



“In my reflections about the global circumstances I realise that nothing to date has illustrated the importance of global solidarity and the co-dependence of the global communities. This should inspire new vigour in SDGs advocacy. Stay safe my global family.” (Futhi Sibiyi in a message last week to the Partner Matching whatsapp group – X Factored Youth – exchange & youth development practitioner)

As we all grapple with the uncertainties, anxieties and challenges of the Coronavirus on our personal and professional lives, we wish to take this opportunity to invite you to reflect on the message by Futhi and we encourage this exchange community to continue to share, support and grow with each other despite the massive challenges in the now. Corona will pass, and the case for exchange is, in our opinion, stronger than ever given what the world is dealing with.

Stay safe, stay home, reach out for support when you need it and offer support when you are able to.

WESSA AGYI Team



Join the Southern African Alumni
NETWORK

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Partner Matching Conference

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In line with WESSA’s mandate as implementing organisation to deliver on the AGYI targets to improve the quality of exchanges and increase the number of youth afforded the opportunity to engage in exchanges, a Partner Matching Conference (PMC) was hosted in Johannesburg, South Africa, between the 2 – 6 March 2020 with optional post-conference site visits offered.



WESSA collaborated with counterparts in Germany, most notably BKJ, DSJ and Engagement Global (EG) to plan and implement the PMC which was attended by 15 pre-matched tandems.

The conference was not without its challenges, misunderstandings and frustrations, but the planning team felt it imparted a large amount of relevant information, provided a diversity to delivery, created good space for the tandems to work together and effectively opened doors to new relationships and cooperations that will mature, with several likely to evolve into exchanges in the future.

Technical Steering Meeting

The AGYI Technical Steering Meeting, scheduled for 17 March in Johannesburg, was reformatted from a physical meeting to a virtual meeting at the 11th hour due to the many challenges and restrictions emerging from the proliferation of the COVID19 around the world. Travel bans and health concerns were taken into consideration and the meeting took place as a ZOOM call on 18 March 2020.

The agenda included – Regional implementation updates; contingency planning for lockdowns and restricted mobility into the foreseeable future; review of Innovation Fund and possible ways forward; M&E updates for the initiative and looking at sustainability of AGYI in the post-pilot phase.

WESSA is currently reviewing and re-shaping the implementation plan for the period April to September 2020 and applying our minds to ensuring we optimise the remaining months despite the uncertainty of the current world order and mobility challenges faced.



MUKA dancers perform for partners (top) and (below from left) Lungisani Myeni from Mtuba Football Academy chats to the Circus tandem of Alexandra Haas of Zirkus Paletti and Melani Boltman of Zip Zap Circus School Trust



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Voice alumni

Ontiretse Ganabo



Update

During a crisis.



Talk to people you trust.

SAAN Support
saanhelp@gmail.com

My name is Ontiretse Ganabo from Zuurbekom in the West Rand, but originally from North West in Taung. Currently I am working for Orlando Pirates Football Club **teaching computer basics to the disadvantaged children** of Orlando West through the Orlando Pirates Football Club learning Centre satellite program.

I went to Germany In 2016 through an school exchange program called ENSA, an exchange program in partnership with Orlando High School in Soweto and Schulzentrum Blumenthal in Germany (Bremen). The partnership is in collaboration with Orlando Pirates Learning Centre and Schulzentrum Blumenthal.

Through the exchange Program, **the lesson that I learnt through the program is the use of computer and communication skills.**

The program inspired me to make an impact back home, because the very same program that took me to Germany is the very same program that I am doing today since 2013. **My aim is to see learners from disadvantaged homes in Soweto knowing how to use the computer.** Today I am teaching the disadvantaged children of Orlando West computer basics because I started by attending the Program in 2013 after the Centre Manager came to my former school named Orlando High School and introduce the program to us.

My last words or **advice to the youth is to enjoy life and take life as it is and use the resources** provided to them and never take advantage of the resources. Most importantly is to **enjoy volunteering and encourage others to volunteer because it all pays back in the end.**

To all SAAN members who are currently in Germany.
We are aware of the worldwide COVID-19 crisis and we would like to help. We are offering peer-counseling services if you need someone to talk to. Email saanhelp@gmail.com and we will try to help you as best as we can. Stay positive. Stay safe.

SAAN BOARD



Alumni Toolkit update

The Southern African Alumni Network has been working closely with the African Union Commission on developing the Alumni toolkit. A survey was distributed to all alumni across the SAAN and AGYI social media to get more input on the toolkit. The team is currently working on the first draft of the toolkit. A lot of the work has been happening in a virtual space with a lot of enthusiasm from both the SAAN and AUC. The team hopes to release the toolkit in the second half of the year.



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EXCHANGE and VOLUNTEERING in these unusual times

WHERE TO NOW?

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INNOVATION FUND UPDATE 2020

South African submissions on the Innovation Fund Call 2 were around 30 submissions despite some technical frustrations experienced by applicants. Approximately 12 applicants fell short on meeting the criteria for various reasons.

Despite strong and diverse applications, **the Fund has had to review the feasibility of many projects from both Call 1 & 2 given the implications on implementation as a result of the Coronavirus challenges.**

GIZ and GFA will meet early April and all applicants will be contacted and updated on the status of awards and potential ways forward where possible.

The AGYI apologises for the uncertainty that this has created around the fund and we hope to have some suitable solutions for some fundable projects.

For queries, please contact Dr Jurie Van Niekerk - Jurie-van.Niekerk@gfa-group.de or Mike Denison of WESSA AGYI - mike.denison@wessa.co.za or on 082 269 6421

SKILLS in EXCHANGE

Workshop
Postponed

The AGYI has postponed to a date yet to be confirmed, the Skills Workshop which was planned for 18 – 20 March.

Thank you to SAwN, SAAN, SAGENet and the GIZ SA office for your commitment through the planning phase of this activity.

Stakeholders will be updated on developments as things evolve.

QUANTUM LEAP to the VIRTUAL SPACE

The Coronavirus rapidly changes how we think and work. “Work remotely” – wow! This is easier thought and said than often done. While yes, it is a trend that needs to grow and the positive spin-offs cannot be denied. But not every person can just “work remotely”. There are many challenges – access to data, fast internet, space to work from, capacity to maximise remote working these are realities that bring stresses to the remote working environment, and especially to many of you in the AGYI network who’s energy is typically people centred and of a human engagement level that does not easily fit the “remote world”.

None the less, the presence of the Coronavirus on our lives does require

a new lens through which we approach our working days.

Within the AGYI, remote engagements are very common, from frequent meetings to the Countdown 2030 conference which was heavily reliant on remote engagements.

Here of some of our learnings that you may find useful – ZOOM is a good choice platform & video image should be encouraged

1. **Preparation** is vital to effective and efficient on-line interactions
2. **Clarity on process** for “each section” of the meeting really assists in keeping it on track [strong facilitator]
3. **Document readiness** – circulate ahead of meeting and have as online for sharing as this enhances productive interaction [using shared screen as opposed to each on their own laptop to review documents keeps the conversation focused]
4. **Use of google docs** to keep the meeting in “real time” is very useful
5. Use of the **message bar enhances participation** and clarity. It also contributes to efficiency when one considers the role it can play in translation
6. **Use of two screens** - allows the participants to be “in the room” and you have sight of the message bar even when you are reviewing documents.
7. **Pre-meeting protocols shared** and allowing for **pre-meeting tech check-ins** to be encouraged
8. **“Action Items”** online document - important to create and equally important to follow-up



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Good Practice, Responsible Exchange & Volunteering

A Guideline for Practitioners

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