The AFRICAN YOUTH CHARTER (AYC) is a political and legal document that serves as a strategic framework to give direction for youth empowerment and development at the continental, regional and national levels. It was endorsed by African Union Heads of States in 2006.

YOUTH, YOU & THE AGYI IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE AFRICAN YOUTH CHARTER

Of the 31 Articles to the AYC, 28 are of relevance in the context of youth development, youth exchange, volunteering and global learning. As actors in the youth exchange and volunteering landscape, we should align our thinking and our practices to the AYC. [Click for the AYC]

The AYC is “CONVINCED that Africa’s greatest resource is its youthful population and that through their active and full participation, Africans can surmount the difficulties that lie ahead” (p7 African Youth Charter).

Trusting you all had a meaningful Mandela Day, 18 July. This image is of a hand-prints mural in Cape Town and it resonates the amazingness and colour that Madiba brought to our lives and our country. Well done to the many hands who brought this to life.
As a result of the overwhelming response to the call for applications for the AGYI Thematic Forum, WESSA apologises to those whom we were not able to accommodate.

Selection considered several criteria which included:
- % youth representation – youth exchange
- % civil society organisations working in the fields of youth exchange
- % civil society organisations with a focus on global learning
- Key government stakeholders
- Academic institutions
- % International delegates
- % SADC representation

Even with these criteria to guide us, we are aware that we could still not meet all relevant applications.

WESSA has added all applicants to our AGYI communications database and we are confident that future workshops and events will provide opportunities for your participation.

To the applicants who will be attending, we are looking forward to meeting you towards the end of August.
I'm fluent in German and was introduced to it at the age of 5 due to a life changing opportunity that my father got in Heilbronn, Germany. The course of my life changed instantly and I naturally understood the significance of this much later in life. I struggled with identity throughout my life and this language skill felt like a heavy burden for a good chunk of my life. But when my motivation was low my teachers and the Hermannsburg - Deutsche Schule / School community always stuck by me and encouraged me to continue learning German. I struggled through German Mother Tongue classes throughout high school and shed a lot of tears till the finish line. In disbelief I was awarded the "Anerkennung der guten Leistung in der Matrikprüfung fürs Fach Deutsch als Muttersprache von der Deutschen Kulturrat" (award for obtaining the highest mark in the German Home Language exam in Matric) and instantly had a new found love for this language which seemed like a burden throughout my life.

But it wasn't all sweat and tears. There were many benefits that this access to another culture afforded me. To give you background – my school fees throughout my time in Hermannsburg was funded by a group of friends in Germany who wanted to give back and had coincidently connected with my parents during our brief time there. I am still not sure what they saw in me but their decision to invest in my future changed my life forever because those funds meant I was afforded an education that I would have otherwise never had access to. This included various school exchanges and volunteer exchanges.

Spending time away from home not only intensified the need to give back and contribute directly to my community in SA but it also shaped my intercultural skills and this amongst many things contributed to my decision to pursue Political Science. I am certain that the experience and education I received at HMB, the challenges post matric, the impact of exchange, my ability to overcome challenges with optimism and my ability to speak German fluently contributed to my approach to everything in life and deliberate attempt to do my ‘bit’ to make a change.

I am still hoping to contribute more towards my community and to make a change because I am where I am because people took a chance on me. It is difficult to put into words the impact of exchange but what I do know is that having navigated intercultural spaces my entire life has given me an utmost second nature understanding for various challenges and situations.

This is purely my own experience and story but I am certain no one is left unchanged Post Exchange...one way or another.

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Dambisa Dube

Dambisa is part of the driving force behind the evolution of the Southern African Alumni Network. Like all the alumni working in the network, it is done on a voluntary basis to contribute towards more meaningful exchange and volunteering for African youth engaging in or having engaged in the exchange/volunteer experience.

In her role as SAwN coordinator, Dambisa has been integral in the planning and implementation of the 5 Cities Tour together with the WESSA AGYI team.
Calendar of SPECIAL DAYS – August planning support

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<th>AUGUST</th>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Int. Day of the Worlds Indigenous People</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>National Women’s Day</td>
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<td>World Lion Day</td>
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<td>Int. Youth Day</td>
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<td>World Mosquito Day</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Int. Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>African Traditional Medicine Day</td>
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Grant Bellairs of the Southern African Alumni Network giving his time to support South North participants at the SAGE Net preparation seminar in Cape Town.

We are building exchange related databases and would like your support to reach organisations that we may not yet be engaging with.

Privacy legislation prevents us from being provided with direct contact to partner organisations, schools, clubs or other entities involved in German – Southern African exchange.

These organisations and entities NEED TO CONTACT US if they would like to harness the opportunities afforded by the AGYI.

Should you know of organisations involved with weltwaerts, ENSA, ASA, City to City Partnerships or any other German – Southern African exchange format, please ask them to contact

youth@wessa.co.za

“The only thing to do with good advice is to pass it on. It is never of any use to oneself.”

(Oscar Wilde. 1854 – 1900 Irish playwright, poet & writer)