

# THE USAU YOUTH



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## The Expanded Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI)

*During his recent visit to Africa, President Obama announced the expansion of his YALI program. The article below details how the program seeks to effectively engage and empower Young African Leaders in the coming years.*

The Obama Administration's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) is a signature effort to invest in the next generation of African leaders. Nearly one in three Africans are between the ages of 10 and 24, and approximately 60 percent of Africa's total population is below the age of 35. President Obama launched YALI in 2010 to support young African leaders as they spur growth and prosperity, strengthen democratic governance, and enhance peace and security across Africa.

## COMMITTING RESOURCES TO DEVELOPING YOUNG TALENT

Through YALI, the United States has invested significant resources to enhance leadership skills, spur entrepreneurship, and connect young African leaders with one another and with Americans. Since 2010, the State Department has held fifteen exchanges specifically for young African leaders and sponsored 1,283 sub-Saharan scholars through its Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) programs. U.S. Embassies have awarded small grants totaling \$750,000 to YALI alumni groups supporting youth development in Africa. Other State Department-led efforts, such as LIONS @FRICA and Apps4Africa, have focused on building an entrepreneurial ecosystem to encourage broad-based economic growth and opportunity for young entrepreneurs – partnering with the private sector to run startup competitions, grow incubators, and develop innovative new products to address local, business, and development needs.

USAID has worked with local governments and institutions to strengthen access to education, workforce training, and skills development to help young Africans gain the skills needed to enter into the labor force. Since YALI's inception, USAID has invested more than \$100 million in over 76 partnerships with African universities to help train a new generation of Africa's leaders in health, agriculture, education, environmental science, technology, and other sectors. Currently, USAID's Higher Education Solutions Network—a \$25 million per year program—partners with African and U.S. higher education institutions, using science, technology and engineering to educate future leaders and research solutions for the greatest challenges in development. To further expand YALI, USAID will establish regional hubs to enhance leadership and ...

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

Welcome to the USAU Youth Newsletter for September and October! In this edition, we'll highlight U.S. President Obama's **Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI)**, with information on how the U.S. government is expanding the program for the benefit of African Youth. Read more on pages 1 and 2. Want some hand tools to effectively run your NGO for greater impact? We'll share information on how you can partner with others non-profit organizations to help achieve your objectives as well as spur change in your community. Read more in our "*USAU Youth Library*" on page 2. On page 4, we feature an article by Awa I. Ndah, a young social entrepreneur, on assessing the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** as a **Politico-Economic Engagement and Advocacy Process toward the Betterment of Youth as Development Assets**. In the "*Spotlight On*" section on page 8, we'll introduce you to the **Youth Initiative for Sustainable Human Development in Africa (YiSHDA)**, a youth-led non-profit that works in the areas of health, education, environment and business development. In the "*Word to the Wise*" section, we spoke with Ambassador Michael Battle, the outgoing U.S. Ambassador to the AU and Permanent Representative to the UNECA. In the interview, he shared his thoughts on how the U.S. government is working closely with the AU in advancing the continental youth agenda. Find out more on page 9. This month's "*Did You Know*" section will discuss what is missing in Africa's technology development cluster. As always, please share your thoughts with us on Twitter (@US\_AU) and our USAU Youth Corner on Facebook!

Happy Reading!

training opportunities in Africa and better leverage over \$200 million in ongoing youth programs and initiatives, such as university partnerships and vocational training, on the continent.

Other departments and government agencies have reoriented their programs and strategies to contribute to the goal of empowering and providing opportunities for youth in Africa. The Department of Labor, for example, is investing in efforts to promote safe youth employment and business opportunities as alternatives to child labor, including a new \$3 million program in Uganda to educate and train youth for quality jobs. The U.S. African Development Foundation (USADF) is investing \$5 million in training and placing thousands of Somali youth in paid internships and jobs, in addition to supporting small business start-ups.

YALI participants have leveraged this support and gone on to start youth-driven organizations and networks, advise their governments, and establish new and vibrant businesses – all showcasing the extraordinary talent and promise of the young leaders who are transforming the African continent and their communities.

Source: [YALI website](#)

### LEADERSHIP CORNER:

"The key to successful leadership today is influence, not authority."

— Kenneth Blanchard

### USAU Youth Corner on Facebook

Get in touch with us! Your voice counts!  
Engage with us on subjects or topics that matter to you!  
Join together in addressing the continent's challenges!  
Stay linked with us on the Facebook page:

["USAU Youth Corner"](#)

## USAU Youth Library



**Book:** The NGO Handbook

**Author:** Hilary Binder-Aviles, Mosaica's Senior Consultant

### Extract:

"People and communities are the heart of why an NGO exists. Regardless of the issues they address, all NGOs were created to make people's lives better and communities stronger - yet, NGOs can be more than humanitarian organizations to ease suffering. They can also be empowerment organizations to spur people to realize their aspirations for better lives and communities."

"Their mandate is to promote the public interest and serve the public good rather than to make a profit or advance the interests of a narrow group of individuals."

"An NGO cannot achieve its vision for a better society on its own. Community needs are too numerous and society's problems are too complex. Your NGO needs to work with other NGOs and your government to accomplish your goals."

"An NGO needs money to pay salaries, buy supplies and fund programs. As a small, poorly funded NGO, how do you find the resources to do all these things? You do them by building relationships with three sources of funding: Foundations, Corporations/businesses, and Individuals."

Read more [here](#).

Octavio Diogo



Opportunities  
straight ahead

### The UN-Habitat call for application

The UN-Habitat is calling for applicants to attend the World Urban Forum 7 (WUF7) in Colombia in March 2014. The Forum will be held under the theme “Urban Equity in Development – Cities for Life.”

The Seventh session of the World Urban Forum will bring together some of the most committed “City Changers” from both the North and the South. It will be a platform to create new networks and partnerships, as well as strengthen existing ones, with a meaningful impact on equity and development. Participants will gain new awareness about the role that cities, countries, international agencies and development partners can play in advancing an equity agenda, while sharing knowledge and best practices.

**Registration for WUF7 is free of charge.** All WUF7 participants must be registered individually in order to receive their accreditation and full access to the WUF7 venue. Registration must be completed in advance through the WUF7 website.

Online registration opened on July 17, 2013 and will close on March 16, 2014. For more information on WUF7, click [here](#).

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### Call for Papers: International Conference on Gender in Focus: (New) Trends in Media

The Communication and Society Research Center invites interested individuals to submit proposals for a paper, panel, or poster presentation to the upcoming International Conference entitled “Gender in Focus: (New) Trends in Media.”

Deadline: **February 15, 2014**

**Eligibility & Criteria:** Applicants around the world can participate in this conference. The official language of the conference is English.

The mission of the event is to serve as a forum to discuss ideas, experiences, and research on gender and media, bringing together social sciences researchers, NGOs representatives, and media professionals.

Learn more about the conference [here](#)

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### Multimedia Journalism (Broadcast Journalism Course)

All eligible journalists are invited to submit applications for a broadcast journalism course offered by Radio Netherland Training Centre (RNTC), sponsored by the Netherlands Fellowship Program (NFP).

The course will deepen understandings on issues dealing with Social Conflict and Cohesion (2014) and Food Security (2015), as well as the role of a broadcast journalist in covering them. It will reinforce the journalistic and teamwork skills required to prepare, research, and carry out broadcast and multimedia journalism assignments, using digital recording, editing equipment, and the internet both as a resource and as a publishing medium.

Learn more [here](#)

## DID YOU KNOW ... LET'S DISCUSS ON FACEBOOK:

### How technology can help lifting lives ?

Did you know that...

Peace Corps workers developed an application to aid rural patients?

Former and current Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) have come together to bring technology to rural patients in low-income countries with a computer program that tells patients what medicines are available at their local clinics.

The program called "MedLink" began as an idea of Peace Corps Community Health Outreach Volunteer Aimee Edmondo, who was serving in South Africa. Edmondo submitted her idea to the Peace Corps Innovation Challenge, a program which asks PCVs worldwide to use what they know about communities in the developing world to identify problems that can be solved using public data, existing computer applications, and other resources. The solutions should be available to the public at no charge.

"MedLink" was recently highlighted at a White House "Champions of Change" event. The White House created "Champions of Change" to feature Americans who do extraordinary things to inspire people in their communities. Learn more about this amazing app [here!](#)

Information sourced from the U.S. State Department Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP).

### LET'S DISCUSS:

How is technology in your country helping to save lives? In your opinion, what is still missing from Africa's technology development cluster?

Share your point of view online on Facebook: (page name) USAU Youth Corner

### TIP OF THE MONTH:

#### How to Overcome Idea-to-idea Syndrome

Most ideas never fully happen. It's a sad truth.

Yes, you may conceive something brilliant, yet, great execution is rare.

Without sound leadership, our natural creative tendencies become obstacles. Idealists, driven by a passion for what is right and good, are especially susceptible to obstacles that obstruct our progress. ...

Continue reading [here](#).

## Assessing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as an Opportunity for Politico-Economic Engagement and Advocacy toward the Advancement of Youth as Development Assets



*Awa I. Ndah is the Founder and Executive Director of Impact Creators and the co-Founder and Country Coordinator of the African Youth Trainer's Network. He's a bilingual non-profit management trainer/consultant, social entrepreneur, leadership/career coach, writer, and motivational speaker with more than 6 years of professional experience. He has worked, consulted, volunteered with several Cameroonian and international civil society organizations, youth groups/forums, and technical and financial partners from all around the world. Passionate about the educational, technical and professional development and contributions of young people, and civil society in general, he has been awarded for his social contributions in Cameroon by AIESEC and JCI (Junior Chamber International) and has been an Atlas Corps Finalist and World Economic Forum "Young Global Leaders" nominee.*

The Member States of the United Nations (UN) first acknowledged the importance of youth in 1965 when they endorsed the *Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples*. Two decades later, the UN General Assembly observed 1985 as the International Year of Youth, with the theme "*Participation, Development and Peace*." Twenty-five years later, at the global launch of the International Year of Youth on August 12, 2010, at the UN Headquarters, the contributions of young people to development and peace were celebrated. The UN Secretary-General (UNSG) Ban Ki-Moon said, "*Youth should be given a chance to take an active part in the decision-making at local, national and global levels.*" The above shows how important the participation and contribution of youth toward their own betterment, and the world at large, has become crucial for development efforts at the local, national and international levels.

Many young people remain marginalized from social and economic opportunities, with limited access to essential resources, particularly education. Youth are among the most vulnerable of all persons the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) aims to reach. Inter alia, the setbacks from a lack of education, maternal mortality, HIV/AIDS, unemployment, and environmental degradation on young people, especially girls, are far-reaching. This is because many young people often lack access to adequate information, schooling, basic social amenities and basic rights, and these are often overlooked in national development agendas. Therefore, the inclusion of young people into initiatives geared toward any national or international development is crucial to ensuring a successful and sustainable outcome for all.

The UN, its Member States, and world leaders drafted and adopted the Millennium Declaration during the 55th session of the UN General Assembly. In this act, they committed their countries to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and set out time bound development goals on meeting the needs of the world's poorest. These goals, to be achieved by 2015, formed the basis for what are now known as the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which have been broken down into 21 quantified targets that are measured by 60 indicators.

I believe that despite the consequences of the financial downturn, local, national and international leaders and partners are working very hard to increase the role young people can play in decision making arenas. The MDGs have increased the visibility, participation and contribution of youth in many national and international gatherings. Global campaigns have been organized and several are ongoing, in an effort to mobilize development actors to stop seeing youth as liabilities, but instead as development partners. MDG 8 highlights this urgent call for collaboration. The AU's African Youth Charter is a glaring example of how youth in Africa have been given a spot but still need resources to effectively play their role. The "*African Youth Conference on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*," which took place November 12-16, 2012 in Nairobi, aimed to support ...

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## Assessing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as an Opportunity for Politico-Economic Engagement and Advocacy toward the of Advancement of Youth as Development Assets

African youth so they can become partners in the development of the Post-2015 Agenda, so they can take responsibility and ownership in building the “*Future We Want in Africa*.”

YOUTHPOLICY.ORG's<sup>1</sup> Overview of National Youth Policies states that “*as of January 2013, 99 of 198 countries, (roughly 50%) have a current youth policy, and an additional 56 countries (28%) are revising their existing or, in a few cases, developing their first national youth policy. A total of 43 countries (22%) have no youth policy (yet) - of those, 17 are in Africa, 12 in Asia, 9 in Europe and 5 in the Americas.*” Obviously, the existence of a national youth policy does not necessarily mean that it is being implemented – or that it is particularly good for young people. However, the place youth currently occupy in the UNSG’s Five-Year Action Agenda and the appointment of Ahmad Alhindawi of Jordan as the UNSG’s Envoy on Youth are vivid indications that the MDGs have increased the role youth in line with development actions.

The Youth 21 Building for Change - *High Level Panel on Youth towards Establishing a UN Permanent Forum on Youth Issues* and the upcoming UN World Youth Conference (UN WYC) in Sri Lanka in 2014 are more indications that youth have actually taken center stage in the processes leading up to the Post-2015 Development Framework. The UN WYC 2014 will focus on “strengthening youth in decision making processes in the development and implementation of the Post-2015 development agenda,” as the Framework requires a youth-centered process. Further peripheralization of youth the world over, particularly those from Africa, from the adoption, implementation and follow-up of the post-2015 discussions will be unacceptable.

<sup>1</sup> *Global community and knowledge based on youth policy, understood as policies pertaining to young people’s rights and realities.*

*[Awa I. Ndah](#)*

*Founder and Executive Director, Impact Creators  
Cameroon*

### SHARE IT WITH US

#### Why do you volunteer?

To celebrate this year’s International Volunteer Day, on December 5th, the USAU Youth Newsletter is interested to share the volunteer experiences of our readers. Please fill out questionnaire online [Here](#)

Do submit your responses by November 5 and be sure to encourage your friends and fellow volunteers to share their experiences as well!

**Please note:** The USAU Youth Newsletter Team always publishes responses in line with the standard practice of maintaining gender and regional balance. Thanks!

Also, don’t forget to visit our Mission website at [www.usau.usmission.gov](http://www.usau.usmission.gov) and subscribe to our bi-monthly newsletter at <http://www.usau.usmission.gov/youth-news.html>.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:



### UN-Habitat World Urban Forum 7 at Medellin, Columbia: Applications Open!

Applications are now open for interested participants to attend the World Urban Forum 7 taking place at Medellin, Columbia from April 5 - 11, 2014. The World Urban Forum is an international conference organized by the UN-HABITAT to discuss issues related to sustainable urban development. The WUF7 theme is "Urban Equity in Development - Cities for Life."

Registration is free of charge. All WUF7 participants must be registered individually to get their accreditation and to have access to the WUF7 venue. Registration must be done in advance through the WUF7 website. Online registration **will close on 16 March 2014**. Register [here](#)

More info [here](#)



## NextGen Social Sciences in Africa

The Next Generation Social Sciences in Africa program is funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York.

The program features three distinct competitive fellowship opportunities for early-career social science faculty who hold positions in accredited colleges and universities in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda

All eligible applicants are invited to submit applications for Next Generation Fellowship Program which aims to develop research opportunities and skills, obtain doctoral degrees, and participate in robust research communities. The purpose of this program is to encourage innovative research on peace, security, and development topics, moving the boundaries of scholarship and research by exploring concrete linkages between these themes.

The next application deadline is **December 1, 2013**.

More info [here](#)

### Esther Ottley Fellowship Program

Interested students are invited to apply for the Esther Ottley Fellowship Program, which offers support for PhD degree level studies at Howard University's Graduate School.

**Benefits:** Full tuition (not including fees) and a stipend of \$20,000 for the 2014-2015 academic year.

**Deadline:** March 14, 2014

Read more [here](#)

## SPOTLIGHT ON:



### Youth Initiative for Sustainable Human Development in Africa

Youth Initiative for Sustainable Human Development in Africa (YiSHDA) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization inspired by the impact that love, unity and harmony can have on young people's lives. The idea of YiSHDA is to have a broad-based youth organization that addresses salient issues that border on young people's development. YiSHDA also encourages discipline among young people by instilling in them the spirit of patriotism, moral values, and loyalty in an effort to raise responsible citizens; thereby promoting sustainable development for all people in Nigeria.

YiSHDA's mission is to advocate for policies and programs that have the potential to positively impact the lives of young people, particularly in the areas of health, education, environment, and business development. In brief, the organization aims to inspire and educate young people by building their leadership skills. YiSHDA believes that young people have the right to express their opinions and put their initiatives into practice.

YiSHDA brings together professionals with a passion for additional hands-on experience in business development, HIV/AIDS and reproductive health, grassroots mobilization, and youth development. The organization provides these professionals and other stakeholders with a platform that allows them to participate in the development of Nigeria and Africa at large.

#### YiSHDA's Objectives:

- Contribute to the development of Nigeria and Africa at large by impacting the lives of the youth;
- Advocate for things that will guarantee moral standards in the life of young people; and
- Promote sustainable development for all people in society

#### Focal Areas

- Community Development
- Education/Capacity Building
- ICT for Development
- Environment/Health
- Business Development
- Leadership Skills

YiSHDA works through its core values, such as resourcefulness, to provide the leadership and guidance needed to manage young people's development of empathy, innovation, and skills.

To learn more, contact YiSHDA, c/o Mr. Muhammed Ibn Saheeb  
at: [yishdanigeria@rocketmail.com](mailto:yishdanigeria@rocketmail.com) and [www.yishdanigeria.wordpress.com](http://www.yishdanigeria.wordpress.com).

(Source: YiSHDA External Relations)

## A WORD TO THE WISE :

Dr. Michael A. Battle,  
former U.S. Ambassador to the African Union



*In September, Ambassador Michael Battle will complete his 4 year term as the U.S. Ambassador to the African Union and Permanent Representative to the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). During his tenure Ambassador Battle deepened the U.S. – AU relationship in several areas of mutual interest, to include youth empowerment, economic development, and peace and security. Before he departed USAU, Ambassador Battle granted the USAU Newsletter team an interview, where he discussed his views on the development of the AU over the last 4 years and closed with some “wise words” to his successor, Ambassador Reuben Brigety.*

**USAU Youth:** Thank you for taking the time to speak with us.

**Ambassador Michael A. Battle :** My pleasure and thank you also for the good work so far.

**Ambassador, you have been working with the AU Commission for 4 years now, in your opinion, can you tell us what you feel has been the organization’s greatest improvement over this period?**

I think the greatest improvement has been the AU’s renewed relationship with the UN Security Council (UNSC). The AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) and UNSC and have been working together in an almost seamless fashion over the last two and half years. I feel this is because the UN has developed a tremendous respect for the work of the AUPSC, and conversely, the AUPSC has cooperated more greatly with the UNSC. The reason (why) that’s important is that, about 70% of what the UNSC deals with, in terms of peace and security, happens to be issues that are directly impacting the African continent. So, given that a large amount of the UNSC’s agenda is in Africa, it’s fundamentally important that these two Councils work collaboratively. I think that probably has been the most significant improvement.

Additionally, there’s also been an improvement in the level of engagement the AU has in terms of raising its own funds to address African issues. For example, in the last famine and drought in the Horn of Africa, the African continent raised over \$350 million to address the famine. In the lead-up to the intervention in Mali, African nations donated \$50 million to support the efforts in Mali. In the past, what happened is the donor community, the external international community brought forth funding for African projects. Now, the African continent is saying, we need the external community but we also going to do things ourselves and I think that is significantly important and we can never ever underestimate the impact of Africans responding to African issues and crises.

**Following the signing of the U.S.-AU Partnership MOU in February 2013, what can we expect from the strengthened relationship between these two entities? How will African youth benefit?**

You can expect a more robust relationship in terms of planning, coordination, and organization in U.S contributions to the African continent and in the capacity of the U.S. to strengthen AU abilities to address some of the critical issues on the continent. Specifically, with regard to youth, we’re planning to fund several positions, at USAU and the AU, that will work exclusively on the roll-out of President Obama’s Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). We have already secured funding through USAID that will allow us to support this initiative. So, you’ll have an American working from the U.S. context and an African working in the AU context, specifically on this youth initiative.

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## A WORD TO THE WISE

The President talks about building a cadre of African young people who will be engaged with the U.S., not only in terms of seminars and trainings, but also in working with large U.S. corporations and universities who are then coming back to the African continent to train other young people. This “train the trainer” scenario creates what they call a “multiplier effect.” The hope is that we will not just bring African youth to the U.S. and then have them assimilated into the U.S. market, but they will come to the U.S., learn, be trained, be developed and then come back to the African continent better equipped to further what they are doing.

**The U.S. Mission to the AU (USAU) was the first diplomatic mission to host an exchange program between African and American youth – why did you decide to create this program? When can we expect other diplomat missions to give similar opportunities to youth on the African continent?**

To the first part of the question: the reason USAU wanted to be the first is that we thought it will serve as a great example. If USAU was able to have an African youth integrated in our staff during our staff meetings, working with the AU and USAID, it would validate that a program like this could work, it would validate that the process was a good process. When we can expect the same kind of program in other embassies, I don't have a timeline for that but I do have a hope that, once we have our officer from USAU connected to the focal point at the AU on YALI implementation, we should then find it much easier to convince other embassies that this is the good thing to do.

**Dr. Reuben Brigety has been named as the new U.S. Ambassador to the AU, what wise words can you offer him as he works with the AU, in hopes to empower and engage youth across the African continent?**

I know that he comes to this job with a tremendous amount of commitment and a profoundly deep appreciation from the African continent. What I would say to say to him, (is what I have already said to him, but I will repeat it to you) is that the relationship the U.S. government now has with the African Union is extremely meaningful, it has a tremendous potential for growth and investment and I would encourage him to work closely with his staff, people who have already shown an ability to interact with the African Union's leadership. I would also encourage him to continue to work very strongly with the countries that are in Addis, especially with embassies who are also members of the UNSC, to continue to work on that relationship between the AUPSC and UNSC countries. And, I would encourage him to enjoy himself because this is a wonderful place of tremendous opportunity for engagement and it requires a person to enjoy the enthusiasm that one can see on the African continent. He is leading USAU at a great time, as much of the foundation of the U.S.-AU relationship has already been laid. Ambassador Brigety now has the capacity to build strongly on that foundation and to do phenomenal things, even beyond what I can imagine. He has the capacity to work with a number of nations on the African continent, with members of the international community – all of whom have already developed relationships with our mission. Additionally, he can now expand our work with the UN to other agencies beyond just UNECA. I'm also very pleased with him coming because I know him personally, I know his background, his enthusiasm, and I know that he will approach the AU with a tremendous sense of passion and devotion which will ensure he does a wonderful job.

Interviewed by Octavio Diogo

## U.S. MISSION TO THE AFRICAN UNION

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### SPECIAL CONGRATULATIONS TO:



Malawi's President Joyce Banda for launching her country's National Youth Policy on August 12, after installing the National Youth Council last year. Malawi ratified the African Youth Charter on August 13, 2010. Last November, President Banda assisted the Youth Conference Forum with its request to revise the National Youth Policy, which led to a stronger commitment from the Minister of Youth Development and Sports. Now, Malawian youth are looking toward the policy's implementation. Hopefully, other African countries will follow Malawi's great example!

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The USAU Youth is always interested to hear from you!

Please send your articles, announcements, and/or information on any subject matter you would like to see in subsequent editions of the newsletter to [USAUyouth@state.gov](mailto:USAUyouth@state.gov), and please don't miss out on our monthly discussions on Facebook. Thank you.



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### CONTACT

**TEL:** +251 - 11 - 130 - 6794

**Email:** [USAUyouth@state.gov](mailto:USAUyouth@state.gov)

**Facebook (page name):** USAU Youth Corner

**Website:** [www.usau.usmission.gov](http://www.usau.usmission.gov)

**Twitter:** @US\_AU

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### EDITORIAL DETAILS

**Editor-in-Chief:**

Octavio H. Diogo  
*AU Youth Intern, USAU*

**Chief Editorial Advisor:**

Jasmine White  
*Political and Public Diplomacy Officer  
(USAU)*

**Translations:**

Aristid Somda

**Design/Layout:**

Lina Mohammed  
*Public Diplomacy Assistant (USAU)*

**Contributors:**

African Union Youth Volunteers  
Youth Around the World

**Web Mistress:**

Lina Mohammed  
*Public Diplomacy Assistant (USAU)*