



PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL



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**IT TAKES
A VILLAGE
TO RAISE
A CHILD**

aymnetwork.org





The African Youth Mentorship Network (AYMN) Foundation aims to inspire, develop and empower African youth through education and mentorship programmes. Our goal is to build emotionally intelligent, socially responsible and self confident citizens.

WHY AYMN NOW?

Navigating adolescence is daunting, considering that youth in this age bracket have a plethora of issues to contend with. The ubiquity of information does not make this transition any easier. The African Youth Mentorship Network (AYMN) seeks to become the village that brings together a multitude of partners who will shape and drive the Foundation's vision of raising well rounded citizens who will make a difference in their respective societies. To complement the "village approach", AYMN is guided by "ubuntu", a Southern African humanist philosophy that means "I am, because you are". Ubuntu can be described as the capacity, in an African culture,

to express compassion and is grounded in the understanding that the community (village in AYMN's case) is a key building block of society.

It is becoming more difficult to raise teenagers to become responsible citizens because the village concept has faded away, parents have become busier and there has been an increase in single parent households - to name but a few. Through its motto "It takes a village to raise a child, AYMN recognizes that parenting in all its facets is a shared responsibility - a communal affair - not just the concern of parents and guardians, but of the village.

In recognizing that fathers play a crucial role in shaping their children and specifically young men, AYMN developed the BECOME programme.

BECOME PROGRAMME - BRIDGING THE GAP

The overall objective of the BECOME programme is to empower African adolescent boys by educating and inspiring them to become emotionally intelligent, socially responsible and self-confident individuals capable of making meaningful contributions to their communities. BECOME is a 6-year mentorship programme that seeks to pair young adolescent boys with mentors and actively equip them with skills and tools that will help them BECOME better men in their societies. The programme will host an annual adolescent camp for participants from several African countries at any one time. BECOME's inaugural camp will focus on 20 boys from five African countries, with the long-term goal of hosting adolescent boys and camps in every peaceful country in Africa.

Young people require relevant and empowering experiences if they are to be active participants in an increasingly knowledge-based and globalized society. Youth transformation demands that they are equipped with skills and competencies that enable them to be engaged thinkers and doers who demonstrate 21st-century citizenship. These skills and competencies include personal management and leadership, effective communication and collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation as well as social responsibility, cultural, global and environmental awareness. Activities that enable the development and nurturing of these skills will be part of their mentorship programme at every phase of the curriculum.

Developed by seasoned educators, career coaches, motivational speakers, philosophers and other partners, BECOME's curriculum is envisaged to cover the concepts in the table that follows.

FATHERS - THE MISSING LINK

Father absence is associated with adverse consequences for children and women. A father's role has traditionally been defined as that of

provider or breadwinner, having responsibility as well for moral oversight over children, and gender role modelling (Lamb, 2000). In traditional African families, the father still constitutes the authority figure and consequently, shoulders the major responsibilities for the members of his family. "Children are not necessarily disadvantaged by the absence of their father, but they are disadvantaged when they belong to a household without access to the social position, emotional labour and financial support that is provided by men". In many parts of the world, a father who acknowledges and supports his children confers social values on them, enabling children to become members of a wider circle of family and kin. Men also provide a household with protection which includes shielding women and children from potential exploitation and abuse by other men.

Indeed, a significant number of men living in urban areas attest to not having access to good role models whom they would emulate, mainly because many fathers in most of the urban regions in Africa are absent from their families, leaving a vacuum in the family front. Men who never knew their fathers or who experienced violence, neglect or abuse at the hands of their fathers, communicate deep sadness about their experience and a longing to have had a father or a better father than they had, and to be themselves better fathers to their children.

There has been a lot of emphasis on gender related support mechanisms for the girlchild to the extent that the boychild has been overlooked. Engaging men and boys in supporting various types of healthy masculinities including full equality for women and girls is critical for many reasons, and it also positively impacts the lives of boys; as they transition into manhood. Today, there is a sizeable breadth of research on men and boys - particularly on health, education, sexuality, masculinities and gender equality producing positive changes in their attitudes, perceptions, and behaviours. It is in this light that BECOME seeks to facilitate mentorship opportunities to adolescent boys towards improved self-esteem, violence prevention, civic responsibility, gender equity and sustainable lifestyles.

WHY PARTNER WITH AYMN?

Apart from contributing to the overall objectives of AYMN and BECOME, partnering with AYMN not only offers unique brand visibility but also opportunities to interact with like-minded individuals building synergies over mutually beneficial interests.

BRAND RECOGNITION

Now more than ever, customers are concerned by what companies care about. What better way to connect with them than by partnering with the AYMN through BECOME and know that your brand is making a difference in building better communities through a mentorship programme.

INVEST IN TOMORROW

Over time we envisage designing similar programmes for girls and young women. This represents an opportunity to connect with Africa's biggest human resource through a continental platform such as AYMN.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employees, like customers, continually seek to identify themselves with causes that matter the most to them. Partnering with AYMN will offer opportunities of better engagement between the company and its employees which can increase employee retention and satisfaction.

TACKLE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN A UNIQUE WAY

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) present businesses with a unique opportunity to have an impact in areas that drive long-term sustainable business growth while at the same time addressing some of today's most pressing challenges. BECOME is one of the creative avenues to understand the life course through mentoring, and becomes an advocacy tool to draw attention to the SDGs.

HOW YOU CAN BECOME A PARTNER WITH AYMN

From direct financial support to providing goods and services, there are many ways to contribute. AYMN is seeking global and local partners to:

- Underwrite the cost of organizing the camps and all materials that are needed to ensure that BECOME is a success.
- Sponsor curriculum modules.
- Provide supporting resources towards the programme.
- Sponsor continuous youth empowerment training and enforcement programmes.
- Sponsor a research student for a degree on the subject matter.
- Coach a cohort.
- Mentor a youth.

CONTACT

To find out more about how to support AYMN, please contact:

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