



"The bottom line is this: Africa's future belongs to its young people... We need young Africans who are standing up and making things happen not only in their own countries but around the world... We want this to be the beginning of a new partnership and create networks that will promote opportunities for years to come."

– President Barack Obama

In May 2011, The United States Government led by the State Department in partnership with USAID and the Peace Corps, hosted "The Dialogue with Young African Leaders"—a targeted series of youth engagement programs throughout Africa. The Dialogue showcased the efforts of young African leaders to discuss current challenges on the continent and to build skills and networks to bring about positive change.

Programs and Activities

The month-long Dialogue featured over 200 programs and activities in 37 countries throughout Sub-Saharan Africa. These events focused on education, civics, entrepreneurship, culture, science and technology, media and journalism, women's issues, the environment, service and volunteerism, and health. The programs included moderated discussions, digital video conferences with U.S. counterparts, in-country leadership and new media skills trainings, cultural events such as slam poetry readings, issue-oriented public advocacy campaigns, and interactive seminars on topics such as entrepreneurship.

Online Discussion

The Dialogue also featured a lively online component. The pan-African online dialogue took place on the Facebook page of the Department of State's African Affairs Bureau with over 25,000 views: www.facebook.com/DOSAfricanAffairs. Discussions also took place on

Objectives of the Dialogue with Young African Leaders

- Showcase a new generation of young African leaders who are shaping the continent's future
- Reinforce the U.S. commitment to fostering two-way dialogue between the United States and African youth
- Help young people in Africa build the skills and networks they need to become positive agents of change in their communities and countries

U.S. embassy Facebook sites throughout Africa and through language specific online dialogues such as a French dialogue produced by the State Department's African Regional Service in Paris.

Ongoing Engagement

The Dialogue is part of a long-term program of engagement with young Africans that started with President Obama's August 2010 Forum with Young African Leaders. It will continue with high-level youth engagement activities and programs on the African continent over coming

months. Ideas obtained from the May Dialogue with Young African Leaders will help shape policy and improve upcoming events in the region.

The Department of State is committed to engaging young African leaders in order to better understand their aspirations for the continent and to collaborate with them on common interests.

"The challenges in Africa may be tough, but I believe the young people of Africa are tougher. The future is bright."

***– Benjamin Dankaka,
from Kadun State, Nigeria***