



YDoS 2021 Report

Documenting Impact Stories from
Around Africa

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Acknowledgement

'Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much'. – Helen Keller

These words were the spirited unison with which the success of YDoS 2021 was hinged on. Through the unwavering support of partners, stakeholders and the entire youth ecosystem within our network, great impact was made in no small measure. To say we are grateful is quite an understatement as we have seen firsthand what young people around Africa are capable of doing given the right support and platform.

To our highly esteemed partners and sponsors, we are glad that you are onboard this moving train to drive youth development. Thank you for yielding your time and resources for a worthy cause.

To participants (project leads and volunteers) you are valued! you matter!! and Africa is a better place because of your contribution.

To the board, management and staff of LEAP Africa, you are stars! A dream team driven by the need to see a transformed Africa by Africans.

Obamwonyi Hope Imuetinyan
MERL Manager, LEAP Africa

Core Partners and Sponsors



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Executive Summary

Youth activism over the last few years in Africa has taken different dimensions including organized protests, volunteerism, community service amongst other key initiatives. It is no longer news that young people are at a critical stage in their lives and require healthy channels to unleash their potentials. In the wake of a pandemic ravaged world, it is important

to offer reassurance to young people that they matter and their contribution makes a difference in transforming Africa.

We are in a race against time in an attempt to ensure that young people contribute maximally to the attainment of the global goals. It has become pertinent to leverage Africa's youthful population in a concerted effort to build momentum for active participation in social change and development of the continent

The Youth Day of Service (YDoS) is nothing short of an attempt to pull together pockets of interventions and engagements by young people to fuel Africa's transformation. As an ecosystem builder, LEAP Africa seeks to bring together interventions happening in silos in a systemic way that fosters reinforcement, sustainability and collaboration.

The Youth Day of Service (YDoS) 2021 was launched in August to commemorate the [International Youth Day](#) to bring youth issues to the attention of the international community and to celebrate the potential of youth as active partners in the global society. The YDoS offers a unique opportunity for young people to play active roles in their communities by leading or joining projects for social good. At its inception in 2020, the YDoS, was launched in Nigeria with participants from various states across the Nigeria. It was successfully engaged over 500 youth leading projects in various communities and over 1 million direct and indirect beneficiaries.

Riding on the success of the previous year, YDoS 2021 unveiled its pan-African vision to reach more youth and promote youth activism through meaningful community engagements.

This report is divided into 3 critical section – An introductory section which focuses on the goals and objectives of the YDoS while also laying a background for the Pan-African vision of the 2021 event. The second section focuses on key finds and outcomes from the week-long event. This section forms a critical part of this report as it leverages storytelling to spotlight interventions and initiatives by selected project leads. These stories are told to draw insight and learnings while highlighting the impact made by young people who participated in the event. The third and final part of this report focuses on insights and key learnings from the findings. It helps to meaningfully understand the implication of the numbers and findings from the previous section.

To this end, the following outcomes were realized:

- 22 countries in Africa participated with over 1500 registered participants – 53% female, 47% male.
- More than 1200 youth volunteered for various projects with about 300 project leads in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Demographic data revealed that 55% of participants were between the ages 23-30 years while 27% were between 16-22 years a clear indication that young people are willing to engaged and be engaged meaningful when giving the opportunity and platform.
- 72% of participants revealed that they have previously volunteered. This means that active engagement of young people in ventures that utilizes their agency creates a future reinforcement of same positive behaviours.
- Increasingly, it has been discovered that most social enterprises started as one-off projects that outlived the project circle. Across Africa, more than 200 projects were

executed in pockets to alleviate the plight of communities in distress. With enough support and engagement, these projects have the potential to morph into social enterprises that targets wicked problems in the society. Interestingly, research has increasingly shown that social enterprises have the capacity to drive development exponentially if they are well supported to become sustainable and impactful.

- The global covid19 pandemic opened up new possibilities in development interventions that were previously unharnessed. Various projects implemented offered

a blend of virtual, physical and blended elements. 16% of projects executed were virtual, 64% were physical while 21% was blended. This means that some projects were executed simply from a mobile device while reaching and impacting several beneficiaries irrespective of geographical location. This is a clear indication that apart from resource mobilization, a key element in youth participation is the will to make a change as various avenues are now within reach with little or no financial investments required.

- Insights from the evaluation revealed that projects implemented were centred around at least 12 out of 17 global goals. The project leads and volunteers were able to situate their solutions within the goals by localizing and contextualizing it to their lived realities. With the pockets of interventions that occurred across 22 African countries, it is obvious that young people are critical to the actualization of the global goals. Their creativity, energy and youthfulness can be leveraged to ensure that vision 2030 is achieved with maximum impact.
- The array of partners and sponsors that played vital roles helped to pivot the YDOS2021 to achieve the success it attained. This brings to the fore, the need for collaboration and partnership among social sector partners on one hand and the private sector on the other hand. The world has become so integrated that youth development and nation building can no longer be left in the hands of a few development partners to tackle. Hence, all hands and hearts must be engaged to turn the wheel of Africa's growth and development.



Introduction

Why Young People?

Africa is blessed! With a thriving youth population of over 90 million which is expected to triple in 2050ⁱ, the continent is expected to reap her demographic dividends if adequate human capital investments are made. Although the continent is bedevilled with challenges that threatens the core of her existence, its human capital can be leveraged to pursue a path of peace and prosperity.

Young people are at a critical stage in their lives where they are trying to engage themselves in formal schools; economic activities for better livelihoods; forming bonds and families; engaging in healthy or risky behaviour;

engaging their agency in decision making while attempting to climb the social ladder.ⁱⁱ

Majority of youth in Africa do not have stable economic opportunities. Of Africa's nearly 420 million youth aged 15-35, one-third are unemployed and discouraged, another third is engaged in the informal sector which is volatile, unstable and vulnerable. Interestingly, only one in six is in wage employment. The problem is not just unemployment but underemployment, which peaks at just over half of youth in the labor force in low-income countries.

While 10 to 12 million youth enter the workforce each year, only 3.1 million jobs are created, leaving vast numbers of youth unemployed.ⁱⁱⁱ The consequences of youth unemployment in Africa are pervasive and severe: unemployment translates to poorer living conditions, fuels migration out of Africa, and contributes to conflict on the continent itself. Above all, youth unemployment constitutes a failure to capitalize on one of the continent's greatest assets for growth: its large and growing population of talented young people. There is therefore an urgent need to create opportunities for youth, with tremendous potential for impact. LEAP Africa believes in the youthfulness, agility and creativity of Africa's population

The only way we can truly change the world is by inspiring and empowering the youth that live in it.

YDoS 2021 Goal and Objectives

The Youth Day of Service is an annual week-long youth led social impact programme designed to rally the agency and creativity of young people. It is an act of service across Africa and is scheduled to hold the week of the ‘International Youth Day’ commencing August 12th yearly. It is Leadership in Action! It presents the unique opportunity to reinforce the need to engage youth for a decade of action and rally an ecosystem of like-minded organizations to perform acts of service in their communities.

The Youth Day of Service (YDoS) is an opportunity to spur young people (13-35) to action, champion social change in communities and demonstrate by doing; influence other organizations to take on personal leadership and be the change they want to see in society. The campaign attracts change agents from across Africa who share their community change projects from respective locations via social media using the hashtag #YouthDayofService, #YDoS #Youthful&Useful

Objectives



Goal: To foster youth engagements for community development across Africa

Expected Outcomes

100

Youth champions/
micro-influencers



5000

Volunteers



20

African Countries



1000

Projects/project
leads



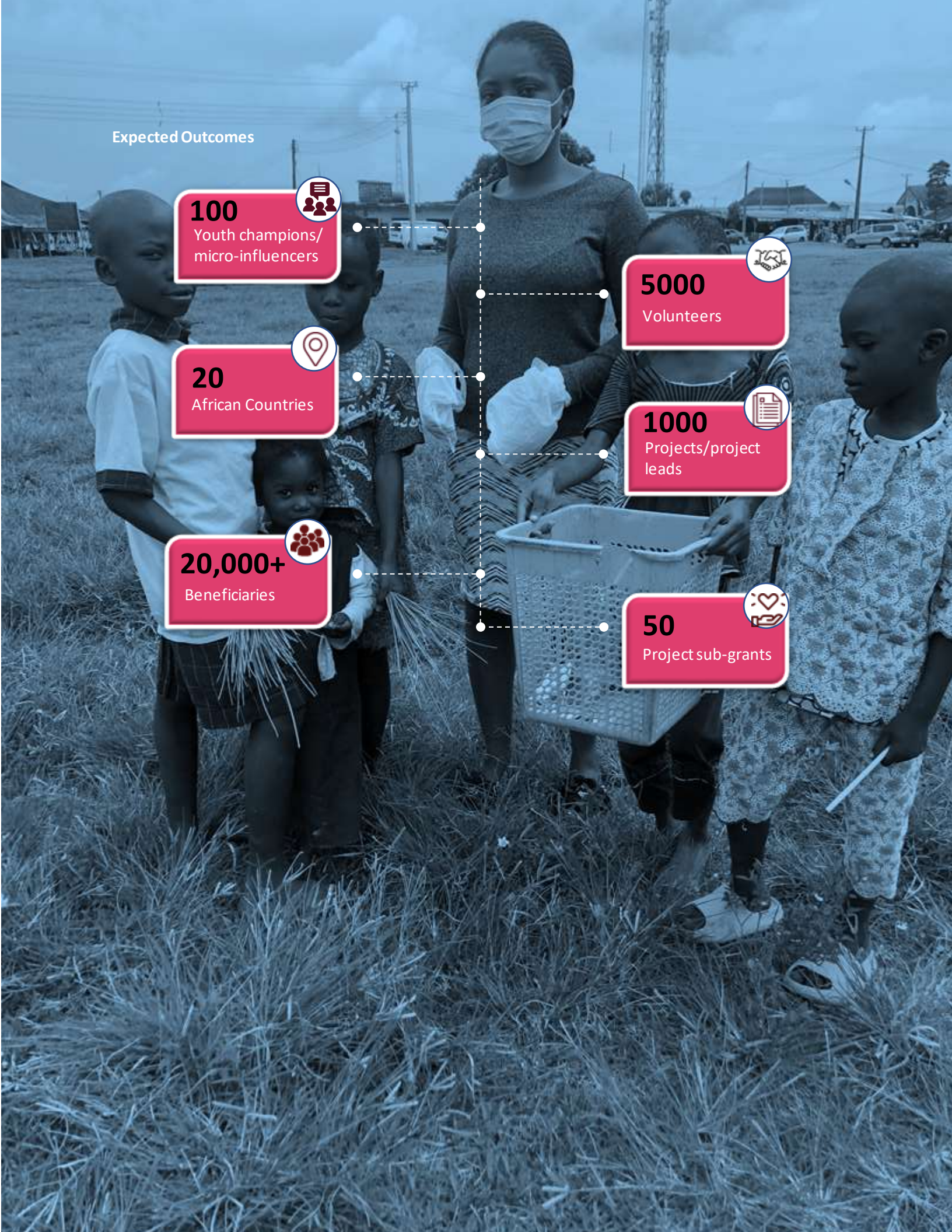
20,000+

Beneficiaries



50

Project sub-grants






PROJECT GREY
YDOS Youth Day of Service
PROJECT BLESSING BAGS

YDoS 2021: Key Outcome

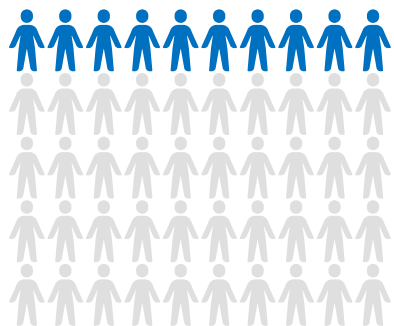


Leveraging youth agency for the actualization of the goals.



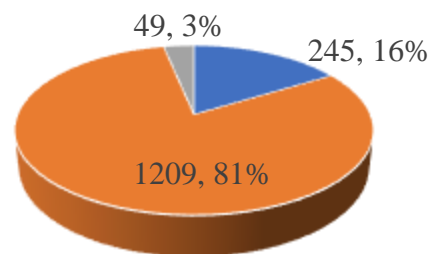
22 Countries

Across Africa participated in the week-long event.



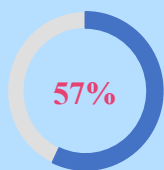
1503

Total Registrations



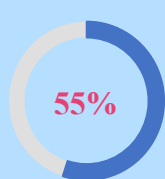
■ Project Leads ■ Volunteers ■ None

Gender



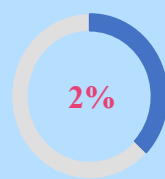
were female while **43%** male registered

Age



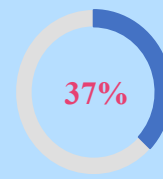
of participants were between 23-30 years, while **27%** were between 16-22 years.

Disability



are Persons with Disability (PwDs)

Employment



are students, **25%** are gainfully employed while **22%** are self-employed.



72%

Of volunteers hand previously engaged in volunteering in the past while **28%** were first time volunteers.

Youth and Personal Leadership in Action

Small acts when multiplied by millions of people can transform the world.

1+ Million

Indirect beneficiaries from communities all over Africa

12 out of 17

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were contributed to.

125+

Projects in various communities in Africa.

Project type



Virtual Physical Both

41

Sub-grant winners across Africa

18

Exceptional Project Award Winners

Youthful & Useful!

We believe in the power of collective action for creating positive and lasting change.





Youthful and Useful: Documenting Impact Stories from Around Africa

With pockets of interventions completed across 22 countries in Africa, there is a growing recognition that young people are neither docile or uninterested in their own development. They are capable of galvanizing change given the right resources, support and platform. Many impact stories were recorded across Africa; however, three stories are told of youth leaders who navigated the terrains of hostility and inadequacy using only the resources at their disposal to cause positive change in their communities. Their interventions spurred other youth to action through courageous acts of kindness to make life more meaningful for others.

Oguta Clean and Green Project

Location: Oguta Lake, Oguta Imo State

History has repeatedly shown that a people who have faced marginalization and neglect for a long time are often associated with violence and aggression with minimal provocation. This is the story of Oguta, a rich oil producing area in Imo state. Having endured years of gross marginalization and neglect despite their wealth in crude oil, the government and visitors are viewed with suspicion and often responded to with hostility and violence.

The team led by **Anita Ngozi Udeh** embarked on a cleaning and sensitization project at the Oguta lake to improve environmental sustainability. Although it was common knowledge that an attempt by any group of persons to embark on any intervention within the area is met aggression and defiance from the youth, the team took advantage of avenues to engage stakeholders who were influential within the community.



The Oguta Clean and Green project team started of their intervention with a sensitization programme where they created awareness on the benefit of keeping the lake and its environs clean. As expected, they were met with hostile youth who demanded their immediate exit. However, leveraging on the theme of the Youth Day of Service (YDoS) – Youthful and Useful, they were able to convince the erstwhile hostile youth of doing their part in community development despite neglect from the government. In a twist of fate, the youth voluntarily engaged their agencies in joining the cleaning exercise and mobilizing other

youth to join them. They made commitments to join subsequent activities for the betterment of the community.



The Oguta Clean and Green team echoed how fulfilling the exercise was for them as they were not only able to contribute meaningfully to keeping the environment clean but also to mobilize other youth to join them. The team lead added that it was a humbling experience to see tough and trouble ready youth turn around to become eager and ready to do their own part. It is noteworthy to add that the community residents were grateful for the innovative idea to reiterated that they were erstwhile ignorant of how they can make their lives better without government intervention. They called for more concerted efforts to engage the youth to reduce vulnerability and violence.



This experience made me realize that every young person is reachable; the manner of approach is very key when reaching out to young people - they need to be aware, informed and engaged. Bringing them to be part and parcel of a social cause will give them that sense of belonging thereby motivating them to lead a positive and impactful lifestyle in their community. - Anita Ngozi Udeh (Team Lead)

Identify and Assist Victims of Trafficking (VoTs) Project

Location: FCT, Abuja



Nigeria's triple status as a major source, transit and destination country for trafficking of women, children and other vulnerable persons poses a global challenge. Despite efforts at various levels to tackle this endemic issue, the menace is still on the increase. With the understanding of the realities of child sex trafficking, the ID VoTs team decided to embark on a project to identify and assist victims of trafficking to mark the Youth Day of Service (YDOS) 2021. The project was aimed at enlightening the public to identify signs of human trafficking and thus become an effective advocate for the early detection and safety of children and families in FCT, Abuja.

The project was implemented with 15 volunteers including representatives from the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) and youth volunteers. The team took off at a motor park to enlighten transporters, passengers and drivers about child trafficking and how to identify victims who are held against their will in public places.

Although the primary focus of the project was on public enlightenment, the team was able to identify firsthand three teenage girls trafficked from Jos in transit to Lagos and Ibadan. Upon interrogation, it was determined that the girls were unaware of where they were headed and had been made airy promises of a better life. The early and accurate identification of these minors as victims was treated as priority, to ensure that they were rescued from exploitation and referred to the safe care of NAPTIP for protection,

assistance and support. After due investigations, NAPTIP updated contacted the guardians of the girls both at the state of origin and destination to pick their wards. This was done to facilitate further investigation of both parties upon their arrival. At the time of compiling this report, the guardians were yet to report at NAPTIP headquarters. The highlight for the team was the identification of vulnerable victims who could have become another statistic of child sex trafficking. The project created awareness among the general public with testimonials from participants and motorists.

This program did a great job providing actionable signs for identifying human trafficking situations in a way that encouraged instant application. I am already sensitive to these signs. – **Anthony Odeseye, Assistant Commandant of Corps, Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), Abuja Headquarters**



This project was very insightful and made perfect sense in helping motorist and passengers identify victims of trafficking in a vehicle. I am thankful for having the opportunity to be in this vehicle today.
– **Jonathan Ejum, Passenger**

Girls' health and Education Project

Location: Dar es salaam city - Ubungo Municipal, Tanzania



Amongst vulnerable youth, young adolescent girls are faced with multiple challenges that makes them easy prey to societal vices. At the risk of unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and gender-based violence, it has become pertinent to pay more attention to their plight and offer safe alternatives for their transitioning to a productive adult-life.

Girls First Club was launched at Urafiki Secondary School, Dar es Salaam to cater for the need of girls especially indigent ones and provide them additional educational support to help them thrive. The school head was particularly impressed and excited about the offerings of the club to the girls and allocated about 3 hours for the extra-curricular activities. To him, the club will serve as a much-needed handshake between teachers and parents where the latter is admonished to offer more support for their girls to enable better outcomes.

The students were formally inducted in the club from different classes and engagement started. The club created a safe space for the students to share their challenges and collaborate to tackle common challenges they were facing. During their club meetings, the girls decided to volunteer as tutors to younger girls at Maisha Academy in the Qualifying Test (QT) education. They saw past their needs and decided to extend a helping hand to other indigent students within their community.

The girls echoed the need for more interactions that allows them to share their vulnerability and seek mentorship. They also brainstormed on how to ensure the club remains sustainable after their graduation as this will help younger girls while they become volunteer tutors and mentors on the long run.

At Maisha Academy, the students were taught about leadership and how they can have raised aspirations about their future despite their indigent backgrounds. Interestingly, the establishment of the club in Maisha Academy has helped the girls to see themselves positively thereby culminating in them actively taking up leadership roles within the school. They instituted positions within the club and held elections to determine the executive members of the club. This is an indication that when young people are supported, they are capable of leading credible and effective initiative for common good. The elections were deemed successful as leaders emerged. They went further to request for mentorship and support from the team to handle their portfolios credibly.



Insight and Learnings

The events and activities of the YDoS 2021 were inspiring with several impact stories shared by participants who found the exercise fulfilling and worthwhile. Here are a few insights and learnings gleaned from the historic event:

- **Young People are eager to engage their agency**

Insights revealed that over 75% of participants were aged between 16-30 years, while the rest less than 20% were 30 and above. This is a clear indicator that young people are eager to participate and engage their agency in useful and meaningful ventures. It will be useful to reinforce positive youth development approaches by putting young people at the centre of their own developmental efforts in a way that allows

them express themselves positively. It is essential to trust young people and leverage all their potential for the good of the society.

- **Youth Engagement Fosters Volunteerism**

A major objective of Youth Day of Service (YDoS) is to foster youth activism in form of community engagements and volunteerism. The weeklong event was designed to spur young people to meaningful action that will in turn lead to community development. The responses elicited has shown that engaging young people whether virtually or physically fosters their drive towards volunteerism. Consequently, it can be opined that frequent engagement of young people will serve as a reinforcement of positive behaviours – of which volunteerism is a critical part of.

- **Young People are focal to the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs)**

Insights from the evaluation revealed that projects implemented were centred around at least 12 out of 17 global goals. The project leads and volunteers were able to situate their solutions within the goals by localizing and contextualizing it to their lived realities. With the pockets of interventions that occurred across 22 African countries, it is obvious that young people are critical to the actualization of the global goals. Their creativity, energy and youthfulness can be leveraged to ensure that vision 2030 is achieved with maximum impact.

- **Projects executed are potentially budding social enterprise**

Increasingly, it has been discovered that most social enterprises started as one-off projects that outlived the project circle. Across Africa, more than 200 projects were executed in pockets to alleviate the plight of communities in distress. With enough support and engagement, these projects have the potential to morph into social enterprises that targets wicked problems in the society. This means that project leads who are inspired to become social innovators must seek support and build capacity to grow their ideas into bankable enterprises that solves problems. Interestingly, research has increasingly shown that social enterprises have the capacity to drive development exponentially if they are well supported to become sustainable and impactful.

- **Partnership is key for effective implementation**

The array of partners and sponsors that played vital roles helped to pivot the YDoS 2021 to achieve the success it attained. This brings to the fore, the need for collaboration and partnership among social sector

partners on one hand and the private sector on the other hand. The world has become so integrated that youth development and nation building can no longer be left in the hands of a few development partners. Hence, all hands and hearts must be engaged to turn the wheel of Africa's growth and development.

Another critical success factor in partnership is the need for effective stakeholder engagement which has the potential to bind multi-sector partners to fighting a common course. This means that deliberate and conscious effort must be made to engage stakeholders' ways that allow them take ownership of a cause while contributing their quota.

- **Versality of projects**

The global covid19 pandemic opened up new possibilities in development interventions that were previously unharnessed. Various projects implemented offered a blend of virtual, physical and blended elements. 16% of projects executed were virtual, 64% were physical while 21% was blended. This means that some projects were executed simply from a mobile device while reaching and impacting several beneficiaries irrespective of geographical location. This is a clear indication that apart from resource mobilization, a key element in youth participation is the will to make a change as various avenues are now within reach with little or no financial investments required.

- **Funding is critical to execution of social solutions**

Resource mobilization has always posed a critical challenge to young people as they navigate the terrains to make impact in their communities. Project leads echoed their need for financial investments to help them scale their solutions to reach more people. Interestingly, the YDoS offers a unique opportunity for impact investors to test/pilot solutions in small pockets before making huge investments in scaling those solutions. This means a call for investors and financiers to pay more attention to young people as they engage their agencies in small pockets of interventions within Africa. Their solutions can easily be leveraged to offer unique solutions to wicked social problems that Africa is faced with.



Hand Writing

9th/18/2011 Fine art

The Capacity of the basket is
More than the Capacity of the man



The basket

Wednesday

Saturday

Monday



Looking Ahead – All Hearts, Hands and Heads on Deck!

The decade of action is upon us which means there is less than ten years left for the implementation of the United Nations Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This agenda is a blueprint for peace and prosperity among all nations with no one left behind. However, according to the 2020 Sustainable Development Report, African nations are behind in the implementation of these goals. For the actualization of these goals in a timely fashion, Africa must look to its burgeoning youth population. The African Unions’ Agenda 2063 also offers systemic roadmaps to engaging Africa’s youthful population for the transformation of the continent.

More than ever, the continent is on the spotlight with a teeming youth population often described as a time bomb or a pulsating gold mine. The decision to transform Africa through capital investment in her youth is one everyone is called to make. With the annual commemoration of the international Youth Day

globally, it is a call to pay critical attention to young people and what they have to offer. Continuous neglect of young people is disastrous to global growth and development; hence, they must be supported to leverage their agency for the betterment of the world.

No one sector is capable of burdening Africa's huge challenges hence, all hearts, hands and heads must be on deck to move Africa to her rightly place on the world stage. Multi-sector partners must collaborate to mobilize resources and offer support to young people and their enablers to ensure that young people thrive because their contribution matter.

Appendix

Sub-Grant Winners

1. Fizzle Power Tech (Nigeria)
2. One Girl One School Pack (Nigeria)
3. Project VFN, Violence Free Nigeria (Nigeria)
4. Clean Water Resources for Better Health (Nigeria)
5. Support youth scheme initiative (Nigeria)
6. Zero Hunger Project (Uganda)
7. Young woman marriage in Africa (South Africa)
8. OpEd Writing for Teachers/Educators (Nigeria)
9. Smile Charities (Kenya)
10. Build the youth skill acquisition project (Nigeria)
11. PickThatTrash (Nigeria)
12. Upcycling plastic bottles into window blinds (Nigeria)
13. Project 5000 (Nigeria)
14. OPERATION CLEAN UP OUR HOSPITAL (Nigeria)
15. Operation Smile (Nigeria)
16. Mak2school (Nigeria)
17. Sharing Hope Foundation (Ghana)
18. Teenage Pregnancy Not 4Me (Uganda)
19. R4C Ability Project (Nigeria)
20. Green Tech Girls Summer Bootcamp 2021 (Nigeria)
21. Food for Elderly Widows (Nigeria)
22. Child Sexual Abuse Awareness (Lagos, Nigeria)
23. Mental Health Awareness (Ghana)
24. Together Jebbu (Jebbu Miango, Nigeria)
25. Ajegunle Food Bank (Lagos, Nigeria)
26. Support don't Punish (Kaduna, Nigeria)
27. Business and Vocational Training (BVT) for Women (Ghana)
28. Walk and Clean Project (Ibadan, Nigeria)
29. Safe Crossing (Ibadan, Nigeria)
30. Bins Water Project (Nairobi, Kenya)
31. Book Aid Sierra Leone (Sierra Leone)
32. Skill set (Ibadan, Nigeria)
33. Tree plantation and climate change awareness campaign (Sokoto, Nigeria)
34. We-Stand Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (Jos, Nigeria)
35. Youth Empowerment with Recycling and Upcycling Skills (YERUS 2021 (Cross River, Nigeria)
36. Youth Engagement in Solving community Problems (Cameroon)
37. Arikanki WASH Project (Ibadan, Nigeria)
38. A Clean Environment, Your Healthy Comfort (Lesotho)
39. Advocacy on Sexual Abuse and Distribution of Sanitary Pad (FCT, Nigeria)
40. ICHO (Inua Community Help Organization) (Nairobi, Kenya)
41. Almajiri is also a child (Zaria, Nigeria)

Exceptional Projects/Project Leads

1. Community clean-up /sensitization (Nigeria)
2. Youth Stakeholders Roundtable Dialogue (Nigeria)
3. Leader Shape: Redefining Peace and unity in the Nation (Nigeria)
4. Edu Catch-Up (Nigeria)
5. Oguta Clean and Green Platform (Nigeria)
6. Street waste Clean-up to craft initiative (Nigeria)
7. Girls Health and Education (Tanzania)
8. Identify and Assist Victims of Trafficking (VoTs) (Nigeria)
9. The GAME for Hope Initiative (Nigeria)
10. Green Mindsets (Zimbabwe)
11. "Preparing the youth for leadership" (Nigeria)
12. Self-Employability Skills (Nigeria)
13. DE BELIEVER'S EMPOWERING THE FUTURE (Nigeria)
14. Operation Clean Calabar (Nigeria)
15. Future Visions (Nigeria)
16. A Sensitization Exercise on Peace building and Countering Hate speech (Nigeria)
17. Gbenga Adeyemi (Nigeria)
18. Self Defence for Female Gender (Nigeria)

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ⁱⁱ World Development Report (2007) Development and the Next Generation. Available at [link](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ AfDB (2016) Jobs for Youth in Africa: Catalysing Youth Opportunity across Africa. Available at [Link](#)