

Reawaken, Redesign and Re-emerge: Africa Beyond Potential



Social Innovators Programme and Awards (SIPA) 2022

Post Conference Report

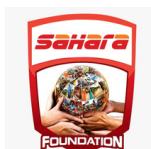




TABLE OF CONTENTS

04

Appreciation

07

Introduction

08

Let us begin

11

Keynote Address

14

Speed Talks

18

Panel Discussion

22

Launch of the Dow
Africa Social Champion
Award

24

Presentation of Award

28

Photo Story: The Event

32

Appendix



Disclaimer

The post conference report is a representation of the activities and events that occurred at the 2022 Social Innovators Programmes and Awards (SIPA).

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Appreciation

This year's Legacy Edition was a special one here at LEAP Africa because it marked the 10th anniversary of the program as well as the 20th Anniversary of LEAP Africa as an institution of leadership development and transformative change.

The theme this year- **Reawaken, Redesign and Re-emerge: Africa Beyond Potential** reflects the critical juncture of LEAP as an organization that recognizes the impactful and life-changing work done so far. This it has done, while being cognizant of the great task ahead on the African continent and the need to reimagine what it means for Africa to move from a continent of 'potential' to a continent of excellence in innovation and positive transformation. Perhaps more than ever, the world, and Africa in particular, faces unique challenges in the areas of climate change, unemployment, growing inequality and digital division. This year's theme recognizes that there is commensurately a unique opportunity, in the midst of the myriad challenges, for Africa to become a continent that leverages our own locally conceived and harnessed solutions in a globally relevant and adopted manner. To this end, our carefully curated selection of speakers, panelists and even entertainers delivered thought-provoking and incredibly inspiring content that unpacked the theme excellently, for which we are truly grateful.

This SIPA, and indeed LEAP Africa as a whole, could not have been possible or come this far, without the support, resources and engagement of our esteemed staff, board, partners, supporters, and attendees (both physical and virtual). In particular, we would like to recognize and appreciate the unwavering support of our corporate sponsors; Union Bank, Sahara Foundation and Ford Foundation. This event would not have been possible without them

Finally, as we look forward to the next year(s) and the future cohorts of social entrepreneurs, we do so with a renewed sense of action and commitment towards designing and implementing innovative and creative solutions that would indeed advance Africa beyond potential to full actualization.

Amabelle Nwakanma,
Director of Programmes, LEAP Africa.



"This year's theme recognizes that there is commensurately a unique opportunity, in the midst of the myriad challenges, for Africa to become a continent that leverages our own locally conceived and harnessed solutions in a globally relevant and adopted manner"

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About 90% of the participants rated their experience at the event between 4 and 5 on a scale of 1 - 5

INTRODUCTION

The 10th and Legacy Edition of the Social Innovators Programmes and Awards (SIPA) held on the 8th of September 2022, witnessed one of the largest gatherings of seasoned innovators and professionals from all over Africa. The conference which also showcased the 2021/2022 cohort of the Social Innovators Programme (SIP), adopted a hybrid approach. With a virtual attendance of 69% and 31% attending the event physically, this presented an opportunity to various individuals from all works of life and locations to attend, thereby extending the impact of the event. Interestingly, this year also marked LEAP Africa's 20th Anniversary of raising leaders and transforming Africa. Reflecting on the past 20 years of its existence, LEAP Africa has no doubt contributed in substantial capacity to redefining Africa through the implementation of several impactful projects cutting across different sectors in the continent.

True to its meaning, SIP is a platform that aims to showcase and celebrate young social change makers whose ideas and innovations proffer active solutions to issues across Africa. LEAP Africa, since 2013, has continually aided in enabling and furnishing these inspiring innovators with the necessary skills and tools to scale their enterprises and impact. In partnership with its sponsors, LEAP Africa through the Social Innovators Program has imparted over 200 gifted social innovators who have truly contributed to the actualization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) through their solutions in diverse sectors such as agriculture, health, energy, education, science and technology, gender, environment and sanitation.

The theme for this year's conference was- **Reawaken, Redesign and Re-emerge: Africa Beyond Potential.** In line with reflections over the past 20 years as well as 10 years of the Social Innovators Program, there is no better time to reimagine and redesign what social innovation truly means in our continent at such a time. With the world facing unique challenges, it is pertinent to ask relevant questions and discuss further on how to increase the reach of impact across Africa as well as harness and empower more talented Africans to become positive change makers across the world. While the conference aimed to recognize and celebrate fellows who have gone on to inspire and improve the lives of millions of people in their local communities and beyond, it is also served as an opportunity to showcase the evident gaps in social entrepreneurship in Africa. The event was indeed an excellent learning opportunity for young persons as the Programme demonstrated that irrespective of social economic status or cultural background, there are indeed opportunities for young people to take action in Africa.



L-R: Pearl Uzokwe, Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli, Ogochukwu Ekezie- Ekaidem, Vanessa Garrison and Amal Hassan

LET US BEGIN...

The event kicked off to a great start at 9.45 am with the Nigerian national anthem, masterfully led by Miss Gift Orok . The beautiful rendition accompanied by the keyboard, set the tone for the event as both stanzas of the anthem were recited by guests.

The two masters of ceremony Daniel Emenahor and Mojibade Sosanya welcomed the guests to the conference. Mojibade Sosanya shared on how the programme had empowered over 200 young change makers since its inception. In addition, they summarized the goal of the SIPA conference which was to showcase, recognize and amplify the impact of young social innovators across Africa whose initiatives have improved the livelihood of millions across the nations.



Miss Gift singing the National Anthem



Masters of Ceremony -Daniel Emenahor and Mojibade Sosanya- welcoming the guests



Guests standing to take the National Anthem

Welcome Remarks



Amabelle Nwankanma, Director of Programmes, LEAP Africa giving the welcome remarks

The welcome remarks were graciously taken by Amabelle Nwankanma- Programmes Director, LEAP Africa. She commenced her address by welcoming the guests and also appreciated the partners of LEAP Africa for the support offered to the organization over her twenty years of existence. Touching on the theme of the conference, her address also mentioned the unique development challenges the world was currently facing and the need to reflect on how best to empower social entrepreneurs to design solutions to solve these challenges. Excitedly, she shared that she looked forward to enjoying the programme in its entirety.

Opening Address

Taking the opening address, Ogochukwu Ekezie-Ekaidem- Head of Branding and Communication Union Bank, welcomed the guests to the event on behalf of Union bank. Sharing her experience of past editions of the SIPA conferences, she mentioned that the event reminded her of the potentials and opportunities that exist in the country. Her address also highlighted the partnership between Union Bank and LEAP Africa to support social innovators to build sustainable enterprises. She specifically mentioned that Union bank had sponsored about 150 social entrepreneurs on the programme out of over 200 entrepreneurs that had participated in the programme since inception. She also expressed her excitement over the diverse achievements of the supported fellows. In closing, she congratulated the 2021/2022 SIP graduating fellows and wished them the best moving forward.



Ogochukwu Ekezie- Ekaidem delivering the opening address



The ceremony progressed beautifully with a drama performance by E-fest group titled "Giant of Africa". The performance highlighted the African culture, challenges and LEAP Africa's transformative contribution to the continent in her 20 years of existence. The dance featured a mixture of cultural dances including Zulu, Igbo and Yoruba.

E-fest crew during their electrifying drama performance

Keynote Address

Soon after the beautiful performance, Henry Kaestner- a leading partner and co - founder at Sovereign's Capital - was designated as the key note speaker of the day. He impressed the audience, speaking on his love for Nigeria's dynamism and potential. He also appreciated his long term friendship with Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli, Founder LEAP Africa.



Henry Kaestner delivering the keynote address at the ceremony

Diving into his presentation titled -"**Scaling an Organization; Secret to Growth in an Organization**", he shared his experiences as a business owner. He further intimated the audience on the early mistakes he made at the start of his organization by focusing solely on fund raising. He stated that when entrepreneurs aim for the right things and have the right focus, they would be able to attract the resources required for success, including financial capital.

In his words, he highlighted three (3) fundamental take-home lessons for business owners looking to scale up;

- State the mission and vision of your organization:
- Resource the mission
- Get the right people on the bus

Speaking broadly on all points, he further reiterated the need to articulate your “WHY” in order to get stakeholders invested. Lastly, he spoke intently on the need to focus on retaining employees. He ended with a note that raising capital should not be the main goal of an enterprise rather, getting the right people for the job.



Guests enjoying the keynote address



Audience listening to the speaker



Guests taking notes from the insightful speech



Over 90% of the attendees mentioned the conference was impactful and educative

Speed Talks

The conference advanced to the speed talk sessions with professionals with a myriad of experiences within the social space. The speakers delivered impeccable lectures, drawing from their wealth of experiences and knowledge which hinged directly on the theme of the event.

The speakers were;

- **Efosa Ojomo**- Director of Global Prosperity at the Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation
- **Vanessa Garrison**- Co-Founder, Girl Trek.
- **Sangu Delle**- CEO, CarePoint.

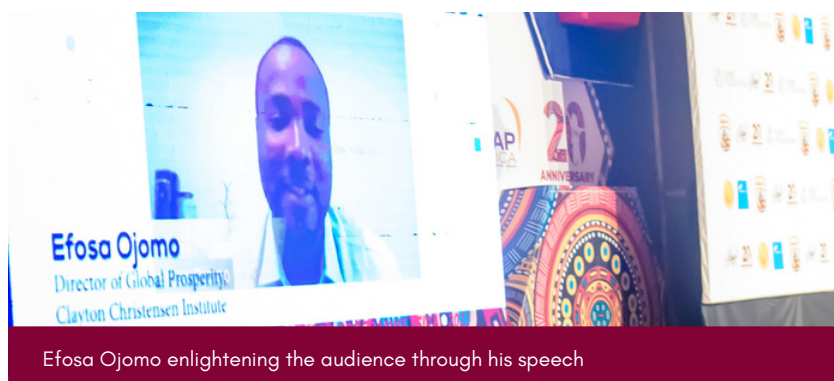
The speed talks began with the first speaker- Efosa Ojomo - who is a recognized researcher with published works on how innovation can transform organizations. To kick-start his session titled "**The Transformative Power of Market-Creating Innovations**", he posed a daunting question to the audience on how much the Nigerian Government had to spend per person. With that, he led the audience through a vivid explanation of how important and vital innovation and entrepreneurship was to the nation.

He further pointed out how many organizations who struggle, have issues framing the problems they encounter, with no consistency in approaching their issues. He further disclosed the need to employ core mechanisms to ensure that our solutions become sustainable.

He then highlighted the different types of innovations and their level of impact in the society;

- **Sustaining Innovation**: This is targeted at people who already consume an existing product or services of high quality with the continuous need to improve its performance.
- **Efficiency Innovation**: This type of innovation involves making do with less. However, it encourages the elimination of jobs and it causes a negative impact on the development of an economy.
- **Market Creating Innovation** is the bed rock of development and is where the secret source of prosperity. These innovations transform complicated and expensive products into products that are simple and affordable so many more people in the society can have access to it.

In a nutshell, he shared that market-creating innovation is lacking in Africa and reiterated the need to prioritize this type of innovation and leverage digital technology which had the potential to build not only companies, but countries.



Efosa Ojomo enlightening the audience through his speech

In the spirit of entertainment, the delegates were given with a thrilling performance by the talented spoken words artist -Havfy who entertained the audience with an electrifying performance on one of her pieces- The Society. Following the beautiful live presentation, the second speed talk was delivered by Vanessa Garrison, the founder of GirlTrek, the largest public health non profit for African-American women and girls in the United States. Guests were left mesmerized with her captivating speech appreciating her descents and ancestors all over the continent. Moving forward, she thanked Ndidi and Femi for inviting her to the conference.

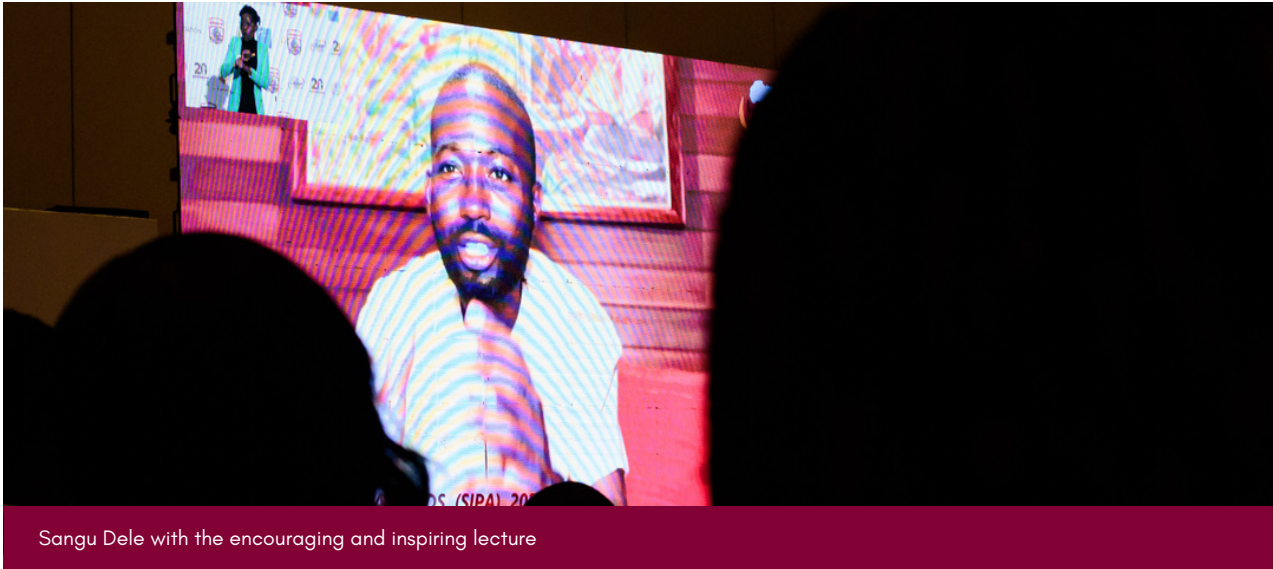
Centering her lecture on **“A Pathway To Scaling African Women-Led Enterprise”**, she began by sharing her experiences as well as the circumstances that led to branching into the public health sector. She shared that she was motivated to find solutions to the chronic ailment and challenges faced by black women which led to the walking initiative. She disclosed that at first, only her close associates and family took on the movement with her. However, today over a million women across different countries and continents walk as a symbol of front line change makers.

She expressed how black women were the architects of disruptive innovations, citing noble women who had stood the test of time as examples of disruptive innovators. She further articulated on how Girltrek was an innovation that taught black women their history and how to value themselves. She encouraged more women to prioritize their lives and reclaim their health.

She concluded with the expectation that the revolutionary act of Girltrek would spread throughout the continent and in particular Nigeria.



Vanessa Garrison delivering her inspirational lecture to the audience



Sangu Dele with the encouraging and inspiring lecture

The third and final speed talk of the day was presented by Sangu Dele, the CEO of CarePoint, an organization focused on building Africa's healthcare future. In introducing himself, he further highlighted that he was an investor and entrepreneur with almost fifteen and a half years of experience. Sangu heartily congratulated the fellows who were present at the award ceremony and remarked that he looked forward to seeing the greatness that would unfold as they embark on driving their different social innovations.

Going further into his session on **Redefining the Leadership of Social Entrepreneurship**, he stated the need to discuss three case studies on those doing amazing things in the social innovation space that would exemplify inspiring leadership. He stated that the themes around the case studies would demonstrate;

1. Disruption.
2. Converting problems into opportunities.
3. Boldness in scale.

Speaking in-depth on the case studies, he related his experience with CarePoint and how they discovered an opportunity to think outside the box and leverage on technology. Also, he remarked on how Andela saw an opportunity in the problem of unemployment with quite a number talented youth in Africa who had potentials but lacked opportunities. However, they were able to develop a solution to train African talents and currently have a robust pipeline of software engineers. Lastly, he mentioned how Jet Stream uses its propriety technology, networks and its systems to enable African businesses, finance, manage and monitor their regional supply chains.

In his final note, he further pointed out that the CEO of Jet Stream is a woman, expressing how women are one of our greatest assets. In his final note, he encouraged all upcoming entrepreneurs to be bold and make sure their innovations add value and also remember to leverage technology.



"It was really great and amazing. I learnt a lot from the speakers which I am going to implement to help my community develop. It was a great experience"

Panel Discussion

This year, an amazing and exciting reveal was the selection of an all-alumni panel, chosen to dissect and lead insightful conversations on the topic - **Social Innovation and Sustainability: Navigating Difficult Contexts**. The moderator was no other than Micheline Ntiru, Senior Adviser at Convergence Finance.

The panelists were;

- **Isaac Damian**- Founder, Teens Can Code
- **Akorfa Dawson**- Co-Founder & Chief Operations Officer NadèLI
- **Damilola Asaley**- Co-founder & Chief Operating Officer, Ashdam Solar Co.Ltd
- **Dr Saeed Jumah**- Founder/CEO at The Smile Shop Dental Clinics.

Africa is indeed blessed with resilient social innovators whose enterprises that have no doubt been instrumental to the growth and transformation of Africa. New businesses and innovations continue to spring up daily, creating millions of jobs and providing solutions to some of the issues plaguing Africa. However, while intensifying efforts towards growing the social innovators landscape, it has become clearer by the day that the field faces diverse challenges that hinders its growth as well as its ability to deliver more benefits. From stumbling blocks in form of lack of access to funding opportunities to the stringent conditions experienced by many entrepreneurs, this has limited their ability to thrive in the continent. In turn, the building blocks of sustainability of social enterprises have been challenged in recent times, thus the need to discuss the way forward.

With the theme fixated broadly on how to navigate through the difficult terrains of the social and innovative space, the panel discussions provided key insights into the experiences of seasoned innovators and how they have been able to steer the wheel on their entrepreneurial journey. In the same vein, the conversations spotlighted the necessary areas for potential investors to focus their lenses, in providing support for the social innovators



Panelists discussing and sharing knowledge

The discussions began on a passionate note, with the panelists sharing on unknown facts about themselves from their entrepreneurial journey. From Dr Jumah sharing on how he initially had no longing to become a dentist to Damilola disclosing how she began her entrepreneurial journey at the early age of 13, the dialogs grew more interesting by the minute. Isaac commented on the fact that he never wanted to start an organization, but instead he just wanted to do something good. However, his involvement with LEAP Africa helped them structure the initiative into what is currently known as TeensCanCode. Akorfa on the other hand also shared that her organization was born out of trying to solve a personal problem as a creative.

Going deeper into the discussions, the panelists intimated the audience with practical experiences they learnt on their entrepreneurial journey. Dr Jumah shared that locating the right individuals to support and invest in ones enterprise is one of the key challenges as an entrepreneur. He explained that the limited access to dental care fueled his drive to solve issues centered around oral care especially in the Northern parts of the country. Also, he remarked on the massive brain drain happening in the country and which further helped him resolve to scale his organization.

Speaking on her current engagements, Damilola Asheleye disclosed to the audience that she was working on many things at the moment. She remarked that she was committed to enabling more women gain entry into the energy sector while also ensuring more people in rural communities have access to clean, affordable and safe electricity. She further reiterated the value of electricity to economic development. She also highlighted her active involvement in mentoring young women to pursue



In advising the investors, the panelists had a lot of valuable insights which they generously offered to potential investors. Akorfa emphasized the need for investors to look out for more impact driven investments to scale impact while Isaac appealed that investors lower their expectations to accommodate young and growing entrepreneurs who may not have all the technical requirements expected to warrant funding but may have great solutions. Locally, Damilola advocated for the need to have more home grown models for their investments while Dr Jumah advised investors to focus their efforts in investing into the health care systems.

With the panel discussion coming to a close, the Q&A session began in earnest as individuals in the audience raised some vital questions. One of which was on how public awareness on sustainability could be increased. In answering, Damilola hinged on the importance of measuring impact and having KPI's as a good place to start. In addition to that, speaking further on the topic of fundraising opportunities in local communities, Dr Jumah also remarked on the need to start with what one had as it could take while to attract external funding.

The panel session came to an end on a high note, with the moderator encouraging the innovators in the room to network as she thanked the panelists and pioneers for gracing the occasion.



L-R: Isaac Damian, Akorfa Dawson, Micheline Nturu, Dr Saeed Jumah and Damilola Asaleye



"It was an amazing experience. Seeing people of my age range doing amazing stuff. It just made me have more fire and motivation"

Launch of the Dow Africa Social Champion Award

After the display of a documentary, showcasing the outgoing SIP fellows, Catherine Busari -Programme Coordinator, LEAP Africa, was invited to the podium as she furnished the delegates with insights into what the Youth Day of Service (YDOS) truly represented. In her words, she explained it to be a Pan-African youth-led social campaign that sort to promote the spirit of volunteerism, active citizenship as well as the actualization of SDGs on the continent. She further disclosed that YDOS is celebrated annually to commemorate the UN International Youth Day from the 12th to the 18th of August. Speaking on its impact this year, LEAP Africa engaged about 5000 volunteer volunteers across 34 African Countries in Northern, Eastern, Western, Southern, and Central Africa. This, she remarked, deepened LEAP Africa's efforts in climate protection, environmental sustainability, and waste management by engaging youth on over 600 SDG Action Projects through the support of the headline sponsor -Dow.



Adebisi Adeoti -Country Manager, Dow, spoke to the organization's partnership with LEAP Africa on the YDOS projects. He further highlighted the impact seen across several projects through engaging the youth while sensitizing them on climate change as a way to curtail the imminent adverse effects. Dow, through constant engagement with the youth has taken a step further to support more youths in building sustainable enterprises, thus its decision to launch the Dow Africa Social Champion Award. The award was introduced to enable young innovators gain access to a wide range of networking opportunities necessary to scale their enterprises. Jonah Kirabo, through his resilient and goal driven passion to plant five million trees by 2025 was chosen as the winner of the Dow Africa Social Champion Award. Dow, with the chief aim to contribute to the growth of several passionate innovators, is focused on driving impact through fostering diverse enabling opportunities to increase institutional strength for innovators across Africa.





"LEAP Africa is a very big source of inspiration at this time. The opportunity they give to individuals who are passionate about making impact gives us hope that collectively, we can move our nation and Africa forward. I give it to the organizing team, they did wonderfully well"

Presentation of Awards



Sahara Impact Fund Fellows posing for a picture after the presentation of awards

Over the years, different awards have been instituted and presented to the fellows based on several criteria. Throughout the fellowship year, a few fellows who were able to distinguish themselves and recorded remarkable growth in their enterprises were acknowledged and presented the Outstanding Fellows Awards. More so, one of the awardees were recognized for the Seyi Bickersteth Award for the demonstration of impeccable financial integrity and accountability in her enterprise during the fellowship year. Excitingly, a new category for the Innocent Chukwuma Award was introduced to honor a distinguished SIP Alumni in the South Eastern part of Nigeria who has made a significant contribution to youth and gender empowerment since completing the Social Innovators Programme. This award is in commemoration and celebration of the life and legacy of Late Innocent Chukwuma who served as a director of Ford Foundation, West Africa (2013–2021). Sahara Impact fund fellows who were present physically at the award ceremony were also recognized for their attendance.

The awardees are;

Outstanding Fellows Award

- Akorfa Dawson -Nadeli
- Idris Ola -The Blue- Pink Center for Women's Health

Seyi Bickersteth Award for Financial Integrity and Accountability.

- Evelyn Odeh -Emerald-Isle Foundation

Innocent Chukwuma Award for Youth and Gender Empowerment in South Eastern Nigeria

- Amanda Obidikwe- Founder- STEMi Makers Africa

Photo Story: Presentation of Awards



Akorfa Dawson receiving her Outstanding Fellow Award



A representative receiving the cash reward on behalf of Idris Ola



Evelyn Odeh- Winner of the Seyi Bickersteth Award



Dr Kole Shettima paying tribute to Late Mr Innocent Chukwuma before presentation of award



Amanda Obidikwe emotionally receiving the Innocent Chukwuma Award



Lamin Ceesay receiving his SIF certificate of attendance



Pearl Uzokwe- Director of Sahara Group Foundation

In closing out the presentation of awards , Pearl Uzokwe- Director of Sahara Group Foundation, expressed her joy at seeing the SIF fellows from across Africa present in the room today while applauding LEAP Africa for putting the event together. She went on to thank Sahara, board members and stakeholders who had been there for the journey so far. She further affirmed the commitment of the Sahara group to the programme going forward.

She remarked on how important SDG 17 was for them as an organization which has led to partnership with organizations such as LEAP Africa to actualize the dream of creating sustainable solutions. She concluded by encouraging the fellows to continue fueling their dreams and advised them to support each other through their amazing alumni network.

To officially close out the ceremony, Kehinde Ayeni -Chief Operating Officer, LEAP Africa appreciated the delegates, fellows and audience present physically and virtually. She expressed her due gratification to all the sponsors, partners, board members and stakeholders who made the event a success. On a final note, she invited the LEAP Africa team to the stage to sing the LEAP Africa song as they ushered the event to a beautiful close.



Kehinde Ayeni- Chief Operating Officer, LEAP Africa giving the closing remarks

Photo story: The Event



An overview of the venue before the arrival of guests



Guests registering at the event



SIP Fellows mingling before the start of the event



LEAP Leadership Institute stand at event



Clare Omatseye extending a warm welcome to Henry Kaestner

Photo story: The Event



Cross-section of the audience



Volunteers at the registration stand



Board members enjoying the event



Fellows at the event



Drama entertainment by the E-Fest group

Photo story: The Event



Guests listening to the speakers



Cross-section of the audience during the speed talk session



A sign language interpreter on stage during the speed talk session



The audience clapping for the speakers at the end of the speed talks session

Photo story: The Event



The audience engaging the panel during the Q&A session



Guests networking after the event



Guests mingling after the event



2021/2022 SIP Fellows



Guest taking a photo with panelist

Appendix

SIPA 2022 AGENDA

1.	9:00-9:20am	Arrivals	Guest and LEAP Protocol team
2.	9:20-9:25am	National Anthem	Singer
3.	9:25-9:30am	Welcome remarks	Amabelle Nwakanma
4.	9:30-9:40am	Opening address	Ogochukwu Ekezie
5.	9:40-9:50am	Interlude	Drama
6.	9:50-10:05am	Keynote	Henry Kaestner
7.	10:05-10:20am	Speed Talk 1	Efosa Ojomo (recorded)
8.	10:20-10:30am	Performance	Havfy (spoken word)
9.	10:30-10:45am	Speed Talk 2	Vanessa Garrison
10.	10:45-11:00am	Speed Talk 3	Sangu Delle (Recorded)
11.	11:00-11:10am	Interlude	Sponsors appreciation video
12.	11:10-11:20am	Performance	Dreamcatchers
13.	11:20-11:50am	Panel	Moderator - Michelin Ntiru
14.	11:50-12:00am	Q&A	Moderator - Michelin Ntiru
15.	12:00-12:15pm	Outgoing Class - SIP 2021/2022 Fellows Unveil - Sahara Impact Fund 2021/2022	IT Team
16.	12:15-12:20pm	Partnership speech	DOW - Adeoti Adebisi
17.	12:20-12:35pm	Award Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seyi Bickersteth Award for Financial Integrity and Accountability • Innocent Chukwuma Award for Youth and Gender Empowerment in Southeastern Nigeria • Outstanding Fellows Award • Top Sahara Impact Fund Fellows 	Presenters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bickersteth Family representative • LEAP Board members • Ford Foundation - Boladale Sobowale • Union Bank - Ogochukwu Ekezie • Sahara Group - Pearl Uzokwe & Sahara Directors
18.	12:35-12:40pm	Closing remarks	Kehinde Ayeni
19.	12:40-12:50pm	LEAP Song	All LEAPers



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