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INTERNATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP

CONFERENCE CONCEPT PAPER

BY

Y-CARE YOUTH LEADERSHIP

PROGRAM ALUMNI

INTRODUCTION

This document summarises the scope of the proposed **International Youth Leadership Conference**. This Conference is being implemented by the **Y-Care Youth Leadership Program Alumni** and is the first initiative of this group in our efforts to continue contributing as a team. YLP Alumni has, through experience and training of YLP, acquired valuable skill sets, relationships and interest within the area of youth leadership. The proposed conference will be a 'next step' in our own development as a group and the development of other like-minded young people throughout the fifteen (15) **Southern African Development Committee** (SADC) region.

BACKGROUND

The **Y-care Youth Leadership Program** is an initiative started by **Y-Care Charitable Trust** comprises of four modules namely, The Journey Therapy, Psycho-social Support Training, Interactive Leadership Skills Training and Out-of-Bounds Experiential Learning Camp. These modules are set in such a way that all members progressively grow personally and as a team. They teach each individual how to deal with emotional blocks, effective techniques of handling one's holistic needs, finding the leader in all of us and finally finding inner strength with support from teammates.

The training began in July 2006 and ended in December 2009 with 15 members of the group completing all modules. In-between the modules, we as the youth leadership programme group decided to practice the skills we learnt by helping out in the community. We worked on various community projects such as a "**Painting Campaign**" at Cheshire Foundation of Botswana (rehabilitation centre for disabled children), two "**Smile 4 Christmas**" campaigns (2008 & 2009) for Princess Marina Hospital Paediatric Ward and recently for the Bulawayo Baptist Church North-end Home (Zimbabwe) and "**Team Building Kgale Climb**" with Naledi Senior Secondary School students.

A group of ten (10) who successfully completed the **YLP programme** have decided to continue contributing to the development of youth as **YLP Alumni**. Our first initiative is the **International Youth Leadership Conference**. The prime reason for selecting such a challenging endeavour was because we successfully embarked on small-scale projects during our training and we would like to undertake a larger scale project to utilise the skills we have learnt. We would like to create a brand name for our group and have a positive impact on other youth. More essentially, we would like to empower other youth in our region and create a platform where we can support each other.

CONCEPT

YLP Alumni would like to host an **International Youth Leadership Conference** in 2011. The group has recognised weaknesses in youth leadership throughout Botswana and the region as a whole. The group has also identified leadership within the youth as a critical component for sustainable development and long-term contribution from the youth. For these reasons, among others, **YLP Alumni** are implementing an **International Youth Leadership Conference** to serve as a regional forum for youth leaders to discuss pertinent issues related to youth and develop practical solutions. We believe that this conference will bring together youth from the **SADC region** that are innovative and creative in order to give back to their communities.

By bringing the youth together, we believe we will create a platform for them to share challenges they have faced and the solutions they have come up with and the problem solving skills they have used. We envision that with this conference we will create a **SADC** network base for each country within the **SADC region**. We believe that the network would be a foundation for addressing the challenges a country may face concerning youth leadership. It will also provide all participants with an opportunity to come up with common solutions to problems they face. The international conference is aimed at sharing leadership skills, addressing issues in the region and providing sustainable, long-term solutions.

HIGH LEVEL SCOPE

The **YLP Alumni** is made up of ten (10) of the fifteen (15) members who completed the **Y-Care Youth Leadership Program**.

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|-----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
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We envision that the conference will be held in Gaborone, Botswana from the **26th June to the 2nd July 2011**. We will create a casual yet professional atmosphere with each country being given an opportunity to share something about their culture enlisted under icebreakers. A tour of some historical sites that are in and around the city is also included in our draft program.

Participants will range between **eighteen (18) to twenty-nine (29) years** of age with **three (3) representatives** from each member state. Participants will have to apply to attend the conference as we would like to ensure that we have the influential, creative leadership oriented youth activists representing their country. We hope to host about one **hundred (100) people** during this conference.

The conference package will include fully paid accommodation and meals and welcome gift bags containing stationery, the program, Botswana Visitors Catalogue and a **Youth Leadership Conference** branded item for memorabilia as well as a tour.

CONCLUSION

The **Y-Care Youth Leadership Program Alumni** feel that an **International Youth Leadership Conference** is an essential endeavour that would make **youth leadership** a reality, as the youth will have a home to grow and share experiences. It will also give a podium for unrecognised leadership potential and this will unveil role models the youth can relate to.