengthened. The support to the Southern African Alumni Network led to their institutional set-up and strong engagement within activities in South(ern) Africa and on the continental level. The alumni are now a self-organized group that provides support and mentoring for those returning and their network members. In Benin, the *Réseau des Anciens Volontaires Internationaux pour l'Echanges et la Solidarité* is developing similar approaches and is currently involved in the preparation of new exchange participants. The collaboration between RAVIES and the AGYI Benin Network



led to a systematic participation of Alumni in dialogue opportunities and product development processes in Benin.

In Tanzania alumni are engaged in the same way in processes that integrate their perspectives into dialogue opportunities. Through the Pan-African Youth Camps young entrepreneurs in East Africa have been connected and provided a space for exchange and learning opportunities to foster their projects. On a continental level, alumni of all three pilot countries have been connecting with each other and gave formed strategic alliances with other alumni networks, such as the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). A continental alumni summit organised by alumni themselves resulted in the AU alumni toolkit which has been written by alumni for alumni.

Alumni have been strengthened to become a voice of proposition and consultation in exchange program related questions. Models to harness the returnee multiplying effect – e.g. alumni as multipliers of the pedagogic goals of exchange programs – have been piloted and are available to be further used (e.g. Countdown 2030, change action projects, AGYI Innovation Fund). There is an increasingly strong awareness amongst host and sending partners of the needs of alumni.

## ☆ RECOMMENDATIONS

### TO PROGRAMS, BMZ AND SOUTHERN PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



- Support opportunities for **Southern alumni to institutionalize their self-engagement** to support future alumni.
- Make **funding for returning participant seminars and actions** equally available as on the German side.
- Promote the **participation of Southern alumni in program decision-making** processes.





## F. NETWORKS: OPPORTUNITIES TO EVALUATE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERING AND EXCHANGE

### REFERRING STANDARDS AND OBJECTIVES (IVCO)



- Investigate and understand the project's contribution to the community and to the volunteer's personal development.
- Develop a systematic evaluation and reporting structure to improve the quality of exchange and volunteering and to adapt to changes.

### ▷ CHALLENGES

Networks can be a powerful way to collect insights into the exchange and volunteering sector, to provide mutual learning opportunities and support, and to provide a collective review and quality assurance mechanism. While on the German side in the frame of the *weltwärts* voluntary service program quality associations and other networks provide those services and infrastructure, on the African partner side partner networks have been missing.

In terms of mutual learning and impact evaluation, a centralized approach at national level is missing on the African partner side. While program related evaluation increasingly take place through program-networks (e.g. SAwN), there is no approach to systematically evaluate the impact of volunteering and exchange in each respective country in order to further develop structures and opportunities. A feedback mechanism for target communities (in which volunteers work) to feedback to the relevant structures to ensure a 'do no harm' approach is missing.

### ☒ MEASURES AND IMPACT

#### MEASURES OF IMPROVEMENT PROVIDED BY AGYI



- Participatory development process of the **Réseau AGYI Bénin**, a network of civil society actors active in the field of volunteering and exchange
- Supporting the **Western African weltwärts Network** to further develop their network structure
- Support of the professionalisation of the **Southern African weltwärts Network**
- Mapping exercises** to research partner organizations nationwide (Tanzania)
- Networks/connections that were build-up through the different **dialogue opportunities** (conferences, forums, workshops)
- Government and Civil society collaboration** in pilot countries (Tanzania, Benin)



Building networks for dialogue and advocacy strengthens the capacity of its members as it represents a platform for knowledge exchange and therefore capacity building. The support of the different network building processes in Benin, Western and Southern Africa (Réseau AGYI Bénin, SAwN, WAwN) provided a channel for its members to strengthen their representation in partner dialogue. Those networks all emerged from a strong ownership of their members and voluntary engagement of their members contributing to a joint vision and objectives.

Specific program networks, such as SAwN or WAwN create a space for a more systematic (because centralized) evaluation and reflection with regards to volunteering impact, capacity building needs and relationships with key partners, such as the government.

The collaboration between government entities and civil society in Benin and Tanzania led to a more systematic evaluation of the impact of volunteering in the country, and results of these dialogues are taken into account by government institutions (e.g. Tanzania– information on volunteering and exchange has been integrated into the national youth policy).





## ☆ RECOMMENDATIONS

### IN GENERAL



- To further **strengthen regional and program-related networks** to increase opportunities for systematic evaluation processes and for continuously improving the quality of exchange.
- Provide adequate forms of representation of networks in evaluation and program steering processes.



## 2.2 QUANTITY OF EXCHANGE

One of the aims of the BMZ by initiating AGYI was to improve the numbers of South-North participants within the existing programs and by this to strengthen the reciprocity in these exchanges. Despite progress over the last years, youth exchange between African countries and Germany and amongst African countries in the framework of EG programs remains limited in numbers. The ratio between North-South and South-North participants is still very unequal. At the same time the interest amongst young Africans as well as expectations from Governments are high. Youth exchange is considered an important instrument to foster youth participation, global learning and skills development within the context of Education for Sustainable Development.

The current Covid-19 situation has put a halt to almost all exchange programs and the future of those physical exchanges is at stake. However, this situation can be an opportunity to further promote and strengthen virtual exchange opportunities to improve the quantity of youth participating in exchange between Germany and African countries. The expertise of CHAT der WELTEN may be an useful resource to enhance virtual exchange opportunities. Still, further research needs to be done on the impact and the pedagogical quality of virtual formats.

### REFERRED AGYI OBJECTIVES



#### Framework – AGYI objectives according to common M&E:

- # of participants in African/German youth exchange from the 3 pilot countries have doubled until 2020
- # of new partnerships

## ▷ CHALLENGES

While the increase in exchange numbers is desired, several structural challenges make such an increase challenging. German exchange practitioners dispose of a limited number of placements within their ongoing longstanding partnerships.

To build more opportunities for young Africans to participate in exchange formats with Germany more placement opportunities need to be developed (e.g. ASA) and new partnerships need to be initiated (in case of *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030, ENSA and *CHAT der WELTEN* but also other formats).

The complex application processes of EG programs are a barrier especially when it comes to partnerships between very small organisations which might not have enough resources and capacities to respond to the process. The financial contribution of 25% by civil society is a





challenge as well. For the ASA program the 25% contribution does no longer apply. Financial contributions are usually made by partners from Germany. The financial contribution by these partners includes: costs for air tickets and possibly a contribution to accommodation for participants from partner countries for the duration of their exchange in Germany.

A particularly important factor, is the challenging visa policy of the Federal Republic of Germany, even more so in the ongoing migration debate. The German partner has to be liable to any damage caused by a violation of the visa policy or the chance of receiving a visa decreases (this has repeatedly happened with Beninese partners). As the responsibilities for visa issues in the German government do not lie within the same ministry (Foreign Affairs) as volunteering and exchange in the context of development cooperation (BMZ) and the approach to youth mobility might differ between the ministries it represents another challenge to build a consistent approach.

It cannot be underestimated that the development of new exchange projects between new partners represents a long process to create a common sense and trust between each are. The psychological dimension of building new partnerships is very crucial. Without trust and commitment, it is very challenging to support new potential partners to invest their resources to create new exchange opportunities. It the process of getting to know each other, also on an institutional level, requires time.

#### ASA PROGRAM

➤ At present, the number of project applications (in the global format) matches more or less planned figures. A future scaling of the program is regarded as desirable. The current Covid-19 crisis led to the cancellation of the last cycle and a restructuring of the format (including virtual elements).

#### ENSA PROGRAM

➤ Even if ENSA's mandate does not foresee an increase in numbers, the ENSA program regulations promote an even number of incoming and outgoing participants. Each project is automatically structured into mutual visits.

Bureaucracy can also challenge ENSA actors. Teachers in particular have to face bureaucratic requirements of applying for funds and conducting the project according to regulations. In response to that it is advised that projects on both sides are accompanied, if possible, by an experienced NGO, who is familiarized with these processes.

#### CHAT DER WELTEN

➤ At present, *CHAT der WELTEN* promotes the increase of peer to peer virtual exchange formats, however, this is limited as Chat der Welten is a small development policy education program.

#### WELTWÄRTS VOLUNTARY SERVICE

➤ For the *weltwärts* format so far, the contingent of the South-North component (currently 800 volunteers/year) has never been used up. Partnerships are in most cases ongoing since long and partners do not have the capacities to integrate new placements.

Beyond the EG programs, Germany has a multitude of ongoing exchange programs with African countries. They are situated in different ministries and organizations without a cen-



tralized overview, which renders the coordination and monitoring of data on exchange numbers very complex.

While digital formats could be a response to financial and visa challenges, they still seem to be rather marginally existing, and IT-infrastructure is a necessary precondition. The current global Covid-19 crisis already brought transformation through digitization (e.g. ASA) into the sector. However, digital formats cannot yet entirely replace existing and scientifically “tested” educational formats, but only complement them. After all, the core of these formats is the direct, personal encounter. The Covid-19 crisis might possibly offer the possibility of better evidence and research on the potential of digital education and exchange formats, also by using the experience of CHAT der WELTEN regarding virtual exchange in the framework of Global Learning.

Finally, In the long run, the importance of the question “exchanges versus climate change” is an argument limiting more physical youth exchange and mobility programs. This is a crucial debate and includes the question of whether the two objectives can be balanced against each other. More reflection and inspiration from existing debate forums in international youth work integrating the different local and global perspectives of the sector’s stakeholders is needed.

## ☐ MEASURES AND IMPACT

### MEASURES OF IMPROVEMENT PROVIDED BY AGYI



- ☐ **Partner-Matching conferences** in Tanzania, Benin and South Africa between German and African partners.
- ☐ **Intra-African partnerships and organisational learning** and sharing catalysed by AGYI
- ☐ **Youth-led virtual exchange** on Countdown 2030, 2063 and beyond’ (teams from SADC and Western Africa)
- ☐ **European synergies:** AU-EU Youth Cooperation Hub - a joint initiative of the AU and the EU to foster youth cooperation between the two continents - as well as supporting the development of proposals on youth exchange within the hub.
- ☐ Development of a **trilateral exchange format concept** by OBSVJ, France Volontaires Benin and GIZ
- ☐ Establishing a **joint monitoring system of EG program numbers** through KDAJ

Partner Matching conferences have been established as a new tool to build more partnerships between German and African CSOs and thereby increase their numbers. In that framework, *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030 as a



new format has been an effective tool to increase exchange opportunities for African and German youth. It has also contributed to reaching more diverse organizations in the field of sports and cultural education. Information sessions for German and African partners about exchange opportunities and programs have been an important step to increase the partner base. The future potential of Partner-Matching as already mentioned needs to be further evaluated with a general reflection on the resource-consuming preparation and outcome relation. Only with a manageable number of participants, intensive support can be provided and high-quality encounters and sustainable partnerships fostered. Partner-Matching-Conferences thus can promote new partnerships quality-wise and stimulate networking and potential new cooperation but quantity-wise have limits. Furthermore, applicants repeatedly perceived language, visa and the formal application requirements as barriers. EG offers visa and application consultation but cannot further influence the visa procedures. Capacity building and accompaniment by experienced NGO partners has been piloted as mitigating measure.

With the AGYI pilot phase being focused on the improvement of framework conditions and quality, with the exception of *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030, there has been no substantial increase in numbers in the framework of the EG programs. However the various dialogue opportunities allowed to discover doors for further developing opportunities by focussing on new topics (technical skills) and geographical areas (south-south and trilateral exchange). Short term encounters between young people have been piloted as another means of opening the opportunity of exchange to more young people (e.g. 'Countdown 2030, 2063 and beyond' as a new tool for youth exchange and youth empowerment; Autumn School for Social Entrepreneurship as a new format with a stronger social business-related focus).

Looking at this more broadly, the question is whether the existing youth exchange formats for German organisations do not already sufficiently cover the needs and whether a significant quantitative increase in the number of exchanges is still possible and, if so, under which prerequisites. However, the aim and need of international youth work remains to give every young person the chance to spend time abroad.

On a pan-African level, dialogue opportunities have led to the development of further ideas for intra-African exchange formats.

The experience of the Countdown 2030 format which enabled young people to develop and prepare a youth conference through digital collaboration, as well as the EU-AU youth hub and youth webinars of the AU shows the importance of further exploring digital exchange formats.

In 2019 and 2020, *CHAT der WELTEN* participant numbers have strongly increased and research on youth shows that at young age one intense experience can shape the trajectory of the person's future life: One week of chat with a class in Senegal has impacted German students in such a way that they felt connected to Senegal and paid attention to anything related to the country for years to come throughout their adult life. With CHAT the challenge remains that organizations and schools on the African partner side are not supported with internet ac-



cess, material costs and personal resources. Virtual exchanges can also be a step that leads to physical exchanges and inspire school partnerships in the future.

Finally, a stronger European approach with trilateral cooperation and exchanges building upon different EU member states strengths in the youth exchange sector, might also be a way to counter some of the more structural challenges in terms of placements, visa and partnerships.

## ☆ RECOMMENDATIONS

### IN GENERAL



- ❑ To focus on **digital approaches** for scaling in order to enhance outreach. Virtual formats are a different kind of exchange and cannot replace face-to-face exchange but can be valuable complement.
- ❑ To seek **collaboration with other European partners** as a potential for multilateral exchange.
- ❑ **Pan African exchange opportunities** may be a more cost enabler of exchange instead of with the rest of the world and improve overall number of participants in exchange programs.
- ❑ Getting to scale in exchange requires working with **non-traditional partners** (including national governments and private sector actors) to define expectations and addressing issues as it relates to their strategic objectives.

### TO BMZ



- ❑ Stronger support for **Partner-Matching** within programs
- ❑ **weltwärts exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030**: Integrate into the funding resources support for the partner organization on application process of *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030 as well as resources for capacity building.
- ❑ Further **build upon German civil society campaigns** for more youth exchange.
- ❑ Assure **more coherence** when it comes to promoting an increase in numbers among programs and stakeholders as well as policy makers. Manage expectations.

Example: ENSA

- o Build on experiences and examples as the Pasch online platform for Partner matching
- o ENSA has a threshold of how many partnerships can be supported.
- o ENSA introduced funded partner matching visits.

Example: *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030

- o New funding line introduced including funded accompanying measures to raise numbers.
- o Visa applications rejected – dialogue with Foreign Office unsuccessful.



Example: *weltwärts*

- o Quota of 800 places for South volunteers set, but no incentives for partners to create placements.
- Sign **MOUs with partner governments** to address issues such as visa and include them in government negotiations.
- Take **climate change** into account: It will impact youth exchanges hugely, there will be a need to prepare for selecting more precisely who will travel for what reason, e.g. number of journeys can be reduced by limiting travels of organisers; building upon digital formats; providing funds for the off-setting / compensation of climate damage done by flights.
- As CHAT seems capable of increasing participant numbers with a fraction of the resources needed for physical exchanges, **investing more in digital exchanges** can be a way to enhance quantity in student exchanges. It is also strongly suggested to provide an equivalent amount of funds for accompaniment of CdW projects to Southern partners.

#### TO THE AFRICAN UNION



- Define and put in place a clear **mechanism to finance and encourage South-South exchanges** in collaboration with the various Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs)





### 3.

## THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN-GERMAN YOUTH EXCHANGE RELATED TO FUTURE TRENDS

### TOPIC (A): THE IDEA OF AN AFRICAN-GERMAN YOUTH OFFICE/ DESK

An African-German Youth Office/ Desk could bring together the different African-German exchange and volunteering programs and initiatives to increase the quality and quantity of African-German youth encounters. The youth exchange desk should be jointly designed and operated by German and African partners and thereby allow for a shift towards stronger partnership and reciprocity. However, the risk of building asymmetrical structures (Country to Continent) exists. The potential for stronger collaboration on the European level to enable an EU-AU cooperation on youth exchange and volunteering should be explored.

### METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH OF THE LEARNING ANALYSIS

#### The following tasks could be covered by such an Office/Desk

- Provide information on youth exchange formats/programs, opportunities for networking and mutual learning as well as training and guidance to German and African host and sending organisations as well as youth and alumni
- Act as a catalyst for partner-matching and the creation of new exchange opportunities and placements in Germany and African countries
- Provide a joint platform for dialogue and programmatic exchange between German and African youth exchange partners
- Improve coordination and knowledge management amongst various programs, ministries, state and non-state actors involved in African-German youth exchange

#### The institutional mechanism should also reduced by:

- Setting up a coordination mechanism (e.g. which creates partner matching opportunities) rather than a program managing structure of a specific exchange format which would bring together different exchange actors
- Basing it on a virtual platform and link it to the platforms existing at the level of the AU.
- Connecting this institution to other international exchange offices and European partners to build networks.
- Setting up a common finance and governance structure integrating all partners.
- Building on what already exists to capitalize available experiences.



## TOPIC (B): DIGITISATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- Build agile structures which collaborate through virtual means
- Climate change: Consider how this will affect the sector of exchange and volunteering and how flights could be off-set
- Conflicts and instability: Find new flexible approaches as some young people might be excluded of exchange opportunities due to regional security instability
- Examples on virtual exchanges
  - o New hybrid nature of ASA Program, allowing for joint projects despite security concerns or visa restrictions
  - o WESSA engaging Alumni and others in COVID response
  - o Countdown 2030 collaboration

## TOPIC (C): SKILLS

- European-African youth cooperation should be strengthened with a stronger focus on mutual exchange to foster technical and vocational skills of young people.
- Young people are key actors in shaping the future beyond the Covid-19 crisis. Cross-regional exchange can activate the young generation to take a lead and contribute to sustainable development while strengthening entrepreneurship and employable skills.
- Evidence from Europe and Africa shows that mobility schemes raise employability, entrepreneurial skills, and social commitment of young people. Education-based youth exchanges and volunteer services can help young people in broadening their personal horizons and acquiring life and employment-related skills.
- A skills-based exchange format should target apprentices and young professionals and could provide them either with a digital exchange opportunity around a joint technical field of interest related to the SDGs or a short-stay group exchange format, analogue *weltwärts* exchange projects within the context of Agenda 2030. .

**Published by:**  
Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered Offices  
Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

**Address:**  
African-German Youth Initiative (AGYI)  
GIZ African Union Office  
Kirkos Sub-City, Fitawrari Damtew Road  
In front of African Union Commission Gate No. 3, Next to Finland Embassy  
P.O. Box 100009, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

E [maria.zandt@giz.de](mailto:maria.zandt@giz.de)  
I <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/43431.html>

**Programme/project description:**  
African German Youth Initiative (AGYI)

**Authors and Editors:**  
Maria Zandt, Raphael Bavoux (GIZ)

**Contributors:**  
Réseau AGYI Bénin (RAB)  
Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA)  
Tanzania Youth Coalition (TYC)  
Engagement Global (EG)  
Bundesvereinigung Kulturelle Kinder- und Jugendbildung (BKJ)

**Design:**  
Additiv. Visuelle Kommunikation, Berlin, Germany

**Photo credits:**  
GIZ AGYI

**On behalf of:**  
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)  
Division 322 – Civic Engagement, Austausch- und Freiwilligendienste, Engagement Global  
Ute Möhring, Bonn

Addis Abeba, 2020