

Chapter 7

Models, Developments, and Effects of Transborder Youth Volunteer Exchange Programs in Eastern and Southern Africa

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Introduction

The people of eastern and southern African are connected by a shared socioeconomic and political history. Yet, a dichotomy resulting from arbitrary colonial chiseling continues to be reproduced through parochial nationalism and feeble integration efforts of the African Union and the various regional integration initiatives such as Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC). While SADC and EAC invoke shared history in their respective regional integration efforts and have clear political frameworks for the same (cf. EAC, 1999; SADC, 2008), a sense of regional identity is shared more by political leaders than by the average person (Kasaija, 2004; Kornegay, 2006). This is partly because 'leaders have not carried the people along with them on the integration journey' (Kasaija, 2004, p. 21). Further, shared social, political, economic experiences and ecological challenges have not been sufficiently mobilized in creating an African identity (Appiah, 1993). As such, instead of progress toward integration, pervasive incidences of xenophobia such as in South Africa suggest degeneration and African integration remains a dream yet to be meaningful to everyday lives and perspectives of ordinary citizens (Okoth, 2013; Southern Africa Trust & AFS Interculture, n.d.).

But an identity that fosters integration, as Brubaker and Cooper (2000) argue, can be socially constructed and used politically to get people to understand themselves, see themselves as similar to one another, and to pursue shared interests. Studies using social constructivist perspectives show that social identities can be

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'embedded and constructed in actions' such as transnational or cross-border volunteering (Sanchez-Mazas & Klein, 2003, p. 4; Stürmer & Kampmeier, 2003). The people-to-people interactions inherent in volunteer programs can aid formation of bridging social capital¹ (Lough, Sherraden, & McBride, 2014); development of value consensus, mutual understanding and purpose, accommodation of difference (Caprara, Mati, Obadare, & Perold, 2012; Kimenyi & Kimenyi, 2011; Lough & Mati, 2012; Ouma & Dimaras, 2013); and creation of a regional identity that could foster regional integration efforts (Mati & Perold, 2012; Stürmer & Kampmeier, 2003).

Despite this evidence, volunteer programs remain largely untapped for African integration purposes. The 2011 introduction of African Union Youth Volunteer Corps by the African Union in addition to a few other South-South African volunteer programs in the last decade are therefore welcome developments. However, such nascent programs are still of limited scope. Moreover, there is still a dearth of literature on the contributions of intra-African transborder volunteering (especially youth) to Africa's integration and development goals. Even where it exists, such literature is mainly practitioner oriented.

This chapter draws from a comparative evaluation of two transborder youth volunteers exchange programs in eastern and southern Africa.² The programs are Canada World Youth South-South Young Leaders in Action (CWY YLA) and Southern Africa Trust (SAT) SayXchange in South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Kenya. The principal research questions addressed are as follows: (1) what are some of the models for youth volunteer exchange programs active in eastern and southern Africa?; (2) to what extent do experiences of volunteers, host communities, and organization's participants corroborate the predetermined impacts of some of these programs?; (3) what are the contributions of these programs to African regional integration and development imperatives?

The chapter has four sections. The first section provides an overview of existing volunteer exchange models in eastern and southern Africa. For the purposes of this chapter, existing models are categorized on a North/South binary of volunteers' origin in relation to where they serve. The second section gives a brief description of Social Analysis System (SAS)² methodology used in evaluating impacts of the two programs. Evidence and analysis in the third section suggest that in addition to their empowerment potential, interactive social action processes inherent in these programs are viable for inciting shared identity consciousness and social capital formation that aids Africa's development and integration efforts. On the basis of this evidence, the chapter concludes that efforts to integrate Africans should explore the utilization of such initiatives.

¹ Social capital is defined as 'norms and networks that enable people to act collectively' (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000, p. 225).

² The chapter draws from a study led by this author through a VOSESA and Canada World Youth partnership, funded by IDRC available at http://www.vosesa.org.za/reports/120625_Youth_volunteer_exchange_programmes.pdf.

Volunteer Exchange Models

Africans have strong traditions of volunteering for social and political change (Caprara et al., 2012; Mati, Wu, El Taraboulsi, & Edwards, 2014; Patel, Perold, Mohamed, & Carapinha, 2007; Patel, 2003; Wilkinson-Maposa & Fowler, 2009; Wilkinson-Maposa, Fowler, Oliver-Evans, & Mulenga, 2005). Most volunteer informally³ where activities typically involve interpersonal contacts between servers and beneficiaries at local community levels. Informal volunteerism is often a survivalist mutual aid response to pervasive state inability to meet individual and community needs (Caprara et al., 2012; Perold & Graham, 2013). In these situations, the socioeconomic profile of volunteers corresponds closely with those of beneficiaries. This contrasts with the volunteer profile in industrialized societies where servers are likely to be from privileged socioeconomic backgrounds (Caprara et al., 2012; Everatt, Habib, Maharaj, & Nyar, 2005; Graham, Patel, Ulriksen, Moodley, & Mavungu, 2013; Leigh et al., 2011; Patel et al., 2007).

The advent of formal volunteer-involving organizations in the last few decades, coupled with advances in information and communications technology, has led to new formal models and practices of volunteering in Africa as elsewhere in the world (VOSESA, 2011). Notwithstanding various other categorizations, viewed through a North/South dichotomy of origin and direction of volunteer's action, the dominant formal international volunteer programs in eastern and southern Africa—including the youth involving ones—fall under North-South, South-North, and South-South models.⁴

The North-South model involves sending volunteers from developed to developing countries (Allum, 2012; VOSESA, 2013; Wijeysekera, 2011). This historically conventional model of many Northern volunteer sending agencies (Fulbrook, 2007) emerged in colonial and/or neocolonial and Cold War contexts. At its worst, the North-South model is condemned as 'imperialist, paternalistic charity, volunteer tourism, or a self-serving quest for career and personal development on the part of well-off Westerners' (Devereux, 2008, p. 358; Healey, 2010; Roberts 2004). The North-South model can be marred with hierarchical relationships and supply driven volunteer placement that undermines potential for reciprocity and mutual benefit⁵ (Ouma & Dimaras, 2013; Perold et al., 2013). Sometimes, like some other development interventions, the North-South model fails to acknowledge, underestimates, and undermines the agency of individuals in the global South 'to bring about social change by themselves, on their own terms' (Green, 2000

³ Unpaid work carried out for a charitable, social, or political purpose in an informal network of extended families, friends, and neighbours (Taniguchi, 2012).

⁴ For example, volunteering can be modelled on basis of formality (formal versus informal) space of interaction between servers and beneficiaries (virtual/online or physical). For this chapter youth volunteer programmes involve young people in stipended organisational schemes that benefit host communities, organisations, and volunteers.

⁵ Reciprocity "represents the general idea that doing good is tied to the expectation that it will be compensated by future rewards" (Manatschal & Freitag, 2014, p. 209)

p. 70; Devereux, 2008; Ouma & Dimaras, 2013). Despite these criticisms, there are multiple positive contributions of North–South programs. Part of the problem with the classic North–South programs, however, emanates from the fact that the most prominent ones are run by Northern Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) whose proximity ‘to wider political and policy processes, such as foreign policy objectives’ of sending countries creates tensions over their accountability (Devereux, 2008).

In redressing some deficiencies of the North–south model, two recent adaptations in international volunteer programs (South–North and South–South) emphasizing reciprocity, skills sharing, and recognition of Southern capacity have evolved. Under the South–North model, Southern volunteers are placed in developed countries with a view to reciprocal skills sharing and development. South–South programs involve placement of Southern volunteers in another developing country (Fulbrook, 2007). The South–South model is the focus of the current chapter.

While objectives of South–South programs include skills sharing, reciprocity, mutual learning, and understanding, a central goal is fostering development cooperation among developing countries and utilization of the agency of poor Southern communities in their own development (VOSESA, 2013). Evidence from South–South programs suggests that they are challenging the dominance of the North in aid and development especially in fostering youth empowerment, community development, and regional integration (cf. FK-Norway, 2009). Further, South–South contributions are helping reduce the ethical pitfalls of instrumentalizing southern communities as only useful in providing privileged Northern volunteers with opportunities for gaining experience in development work (Plewes & Stuart, 2007). As such, though recent, the South–South youth volunteer exchange model has been adopted by among others, Canada World Youth and Southern African Trust whose impacts are focus of this chapter. The two initiatives exemplify an emergent phenomenon worth evaluating with a view to bringing to the surface the contributions of South–South volunteer programs in Africa’s development, especially, their promise to build integration through volunteering.

Canada World Youth South-South Young Leaders in Action (CWY YLA) and Southern African Trust (SAT) SayXchange: Founded in Canada in 1971, CWY is an international not-for-profit organization focused on providing educational opportunities for youth aged 15–29 years in leadership for sustainable development. Among CWY programs is Youth Leaders in Action (YLA). YLA offers opportunities for youth between 18 and 24 years to volunteer, experience, and learn about another country, and at the same time, gain better understanding of their own countries and communities. YLA has a variety of North–South, South–North, and South–South exchanges. Instituted in 2009, the South–South version of YLA in Africa is a recent adaptation of a previously North–South program to localize development interventions. CWY works through partnerships with local NGOs in Kenya (Kijabe Environment Volunteers-KENVO), Mozambique (Youth Association for Development of Volunteer Service-AJUDE), South Africa (Volunteer Centre Cape Town), and Tanzania (Uvikiuta) who are given a grant to collaboratively run a reciprocal youth volunteer exchange between Kenya and Tanzania in East Africa, and

Mozambique and South Africa in Southern Africa. The novelty of CWY YLA is in blending the funding model of North–South programs, with emergent South–South models that leaves Southern partners running the show, a testament to growing sensitivity of Northern development actors to Southern capacity.

The partner organization in each participating country selects and trains nine volunteers, host families, and placement organizations and community. The selected volunteers are paired with nine others from a neighboring country who live with host families and work in local organizations involved in community development to form a cohort. Each cohort spends 3 months in one country before moving to another community in the partnered country to spend another 3 months. Host families and organizations receive a token honorarium for hosting costs.

SayXchange is a program of Southern African Trust (SAT)—an independent, nonprofit agency supporting deeper and wider regional engagement of citizens and their organizations in overcoming poverty in southern Africa. SAT complements SADC’s vision of a common future for all southern Africa people. SayXchange is an indigenous initiative started in 2010 in response to the 2008 xenophobic attacks in South Africa that is aimed at promoting regional integration by fostering a regional identity among young people in southern African. AFS Interculture (South Africa) and Associação Moçambicana para o Desenvolvimento da Família (AMODEFA) are the SayXchange implementing partners. SayXchange targets youth aged 18–25 years, whom they place in a community-based organization in another Southern African country. These volunteers live with a local host family; interact, work, and learn from host communities with a view to embrace diversity, oneness, and interdependence of humanity. In addition, volunteers are expected to learn leadership skills, active citizenship, and appreciate the value of volunteerism in building inclusive and cohesive communities. The program further aims to cultivate awareness of regional cultures and development issues.

The two programs operate on an underlying principle of reciprocity; involvement of volunteers; community-based host organizations and families in promotion of development cooperation and regional integration, skills sharing, and mutual learning. Though expected to have at least a high school qualification, no formal technical/work skills experience is required of youth volunteers in either program.

Social analysis systems: This study utilized Social Analysis Systems (SAS²) methodology. SAS² is a collaborative inquiry and social engagement process that applies qualitative and quantitative approaches in participatory experiential learning.⁶ Data was collected using group interviews that included self-reporting questions for volunteers, host families, and organizations. A total of 18 group interviews were conducted; that is, one group interview per participant category (volunteers, host families, and organizations) per program (CWYYLA and SAT-SayXchange) in each participating country (South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Kenya for CWY YLA; and South Africa and Mozambique for SAT SayXchange). The interviews were conducted between August and September 2011. The multilayered data

⁶For a detailed description of SAS,² see Chevalier (2008). For a full description of the specific SAS² tools utilised for this study, see Mati and Perold (2012).

sourcing was necessitated by the nested nature of interactions between program actors (volunteers, host families/communities, and organizations), especially the need to triangulate results from these categories.

SAS² does not measure whether programs are successful or not. Rather, it assumes that programs do have impacts on set objectives. Data collection exercises, in reality, are akin to ranking and prioritization of impacts. However, SAS² provides room for nuanced assessments as discussions enable explanations for various ratings to be made. Nonetheless, the methodology limits discussions to only what is identified and does not probe, for example, why other impacts are not prioritized or mentioned.

Findings and Discussion

Both programs were assessed for their contributions to friendship across borders, attitudes and values, knowledge/learning, skills, career/studies, and local action on volunteers and host families/communities using a similar data collection and analysis tool. Further analysis was done to determine the extent of impacts on specific aspects of volunteers' knowledge, skills, and attitude. In addition, the study assessed program impacts on host and partner organizations' effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and financial viability. In what follows, the findings and analysis of program impacts on volunteer and host families, followed by impacts on host organizations are presented.

Impacts on volunteers and host families: The main program impacts on volunteers and host families/communities were captured and analyzed using a free listing, sorting, and piling exercise aided by a *P'tit Bonhomme* helper with six different human body parts representing six possible impacts categorized as emotive (head=friendships across borders; heart=attitudes and values); cognitive (two hands=knowledge/learning and skills); and behavioral (two legs=career/studies and local community action). Volunteers and host families in separate group interviews at each site were asked to identify the two most important impacts their participation in the program or in hosting volunteers has had on them. Table 7.1 captures the distribution of mentions for each impact area.

The SAS² group discussions provided further nuances for the specific impacts mentioned and differences in the ratings as explained as follows.

Emotive (Friendships across borders and attitudes and values) impacts: Overall, emotive impacts—mentioned by 43.7% of volunteers and 40.8% by host families—were the second most mentioned impacts after cognitive impacts (mentioned by 49.4% of volunteers and 51.3% of host families). There is a strong relationship between cognitive and emotive impacts, and the two are mutually reinforcing. Specifically, interactions between people of diverse nationalities are a *sine qua non* for engendering learning about those that are different, recognition and acceptance of difference, but also commonalities. Such learning is empowering and can contribute to cultivation of a 'spirit of communal obligation' and enable individuals to

Table 7.1 Distribution of program impacts on volunteers and host families/communities

Helper impact area	% per impact area: volunteers	% per impact area: Host families	Helper impact area	% per impact area: volunteers	% per impact area: Host families
Friendships across borders (emotive)	29.9 (Average for all sites)	23.6 (Average for all sites)	Skills (cognitive)	17.4 (Average for all sites)	23.6 (Average for all sites)
CWY South Africa	50.0	50.0	CWY South Africa	0.0	0.0
CWY Mozambique	37.5	37.5	CWY Mozambique	12.5	12.5
CWY Tanzania	8.3	8.3	CWY Tanzania	37.5	37.5
CWY Kenya	20.8	20.8	CWY Kenya	29.2	29.2
SAYXCHANGE South Africa	37.5	0.0	SAYXCHANGE South Africa	12.5	50
SAYXCHANGE Mozambique	25.0	25.0	SAYXCHANGE Mozambique	12.5	12.5
Attitudes/values (emotive)	13.8 (Average for all sites)	17.2 (Average for all sites)	Career/Studies (Behavioural)	3.5 (Average for all sites)	1.4 (Average for all sites)
CWY South Africa	20.0	20.0	CWY South Africa	0.0	0.0
CWY Mozambique	12.5	12.5	CWY Mozambique	0.0	0.0
CWY Tanzania	4.2	4.2	CWY Tanzania	0.0	0.0
CWY Kenya	20.8	20.8	CWY Kenya	8.3	8.3
SAYXCHANGE South Africa	12.5	33.3	SAYXCHANGE South Africa	12.5	0.0
SAYXCHANGE Mozambique	12.5	12.5	SAYXCHANGE Mozambique	0.0	0.0
Knowledge/learning (cognitive)	32.0 (Average for all sites)	27.9 (Average for all sites)	Local/Regional Action (Behavioural)	3.5 (Average for all sites)	3.5 (Average for all sites)
CWY South Africa	30.0	30.0	CWY South Africa	0.0	0.0
CWY Mozambique	25.0	25.0	CWY Mozambique	12.5	12.5
CWY Tanzania	50.0	50.0	CWY Tanzania	0.0	0.0
CWY Kenya	12.5	12.5	CWY Kenya	8.3	8.3
SAYXCHANGE South Africa	25.0	0.0	SAYXCHANGE South Africa	0.0	0.0
SAYXCHANGE Mozambique	50.0	50	SAYXCHANGE Mozambique	0.0	0.0

'relate to others' (Devereux, 2008, p. 367). This is illustrated by a South African CWY volunteer who described his volunteering experience having significantly influenced his attitudes and values because he learnt that, with a little help from others, individual or societal challenges can be overcome. He thus appreciates the value of giving and volunteering. A Mozambican CWY volunteer indicated how living in South Africa in a community with so much racial segregation made him understand that South Africans were historically socialized by the apartheid system to be hostile to difference. Nonetheless, his experience also illustrates that intergroup trust can develop because, in his own words, an 'amazing host family accepted and treated' him as one of their own.

Reasons given for mention of friendship across borders and changes in values and attitude as key impacts from these programs are consistent with assumptions of interpersonal contacts and social identity theories (cf. Allport, 1954; Turner, 1982). These theories suggest positive effects from interpersonal contacts between people of different groups pursuing common goals. Such contacts contribute to reducing inaccurate perceptions of the 'other,' thereby increasing intergroup tolerance and understanding (Allport, 1954; Turner, 1982). Further, greater exposure to an 'out-group' provides opportunities not only for self-identity but also self-integration into external group because cognitive dissonance (Pitner, 2007) ensures that people converge only on shared superordinate goals (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Sherif, 1958). As we shall see later, pairing with another volunteer and living with a host family were the two program activities that intensified people-to-people interactions and endeared mutual understanding and accommodation.

A South African CWY volunteer illustrates such goal convergence when he stated: 'out there, everything is very different ... we were 18 ... no family members with us. We had to face whatever situation, relying on each other...this made me appreciate my colleagues even more.' Aided by closeness cultivated among participants, these experiences have been observed to generate reciprocity and trust—two forms of social capital—(Ouma & Dimaras, 2013; Torche & Valenzuela, 2011),⁷ and 'shared goals [that] produce friendly attitudes, mutual understanding, and increased tolerance toward out-group members, their ways of life, and cultures' (Ting-Toomey, 1999 cited in Lough & Mati, 2012, p. 2). Such bonds of trust and reciprocity were formed among volunteers and members of host communities as well as among volunteers in a cohort and serve as sources for mutual support, for instance, in learning a new language. Further, the cellular phone has aided the evolution of friendships beyond those made by immediate program actors, because the parents of volunteers reach out to host families to follow the progress of their children.

⁷Reciprocity is 'the type of social capital embedded in personal relations, is experienced as diffuse and taken for granted, and it is hardly universalizable or generalizable. Impersonal relations are those we establish with strangers ... The form of social capital embedded in this type of relation emerges from trust... transcends the particularism of personal relations, universalizing duties and obligations beyond those established by reciprocity' (Torche & Valenzuela, 2011, p. 182).

An added impact, as evidenced from Kenya and South Africa CWY volunteers and host family interviews, is the cultivation of bonding-type friendships and social capital. For volunteers from the same country, time spent together in a cohort offers opportunities for knowing each other; friendships blossom and continue long after volunteering. Arguably, such bonding-type social capital based on similarities of nationality can be potentially counterproductive to bridging, linking, and inclusivity (Portes, 1998; Putnam, 2000), and for our case, detrimental to regional integration goals. Nonetheless, the presence of bonding social capital does not necessarily preclude bridging (Caprara et al., 2012; McKenzie, 2008). As such, bonding is a positive potential spillover contribution to social cohesion at local/national levels. This is especially so, as we see next, when participants learn to embrace broader perspectives of humanity's interdependence and appreciation of difference.

Both CWY YLA and SAT SayXchange expect interactions between volunteers and host families/communities to, mutually and positively, influence attitudes and values toward each other and people of the reciprocal countries. Table 7.1 shows that Kenya, South Africa (CWY YLA volunteers and host families) and South Africa (SAT SayXchange host families) posted higher mentions of attitudinal impacts than other study sites. Compared to friendships across borders, fewer participants mentioned the programs' attitudinal impacts on them. However, 13.8% of volunteers across different study sites reported experiencing self-discovery, valuing who they are, developing self-esteem, confidence, trust, appreciation for other people, their culture and nation, and even developing feelings of solidarity, while remaining self-conscious, positive, and nonjudgmental.

Some female volunteers, for example, reported overcoming their own fears of strangers and new places, while others developed self-confidence:

...it is not easy to go to strange places...that was very courageous...[but] it has taken away the phobia of travelling, of new places, of different people...I now know I can live anywhere, take care of myself, and live with people of different backgrounds (Female South African CWY volunteer).

I learnt how to be part of a group and be myself at the same time. I learnt how to disagree and still be respectful of other people's ideas and how to compromise when the argument offered is convincing...I learned especially from the experience of Kenya, the importance of ensuring diversity is not divisive and destructive.... (Female Tanzanian CWY volunteer).

Some of these attitudinal changes are subtle. Others are potentially revolutionary depending on how knowledge, attitudes, and values acquired are deployed. As a Tanzanian volunteer indicated, 'Kenyans seem more confident than us Tanzanians ... they know their rights and are not afraid to stand for them. This is the attitude needed to make our leaders accountable.' Of course we know that the Kenyan obsession with *haki yetu* (our right) has become a cliché, oftentimes behind the deep sociopolitical rot threatening the very existence of the nation. But as the view of the Tanzanian volunteer cited earlier indicates, these experiences have also enlightened these young Africans to value their own countries. Another Tanzanian volunteer added: 'I am proud of our peace and unity ... [unlike] Kenya where people are very divided with ever-present fear of violence along tribal lines in the

aftermath of elections...we should not take for granted what we have.' Arguably, such perceptions may also lead to resentment and unnecessary caution when dealing with people who are different and, as we see shortly in the Tanzanian case, stifle the goals of integration.

For host families and communities, their attitudes and values, especially on either appreciation or lack thereof of 'complex diversity of humanity' are affected by behavior and actions of volunteers. When positively perceived, the little changes brought by these volunteers, as mentioned by Kenyan and South African CWY host families, have demonstrable effect that reinforce the value of volunteering and also leads to constructive evaluation of other people. But exchanges also expose young inexperienced volunteers to challenges they are potentially unprepared for, especially when inadequate support is not offered. In such instances, volunteers might develop self-esteem complexes and end up becoming a burden to host communities and organizations.

Further, as Table 7.1 shows, Tanzania CWY YLA and South African SayXchange recorded the least or no impacts on friendship across borders compared to other study sites. To some extent, this could be viewed from limitation of SAS² methodology in restricting each participant to identifying only the two most important impacts. However, it may also point to existing bottlenecks to regional integration. Specifically, if emotive impacts are proxies for the likelihood of people embracing others for successful regional integration to happen, low scores for emotive impacts in Tanzania and South Africa, to some extent, suggest that for a majority of citizens in these countries, regional integration is not a priority. A recent Afrobarometer briefing paper Tanzania, for example, reveals that for a majority of Tanzanians, 'though positive about economic integration, there are higher levels of disapproval toward economic integration in 2012 relative to 2008' (Knowles, 2014, p. 5).

This regression may suggest that the realization of a regional identity for integration purposes will require 'stronger effort to attract public support' (Balongo, 2015, p. 8). Such efforts may include, as one Kenyan volunteer indicated, expressly stating regional integration as a political imperative of these programs. This would help participants to be more open-minded and mindful of essential program objectives. Without active political conscientization, these programs will remain superficial and limited. Further, there is a need to profile successful cases of integration as has happened in Tanzania. As one Kenyan volunteer pointed out, in Tanzania there is a much more solid national identity and unity than in most other African countries, despite the over 260 ethnic groups in that country.

Cognitive (knowledge and learning and skills) impacts: Knowledge/learning and skills acquisition, as Table 7.1 shows, were mentioned by far more volunteers and host families as the most impactful aspects of these programs. Participants' association of their learning of cultural modes of behavior, language, dynamics of development issues and challenges such as gender, sources of social conflict, history, culture, geography and politics of the host countries, and even culinary skills to attitudinal changes and friendships, confirms the relationship between cognitive and emotive impacts. Overall, knowledge gains lead to appreciation of the need for Africa's unity to face shared development challenges. As a Mozambican CWY

volunteer indicated, a visit to Robben Island for *Africa Unite Against Xenophobia Youth Conference* became a 'great educational experience ... on things that unite Africans and challenges that need a united approach.'

The current findings are also consistent with studies showing that international volunteering offers opportunity for learning; development of new skills, languages, or expanding experience and careers (cf. Perold et al., 2013; Tiessen, 2012; Unstead-Joss, 2008). A Kenyan CWY volunteer, for example, pursued a career in agriculture after learning farming skills through the exchange. He undertook further trainings on farming and farm management and became a farm manager. Mozambican volunteers in both programs reported learning organizational skills, leadership, public speaking, and social and technical skills that improved their confidence, built team-working ability, and conflict resolution skills.

The two programs aim to expose volunteers to at least three specific skills sets: (1) technical skills such as farming, computers, and teaching; (2) organizational skills such as planning, team work, leadership, facilitation, mediation; and (3) communication skills such as learning or developing competence in a new language, cross-cultural communication, active listening, and public speaking. When asked to rate the extent of gains on these specific skills and knowledge on a 5-point scale (0=no impact, 5=highest impact), volunteers in all study sites, save for SayXchange South Africa gave relatively high scores. The averaged scores show 3.9 for communication skills, 3.5 for technical skills, 3.9 gains in knowledge on host country, 3.5 for knowledge of development issues, and 3.8 for organizational skills. The outlier, SayXchange South Africa volunteers, who reported a 1.2 average on organizational skills, attributed their low scores to inadequate support from host organizations, as well as inability to work/communicate well in the language of host country (Portuguese).

The higher mention of skills development among eastern Africa volunteers (shown in Table 7.1) is a product of the context of the environmental conservation work of partner organizations, which directly exposes volunteers to practical skills. It follows therefore, that volunteers are more likely to acquire greater skills if exposed to a more practical environment. Nonetheless, there were concerns raised on the quality of skills gained, and their sustainability given the length of the exchange. Six months is too short a period for one to master a skill. Further, as Kenyan volunteers indicated, placements in the two exchange countries are not always similar. The resultant discontinuities limit the potential for volunteers to acquire concrete skills that can shape their careers and education.

Behavioral impacts: Some motivations for young people to volunteer internationally are linked to individual desire for personal development, improvements on career prospects, or for getting vital work experience as requisites for certain courses in college (CWY, 2006; Hustinx, 2001; Unstead-Joss, 2008). However, current findings show a paltry 3.5% of respondents from all sites indicating the program had career/studies or local/regional action impacts. As Table 7.1 shows, except for Kenyan CWY (volunteers and host families) and South African SAT SayXchange (volunteers), all other sites did not report impacts on advancement of careers. The few volunteers who mentioned advancement in career/studies choices include a

Kenyan youth pursuing a career as a farm manager (mentioned earlier) and another with a teaching job in a host community school in Tanzania. On the whole, while behavioral impacts are products of gains in skills (technical, organizational, and communication), low impacts here may suggest that while they are ameliorative, volunteer programs, at least in the eastern and Southern African contexts, are not the magic bullet in youth empowerment, especially on their careers and studies prospects.

For host families, the dearth of impacts on their careers is indicative of their demographic profile. As a Kenyan host family participant indicated, most hosts are well past the age for concerns about careers or studies. It was however unclear whether these interactions influence younger members of the host families in making career or study choices.

While all programs are designed to include local action, it seems like this objective is not a priority. This may indicate that the value of these programs lies in their contributions to cognitive and emotive impacts. Perhaps these are the objectives that these programs should prioritize, especially because they emphasize relationship building and provide a greater possibility of developing mutually beneficial partnerships between youth volunteers and organizations in facing the challenges of development and regional integration in Southern and Eastern Africa.

Attribution of impacts: A fundamental test for any impact study is attribution in the causal chain mechanism of impacts. In other words, how do we attribute a particular change to interventions or activities carried out since causality is not always a directly observable phenomenon? To determine how volunteers perceived the program activities' contribution to impacts, volunteers were asked to identify two activities that most contributed to the impacts they had identified. Thereafter, they placed these on a corresponding quadrant of a Cartesian graph representing the four activities these programs are designed to contribute to. The activities are living with a host family, pairing up/interacting with youth from another country, doing a community service project, and receiving educational/training. Aggregate results show that, with 53.4% mentions, contact-related activities (living with a host family and pairing up/interacting) contributed most to impacts. Specifically, 31.3% mentioned being paired with another youth as most impactful, while 22.2% mentioned living with a host family. But 29.3% of mentions were of educational and training support given to volunteers, and 17.2% of mentions were for doing community service, which suggests that all program activities contribute to reported impacts.

Further disaggregation of these results for each site, presented in Table 7.2, indicates that the CWY program in Kenya and Tanzania had higher ratings for all program activities' contributions to impact, while CWY South Africa volunteers did not report any impacts from doing a community service project.

Volunteers in both programs indicated being paired or interacting with youth from another country, and living with a host family contributed to mutual learning and understanding of their partners' and host societies. This is consistent with other studies that show that interpersonal interactions lead to relationship building and mutual understanding (cf. Ouma & Dimaras, 2013). Such interactions also influence development of interpersonal conflict resolution skills, negotiations, and

Table 7.2 Program activities contributions to impacts

Program and site	Receiving education or training (%)	Living with host family (%)	Pairing/interacting with youth from another country (%)	Doing a community service project (%)	Total (%)
CWY South Africa	20	30	50	0	100
CWY Mozambique	25	25	37.5	12.5	100
CWY Tanzania	14.3	25	32.1	28.6	100
CWY Kenya	41.2	23.5	23.5	11.8	100
SayXchange South Africa	28.6	14.2	28.6	28.6	100
SayXchange Mozambique	50	7.1	28.6	14.3	100

accommodation of differences. As a Kenyan CWY volunteer indicated, 'as time goes a conflict may arise between partners. From such conflict, you learn that there are different kinds of people ...all cannot just agree with you.' Such experiences help promote tolerance in a region prone to violent social conflicts such as persistent xenophobic violence in South Africa, and postelection violence in Kenya and Zanzibar. But contact-related activities, might, as highlighted by SayXchange participants, breed conditions for conflict, especially when both volunteers and host families are inadequately prepared.

As a collective phenomenon, an African identity will need to have shared value dispositions and group consciousness and this, as Brubaker and Cooper (2000, p. 7) argue, can be cultivated through interactive processes that emphasize 'fundamental and consequential sameness...' Such can be achieved through conscientization geared toward social identity construction, values consensus, and regional integration. Evidence from the current study demonstrates that predeparture orientations and trainings aid generation of shared expectations and value dispositions that shape volunteer experiences and generate impulses of solidarity for other Africans. These findings support studies in the region which show 'induction and orientation programs, along with carefully structured opportunities for reflection' are necessary preconditions for cognitive impacts and the creation of 'international bridging social capital' (Perold et al., 2013, pp. 190–191). However, some CWY volunteers indicated a need for better articulation of regional identity formation goals in these trainings.

Doing a community service project contributes to cognitive, emotive, and to a lesser degree, behavioral impacts. A Mozambican SayXchange volunteer indicated that from his participation in community projects, the interactions therein, gave him greater insights into aspects of social life, ways of community building, and creativity in generating income in the informal sector. These findings reinforce what Perold et al. (2013) call 'learning by serving.'

Program impacts on host and partner organizations: These programs are designed to benefit not just volunteers and host communities, but effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and viability of host organizations (Buckles & Chevalier, 2012). Results from a Socratic Wheel with a 5-point scale (0=no impact, 5=greatest impact) used to determine levels of program impacts on effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and financial viability of host and partner organizations, captured in Table 7.3, show consistently higher ratings on efficiency and relevance indicators in Eastern Africa.

These programs have provided effective links to organizations, people, and communities sometimes (especially for the CWY) transcending North–South divisions. Such linkages are useful in overcoming prevalent power differentials prevalent in

Table 7.3 Impacts on host and partner organizations

		Effectiveness impact rating	Efficiency impact	Relevance impact	Financial viability impact	Average rating for all impact areas
CWY KEN	Mean rating per impact area	4.14	4.00	4.14	3.43	3.92
	Standard deviation	0.38	1.00	0.90	0.53	0.57
CWY TZ	Mean rating per impact area	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	4.50
CWY South Africa	Mean rating per impact area	4.00	2.67	3.67	2.83	3.29
	Standard deviation	1.10	1.21	1.37	0.75	0.71
CWY Mozambique	Mean rating per impact area	3.67	4.20	4.20	3.20	3.85
	Standard deviation	0.45	0.40	0.40	1.33	0.44
SayXchange South Africa	Mean rating per impact area	2.67	2.67	3.00	2.67	2.75
	Standard deviation	1.53	1.53	2.65	2.31	1.95
SayXchange Mozambique	Mean rating per impact area	4.00	3.40	3.80	4.00	3.80
	Standard deviation	0.00	0.55	0.84	1.00	0.21

The Mozambican partner-AJUDE—did not take part in the interviews. In Tanzania, all volunteers are placed in sector projects of Uvikiuta

North–south programs (Perold et al., 2013). Further, as mentioned in Mozambique, these programs have managed to link host organizations and young people to the region for mutual benefits of organizations and the youth.

The findings indicate that program impacts on host and partner organizations' effectiveness are contingent upon alignment of host/partner organizations and program goals, as well as existence of appropriate skill set or training of the volunteers. In this regard, higher ratings in Kenya and Tanzania signify significant goal and activities alignment between hosts, partners, and CWY in environmental conservation work. These programs were hailed in all sites for contributing to organizations' visibility at no or minimal costs by giving young people an opportunity to learn and develop skills.

Organizations rated efficiency impacts based on costs needed to achieve program objectives. As indicated by Kenyan host and partner organizations, a greater value for these programs lies in the rare enthusiasm volunteers bring to environmental protection, which probably, paid labor would not exhibit. Tanzanian and South African organizations reported that CWY YLA grants brought them operational, financial and training and skills benefits such as program budgeting, reporting systems, record keeping and documentation, and even sharing equipment and staff labor meant for the CWY-YLA program. These grants and equipment sharing enhanced the efficiency and financial viability of the host/partner organizations. Nonetheless, all sites reported instances when they would have done better. For instance, as observed elsewhere (cf. Ouma & Dimaras, 2013), some host organizations reported that volunteers take longer to complete activities because they are not experts, are young, inexperienced, and do not easily communicate in a local language. This affects efficiency.

CWY registered higher impact rating on relevance of host organizations' activities to key stakeholders. For South African CWY partner organizations, the program helps them enhance services to young people, while many Tanzanian stakeholders value the program, which in 2011, was mentioned in Zanzibar parliament for its usefulness in youth empowerment. In Mozambique, relevance lies with the practical way it integrates host organizations and young people to regional development goals. However, one host organization indicated existence of dissonance between it and volunteer expectations.

Notwithstanding the above benefits, in most sites across both programs in South Africa and Mozambique, because these programs do not always meet all expenses, the already financially overstretched hosts are forced to subsidize. This compromises not only the effectiveness of the programs on volunteers, host communities, and organizations but also the financial viability of host organizations.

Challenges: Despite the overabundance of positive impacts, there are several areas needing improvement. In addition to the various disclaimers so far mentioned, participants pointed to information asymmetries, resource constraints, lack of life skills and competing priorities for young people, general structural constraints and biases in the design and implementation of these programs as general challenges. Specifically, there is low awareness of existence of these programs due to low Internet (the main means through which these programs are advertised) penetration.

Furthermore, some young people assume that such programs exist only for very educated people. Others see no value of volunteering. Limited knowledge restricts the number of eligible participants. Limitations also arise because some parents are overprotective (especially of their daughters) and ignorant. They cannot allow them to venture elsewhere on the continent due to misconceptions of the security situation.

In addition, the costs for processing travel documents, Internet access and charges, and the administration fee charged by partner organizations to participants, though minimal, cuts out those who cannot afford them. Furthermore, while CWY YLA has managed to transform a North–South to a South–South model, the slow uptake of such development partnerships points to the existence of resource constraints and the success of these programs depends on Northern NGOs' financial support to their Southern partners.

The qualification criteria—a pass at secondary-level and age limits are restraints too. At 18 years, these young men and women have other competing priorities, especially education as they are graduating from high school and joining colleges and universities. At 24 or 25, they are just completing university but already 'too old' to participate. Moreover, the exchange times clash with education term calendar, restricting participants to only those out of school. If these programs are to reach out to more young people, the age limitations need to be reviewed with a view to, as one Kenyan volunteer indicated, recruiting young volunteers based on a genuine interest rather than in terms of age limits.

Moreover, some participants feel that while the basic premise of these programs hinges on the belief that exposure to environments with people who are different is likely to trigger an embrace for diversity, the levels of exposure especially in volunteers' own countries are insufficient as some are placed within familiar sociocultural environments. In Kenya, volunteers are recruited from Kijabe environs and are placed within their own community. This, a Kenyan CWY volunteer argued, limits exposure: 'I am not sure it really helped me. A family just about 500 m away from my home hosted me...I could have learnt more from a family far away from here.'

A bigger constraint to the vitality of these programs is a generally declining culture of volunteering among youth who, in the face of social and economic hardships, would rather do nothing, than volunteer. In Kenya, a country reported to have a rich volunteering culture (Kanyinga, 2001; Kanyinga, Mitullah, & Njagi, 2007), participants argued that volunteering is not a priority for young people who prefer paid jobs. Moreover, most young Africans would rather participate in the North–South/South–North exchange than in the program across the border in Tanzania. But even when there is sufficient youth interest to volunteer, the programs have very limited spaces and competition can be intense. Moreover, people living with disabilities or young mothers are not accommodated in these programs. To have a wider impact in the region, the scale and scope of these programs needs to be reconsidered.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown some of the contributions of these programs to youth empowerment, African civil society organizations, regional identity, and to a lesser degree, local community development. These programs help broaden volunteers' and host families' horizons and attitudes toward other Africans. The findings suggest an emergent consciousness and inter-African solidarity among participants, aided by the various program activities. The findings further suggest that the value of South–South volunteering models lies in their reciprocity, which engender values exchange, sharing network building and collaboration, as well as creation of new linkages and understanding.

As such, regional awareness and African identity can be fostered through youth volunteer exchange programs that address both development and regional integration imperatives. This is especially so if such programs are designed to emphasize solidarity and collective self-understanding, commonality, and connectedness of Africans in aid of bridging social capital and regional identity formation. If indeed, as Benedict Anderson (1983) indicates, the nation is an imagined community, so is a region. The governance and development implications for African leaders, is to, among other things, work toward integration using not just economic and political instruments, but also sociocultural and action repertoires, such as transborder youth volunteer exchange programs.

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