

YBI-N



YOUTH BUSINESS INITIATIVE NIGERIAN NEWSLETTER | JUNE, 2009

YOUTH BUSINESS INITIATIVE
NIGERIA FUND RAISING
DINNER

Unleashing the
Spirit of Entrepreneurship
in Nigeria

VOLUNTEERING:
A WAY OF GIVING
BACK TO THE SOCIETY

Poultry Farmer,
Mr Elijah Abiodun Daramola
YBI N Entrepreneur of the year 2008

ABOUT US

Youth Business Initiative-Nigeria is a youth enterprise programme that belongs to the Prince's Youth Business International network (A network organization of 39 independent youth enterprise programmes worldwide). Youth Business Initiative-Nigeria was founded by Alero Okotie-Eboh Jadesimi in 2001, following contact with Youth Business International on a visit to the United Kingdom in 2000. YBI-Nigeria was registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission in May 2001, as a non-governmental business organization.

The programme provides direct support to its young entrepreneurs as well as volunteer business mentoring, training and related support to loan recipients, critical to the success of their small businesses. YBI-Nigeria encourages all disadvantaged sectors of the young population between the ages of 18-35 who are in need of the opportunities provided by self employment.

The programme held its first fundraising dinner in May 2001 and raised funds for loans to 30 young people under the pilot programme. These businesses ranged from; Local food sales, Poultry and Fish farming, Pig keeping, Screen printing, hair dressing, a cyber café and catering services.

YBI-Nigeria continues to develop a culture of entrepreneurship and increase self-esteem and life skills among young people in Nigeria.

VISION

Leading promoter of entrepreneurship among youth
Catalyst for reduction of unemployment of youth
Stimulant for growth of economy

MISSION

Provision of access to financial support to young people with viable business propositions who will otherwise not be able to access financing elsewhere.

YBI-NIGERIA BOARD

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Front Cover: Mr. Ahmad Ishaq Imam, Tailor,
set up in business by YBI-Nigeria in 2004
he has since expanded his business to employ more tailors.
News letter June issue kindly sponsored by
Mr.Itua Ighodalo YBI-Nigeria Trustee/Partner SIAO.

Editors Note

Ever since the first YBI-Nigeria fundraising event in May 2001 which raised funds to support the first 30 young people to start up their own business. YBI-Nigeria has gone from strength to strength to support over 155 young people.

This year's fundraising event held on June 5, 2009 was to raise even more awareness of YBI-Nigeria's work, opportunities on how to assist and funds to support young people. It was also a cross-cultural experience for everyone because of the Fusion Bollywood dance performance by an Indian dance Troupe led by Sandip Sopakaar.

The Chairman of YBI-Nigeria Board, Chief Emeka Anyaoku in his welcome speech at the event emphasized the importance of YBI-Nigeria's work by having such events when he said that youth unemployment remains among the main challenges facing Nigeria today.

A common thread runs through most of the articles in this issue. Kunle Akinkugbe finds a lot of personal fulfillment in being a friend of YBI-Nigeria, Mr.Simon Olagai says of volunteering, that it gives one the feeling of fulfillment which is irreplaceable and believes that people must be encouraged to be the best they can possibly be. Opoola, the Best Mentor 2009 believes that time should be created for ones passion. Pastor Ighodalo says your dreams propel you to your destiny and allow you to leave a legacy, he however, believes that one must work hard to achieve that dream.

Elijah Daramola, YBI-Nigeria entrepreneur of the year 2008 underscores it all by saying that, as a young person, you have a dream and if help is not available, you can die with that dream, but the seed money given to him by YBI-Nigeria made his dream to become a reality. I hope that this June issue of our newsletter brings you closer to supporting YBI-Nigeria's efforts to empower our disadvantaged youth.

EJIDE UKELONU
CEO

CONDOLENCE MESSAGE

The Board of Trustees announces with sadness the death of Mrs. Mabel Efuntloye Williams (1921-July 8 2009), beloved wife of Akintola Williams and Mrs. Theresa Ukachi Kunuji (November 18, 1935-April 21, 2009) beloved mother of Mrs. Elsie Payne- Hamman.

The Board offers its heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. May God give them the strength to bear their loss and grant the departed eternal rest.

WELCOME ADDRESS BY CHIEF EMEKAANYAOKU (CHAIRMAN BOARD OF TRUSTEES) AT

YBI NIGERIA

FUNDRAISING

DINNER 2009

The Personal Representative of Her Excellency, Hajia (Dr) Turai Umaru Yar'adua, the First Lady of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Mrs Salamatu Suleiman, Hon Minister of Women Affairs

Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Captains of Industry, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

I am delighted to welcome you all to this fund raising event by YBI Nigeria. And I would like to specially welcome the Representative of our First Lady whose personal attendance was, we were regretfully informed, prevented at the last minute by pressing national issues..

I must admit that although Mr. President is the Patron of YBI Nigeria, I and my fellow Trustees of YBI had been encouraged to invite the First Lady to be our Special Guest of Honour by her personal outstanding record of practical concern and involvement in tackling some of our nation's serious social challenges.

We had watched with admiration her hands-on leadership of the Women and Youth Empowerment Foundation (WAYEF) and such other national efforts as to immunize our children against polio, to help our women fight against cancer and to campaign against the menace of HIV/Aids. Indeed, we believe that YBI can partner with WAYEF in helping the young women and men whom WAYEF takes off the streets and assists with skills acquisition, to establish their own businesses.

This is why we are confident that Her Excellency the First Lady would want to encourage and support YBI's efforts to contribute to tackling the scourge of youth unemployment in Nigeria.

It is well known that over 50% of Nigeria's population are young people of 25 and under. And every year our educational institutions -- the universities, the polytechnics and the various vocational colleges and-- release into the job market millions of young people who remain job seekers for most of the time. And these do not include the other millions in the villages who either stop their formal education after primary school or have not gone to school at all and have little interest in farming.

Little wonder then that in the country, there is endless drift from our rural to our urban areas; that the spate of armed robberies has continued to rise; and that kidnapping and hostage taking is now becoming common place in Nigeria.

All these evils can be mainly attributed to the frustration and unemployment that is the lot of too many of our young people.

Stories abound from the victims of armed robberies and kidnapping who were fortunate enough to survive the ordeal that many of their assailants are well spoken and reasonably articulate in the English

language thus indicating that they have been through post-primary educational institutions.

It is also an undisputed fact that among the factors which adversely affect Nigeria's image abroad are the activities that we describe as "419". According to available statistics, these activities are mainly carried out partly through written communications and mostly through the internet by computer-literate individuals. There can be little doubt that in most cases, these activities are the products of the misapplied ingenuity of the idle minds of educated and criminally-inclined unemployed young people.

Youth unemployment therefore remains among the main challenges facing our country at this time. It is awareness of the scope of this challenge that underscores the work of YBI Nigeria.

In a brief summarisation, YBI Nigeria provides seed capital and mentoring to young Nigerians who have sound business plans but are unable to raise the necessary funds for actualizing their plans because they lack collaterals to offer to financial lending institutions including the commercial banks.

So far YBI Nigeria has helped about 140 young men and women to establish their own businesses in a variety of fields. And in this, YBI has had the active cooperation of the Rotary Club of Nigeria whose members provide mentoring to the young entrepreneurs.

YBI has been operating only in Lagos State but we are keen to roll out its operation to other states of the Federation. The main obstacle in its way of doing so, and also to its being able to sustain its current level of activities, is lack of funds.

That is why we have organised this fund raising dinner to which we believe that the musical and dancing troupe from India will add an exciting dimension. I want in welcoming them on their first visit to Nigeria to specially acknowledge the role of Mrs Vimla Ramnani, a fellow Trustee of YBI, in arranging the troupe's visit. From my past enjoyment of Indian music and dancing in the different parts of India that I have been privileged to visit, I am sure that we are in for a treat this evening.

In conclusion, we are glad that all of you, our guests are here. And we are hopeful that you will all through your donations; demonstrate your practical support for the development of entrepreneurship and tackling the challenge of youth unemployment in our country.

I thank you all for your attention.

Chief Emeka Anyaoku CON, CFR, GCVO
Lagos, 5 June 2009.



June 5th 2009

Dear Friends and Supporters of Youth Business Initiative Nigeria,

The Prince of Wales Youth Business International (YBI) is proud to be a partner of Youth Business Initiative Nigeria, a leading and long established member of our global network. We applaud your efforts to help talented young Nigerians establish new businesses and thereby sustainably strengthen their communities and the economy. Talented entrepreneurs like poultry farmer Elijah Daramola who was one of the three finalists in the global YBI Entrepreneur of the Year competition in 2008.

There are 37 other youth business initiatives in our network all working with the same methodology in as many different countries and environments. Our network has grown by 30% a year for the last four years and last year nearly 7,000 new young entrepreneurs were supported.

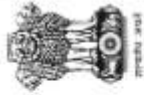
However the scale of youth employment is sadly enormous and getting worse in this difficult economic climate. At least 100 million young people are officially unemployed and many times more are either not formally counted or in underemployment. Your support is vital in helping Youth Business Initiative Nigeria expand and reach more young people. By 2020 the YBI network goal is to be supporting over 100,000 new young entrepreneurs each year and we very much hope that in a key and sizeable country like Nigeria, Youth Business Initiative Nigeria will be an important part of that total!

On behalf of HRH The Prince of Wales, President of YBI, I congratulate you on your contribution and wish you a wonderful and exciting evening.

Best wishes,



Andrew Devenport
Chief Executive Officer



भारत का उच्चायुक्त
अबुजा (नाइजीरिया)

High Commissioner of India
Abuja (Nigeria)



Message

I was pleased to learn that Youth Business Initiative of Nigeria is organising a fund raising event involving an Indian cultural troupe. I wish this important event all success.

Through my many interactions with Nigeria youth, I have been impressed with their sincere and hardworking nature. Their energy and commitment to progress are often hobbled by lack of proper technical guidance and financial resources. I am convinced that given some initial hand-holding by committed, non-partisan professionals, Nigerian youth can not only lift themselves, they can create a virtuous cycle by setting example for others to follow.

This is why success of dedicated NGOs such as the Youth Business Initiative is so critical. I hope that their agenda would receive support from all like minded stake-holders.



(Majresh Sachdev)

GOODWILL MESSAGES



MY EXPERIENCE AS A Mentor with YBI

By Akindele Opoola

I have always been involved in helping young people by way of counseling, financial assistance especially in their quest for a better education, so when a similar opportunity to impact presented itself again through YBI Nigeria I welcomed it with open arms. 2008 Y'ello Care Project by MTN Nigeria was that opportunity when YBI came calling to MTN and some of us were introduced as volunteering staff willing to partner with YBI in carrying out their objectives.

And again, it has been an unconscious habit and part of me to be interested in helping younger ones and even contemporaries, so, as I was assigned a Mentee by YBI, I just accepted it as part of my normal routines. In my mind I seem to say "I would also contribute my quota here, that's, sowing back to the society has helped me as well"

My Experience and Challenges

The experience is satisfying to know that you are in a position of influence, to use the basic skills of business I have learnt over the years, impacting them on others who see you as a role model. Although, like any other responsibilities, it has its own challenges, for example I'm always very busy, working with a multi-national such as MTN Nigeria and serving as the Vice President of her Employee Multipurpose cooperative society, pastoring a small Church, earning additional degrees though distant learning are no small tasks in themselves. But I

have discovered a very important thing that whatever you have passion for, you would always create a time for it.

Mentoring a mentee with YBI entails you visiting your mentee to monitor his/her progress on their business, in my case I was assigned to a lady, Mosunmola Philips operating a Business Centre with a loan from YBI. My joy knew no bounds when she eventually completed paying back the loan and could stand on her own to continue with the business she started, she could as well mentor others. I'm also part of a Panel of Interviewers assessing and determining young people between the ages of 18 and 35 who had applied for loan to start their businesses. These loan prospects are assessed based on their knowledge of the business they intend to start, experience, interest and several other factors before the loans are granted.

However, I was thrilled when I received a call from YBI that I had been nominated for an award. "Do I really deserve to be recognized", I asked myself. On Friday, 5th June, 2009 during YBI Nigeria fund raising event, I was awarded as "BEST MENTOR OF THE YEAR 2009" It was presented by a great personality, Emeka Anyaoku, the former Commonwealth Secretary General, who until now I never knew as the Chairman of the Non Profit Organisation, This in my own opinion is a morale boost for me, to do more in what I love to do.

BUSINESS MENTORS AND MENTORING

Mentoring is a vital part of the organisation's programme. Since the inception of Youth Business Initiative- Nigeria it has been difficult to get and sustain mentors. The reason for this cannot be far fetched as we all know that in this part of the world the citizens are too busy attending to their daily needs. Nevertheless, the organization believes that there are retired people who are still strong and are willing to do something daily, therefore, this is an avenue for them to fulfill their desires and give back to society in which they live by offering volunteer business mentoring services on the platform of Youth Business Initiative-Nigeria.

On the other hand, there are people despite their tight daily schedules who are available for this kind of service not because of money, but the fact that they have the interest of the society in mind and share in the vision of YBI-Nigeria.

The first months of trading are often the hardest and most critical. An approved applicant is really in need of a business mentor and these mentors are allocated based on the geographical area, type of business to suit the mentors skills and interest. YBI-Nigeria organizes orientation programme for mentors to brief them

about their expected roles and responsibilities while helping the young entrepreneur to succeed in the new business.

It is necessary to mention here that mentoring in Youth Business Initiative-Nigeria is a voluntary service without monetary reward, the reward is the fact that, the mentor is able to make a real difference to the survival of an enterprise and put a smile on the face of the entrepreneur (Mentee); Also, the mentor gains positive recognition amongst peers, a sense of fulfillment by passing on wisdom, and to cap it all, there is increase in the creativity of the mentor and catalyst for further innovation. An ideal mentor must be able to help a mentee (client) in the areas of; challenges, choices, creative solutions and consequences. He or she must be warm, wise, be able to gain credibility, make people (client) feel comfortable and can create a demand (visitation done at least 3-4hours monthly) for their services.

Lastly, emphasis needs to be made here that, a mentor in Youth Business Initiative-Nigeria is not required to provide funds to run the mentee's business; this is the responsibility of the organization to the client.



Bukky Olorunfemi
Business Development Officer (BDO)



YBI - N Fundraising Dinner 2009

1. Hajia.Salamatu Suleimon. Minister of Women Affairs, Representative of her Excellency,Hajia(DR.) Turai Musa Yar'Adua-First Lady of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. 2. Mrs. Gbemi Sasore. Representative of Her Excellency,Mrs.Abimbola Fashola.First Lady of Lagos State. 3. Chief Emeka Anyaoku,Chairman YBI-Nigeria Board of Trustees. 4. Representative of the First Lady of Imo state Her Excellency Mrs,Ohakim. 5. Chief Anyaoku and the Hon. Minister of State for Petroleum- Odein Ajumogobia. 6. Adedotun Sulaiman,Vice Chairman of YBI-Nigeria. 7. Mrs.Alero Okotie-Eboh Jadesimi, Initiator/Trustee YBI-Nigeria. 8. Mrs.Vimla Ramnani, Trustee and Mrs.Isioma Fidel-Enwerem, Compere. 9. Mrs.Ajumogobia (Trustee) and her mother. 10. Mr.Kunle Akinkugbe (Trustee). 11. Dotun Sulaiman and YBI-Nigeria client. 12. Chief Anyaoku and a mentor. 13. Mrs.Jadesimi,Mrs Ramnani and guest. 14. Chief and Mrs.Ggbajumo. 15. Chief Anyaoku, Chief Mrs. Benson and guest. 16. Guests 17. Chief Mrs. Olakurin, Trustee. 18. Guests. 19. Guests. 20. Dancers. 21. Dancers. 22. Dancers. All the dancers belong to the Sandip Sopakaar dance troupe, India.

UNLEASHING THE SPIRIT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NIGERIA

The problem all over the world today is leadership or should I say lack of it. I was at a dinner on Sunday evening, where a lady speaker, a lecturer from Harvard University said she was amazed at the fact that Nigeria was still so far behind countries like China, Singapore, and Malaysia when she had been ahead of them in 1960. Someone also said that it is surprising that the palm produce which was exported from Nigeria to Malaysia, and that has helped to develop the Malaysian economy is almost now nonexistent in Nigeria. In his autobiography "Awo" on page 249, Chief Awolowo said and I quote, 'when the Action Group won the election in 1951, we were quite definite as to the objectives which we were going to pursue both at the centre and in the Western Region and had fairly clear ideas as to how we would achieve them'. He went on to say "we were going to pursue the four freedoms that supported the motto of the Action Group; freedom for all, life more abundant. The four freedoms are as follows:

- 1) Freedom from British rule
- 2) Freedom from ignorance
- 3) Freedom from diseases
- 4) Freedom from wants

I believe those four freedoms are still as relevant today as they were in 1951 especially when you substitute "freedom from British rule for freedom from bad leadership". He went on to say that "after almost 100 years of British rule our land is still riddled with ignorance, diseases and wants" and enunciated his key principal political activities as:

- 1) The immediate termination of British rule in every phase of our political life
- 2) The education of all children of school-going age, and the general enlightenment of all illiterate adults and all illiterate children above school-going age
- 3) The provision of health and general welfare for all our people
- 4) The total abolition of want in our society by means of any economic policy which is both expedient and effective.

What therefore, are the ideas is that we need to pursue to achieve sustainable entrepreneurship; and a developed economy:

- 1) The provision of infrastructure and para- government establishments that promote entrepreneurship: Any government that wants to encourage entrepreneurship must provide good infrastructure, however this is not the case in today's Nigeria. It is to the credit of the government of the Western Region that we had an outstanding road network in that region, buildings and structures like the Cocoa house, Liberty stadium, the Western Nigeria television corporation, and the Western Nigeria broadcasting service, the University of Ife, now Obafemi Awolowo University, Western Nigeria Secretariat et, etc. All these provided an enabling environment that was able to unleash the entrepreneurial spirit in the people and gave them the capacity for self

expression and self actualization. Today Lagos state is trying to rapidly catch up on several years of infrastructural neglect. I hear states like Anambra, Kwara, Ogun and Delta are trying also. I pray they succeed. Other States in Nigeria should put their hands on the plow, without solid infrastructure there can be no development.

- 2) Government must also be ready to give entrepreneurial support especially in the areas of agriculture through the provision of agricultural tools and instruments, pesticides, fumigation, seedlings, fertilizer and equipment. Government will also need to guaranty the purchase of whatever the farmers can produce and provided storage so as to greatly encourage farmers to actively face their businesses. Farming and agriculture should be made noble and very attractive. In addition, banks and financial institutions should be actively encouraged to give loans and financing support to serious minded farmers, entrepreneurs and industrialists. Foreign investments, foreigners and other serious minded Nigerians should be sought after to partner with the government and among themselves in the establishment of various industries.

- 3) The third legacy requirement for entrepreneurship is a strong and disciplined civil service with clear policy and procedures and the enthronement of the rule of law. This should provide a level playing field for all and make it easy for business to start and operate.

- 4) The fourth requirement should be free education and scholarships at all levels for every child and citizen of Nigeria. The education of all children of school-going age and education of all illiterate adults and the general enlightenment of all illiterate adults. This is important because information brings knowledge, knowledge brings power, and power gives rise to economic development and economic development results in an improved society for all.

- 5) The fifth is the encouragement and development of the individual and the instilling into the average person the 'Can do spirit' where each person is encouraged to be the best that they could possibly be. Hard work and enterprise should be encouraged and rewarded.

Let me give you a few facts about Nigeria, In the 50's and early 60's there were 3 Regions, today there are 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and 774 local government areas (LGAs). Despite being the 6th largest exporter of oil, Nigeria is one of the poorest countries in the world with per capital income of US\$620, and with very high level inequality approximately 54 percent of the population is estimated to be poor. In the 50's there was no oil. From being a great exporter of cocoa, palm produce, groundnuts, minerals, coal and the like in the 50's, Nigeria has become totally dependent on oil which accounts for over 90% of its national revenue.

POPULATION

In 1950, records showed Nigeria has a population of less than 50m. As of 2008, the population had grown to almost 148m reflecting an effective growth rate of almost 150% in the almost 60 year period. The urban growth rate is as follows:

Year	1955	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2008
Urban growth rate	4.65	5.59	5.3	5.94	5.62	5.01	6.27

The GDP and GNP per capital are as follows:

Year	GDP PER CAPITAL	GNP PER CAPITAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
1950			2957
1960			
1970	360	350	
1980	1248	520	
1990	1750	650	
2000	2333	790	
2008	3546	900	315

Nigeria's oil revenues grew from an annual average of about US\$15 billion between 2000 and 2003 to about US\$36 billion annually between 2005 and 2008. On the macroeconomic front, real GDP growth was 6.3 percent in 2007, and is projected to increase further in 2008 but at a lower rate due to the global economic slowdown and falling oil prices. Inflation rates of 40 percent per year in the 1990's declined to a range of 14 to 18 percent during 2001-2005 and to single digits in 2007; and in spite of recent increases in food and energy prices, inflation was under 15 percent in 2008.

Now in the year 2009, there is no energy with production less than 4000 Kilowatts, roads are in terrible shape, and education is difficult and challenging with a 60% illiteracy rate and Medicare almost at its lowest ebb. Doing business in Nigeria has become exceedingly difficult and chaotic because of most of the above and the endemic challenge of corruption, inconsistent government policies and the abuse of rule of law, things are indeed difficult and entrepreneurship has become very tough

Let me conclude by sharing with you some of the keys to success in life and I dare say entrepreneurship:

I. The power to dream and to dream big dreams: Everyone must have a dream because life is not worth living if you do not have something you are living for and dreaming about. Something you are even prepared to die for, because it is your dreams that propel you to your destiny and allow you to leave a legacy.

II. The desire to acquire knowledge: because it is new knowledge that gives any man new abilities, even the Bible itself says in Romans 12 vs. 2 'Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind'. Any serious minded entrepreneur must be ready and willing to learn and consistently invest in new knowledge.

III. The capacity to think: it is thoughts that provoke speech, speech that motivate action and action that produces results. That is why the bible again says, 'As a man thinketh in his heart, so he is or so he would be'.

you can think it, then you can become it. Every entrepreneur must take time to think. The world's richest man Bill Gates takes one week off every year just to think.

iv. The ability to work hard: nothing works unless it is worked and nobody truly succeeds without an element of hard work. Chief Awolowo once said 'when my friends and colleagues are busy carousing with women of easy virtue, I am at my post doing my work, only the deep can call to the deep....'. Hard work produces good results.

V. A foundation of integrity: integrity is key to the long term success and sustainability of any enterprise. A well renowned public speaker and motivator; John Maxwell once said: 'integrity protects your gift'. Most gifted people without integrity end up eventually failing.

vi. The fear of God: it is the fear of God that puts man in his rightful place and motivates him to continue, to achieve and succeed. Give him the right perspective to life and redeems him to the appropriate principles

Vii. The determination to succeed: nothing succeeds like success, but without determination success can hide itself. You must be determined to succeed.

Let me end on this note; Nigeria desperately needs leaders that through their vision, strength and spirit of sacrifice, determination and hard work will unleash the latent entrepreneurial ability that will transform the nation.

Any man who is not prepared to die for Nigeria should not be prepared to lead Nigeria.

Thank you and God bless you.

Pastor Ituah Ighodalo
TRUSTEE YOUTH BUSINESS INITIATIVE NIGERIA



VOLUNTEERING

A WAY OF GIVING BACK TO SOCIETY

By Simon Olagai. VSO (Uganda)

Volunteer (Voluntary Service Overseas-VSO) an international charitable NGO that works through professional volunteers to fight poverty and disadvantaged World wide. "Some people wait till they are old to start giving back to the society; to me the time is now" developed a volunteer culture right from my childhood. As the last born in a family of seven, I was always curious and offered myself to do any activity both at home and the community in my first year in the university. I joined to work as a volunteer with Mental Health Uganda (MHU), a Non Governmental Organization set up to help fight for the welfare and rights of people with (and the survivors of) mental illness in Uganda. From there I was appointed a youth coordinator in charge of secure livelihoods.

I chose to volunteer due to my passion for the plight of young people. When I received an offer from Youth Business Initiative-Nigeria through Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), it was another opportunity to further intensify my involvement with the youth. I trust that my contribution as a volunteer will be constructive to the youth in Nigeria and Lagos in general. For Six (6) Months, I was involved in a private enterprise that took me to Sudan, there I worked with various displaced people in the camps to ensure that they are rehabilitated. This was a very rewarding experience.

Unfortunately in Africa the culture and the attitude of voluntarism is still low, a number of people see volunteering as a waste of time, or that it is for missionaries, white people or those people who lack employment. To me volunteering is part of social responsibility, it's not all about money but rather the feeling of fulfillment which is irreplaceable. I believe that people must be encouraged to be the very best they can be in order to achieve and maintain a balanced society. The fact here is that for any nation to develop it has to start with an individual, therefore, personal development is a key to community development. Many young people today end up being disappointed, discouraged and frustrated especially after graduating or acquiring relevant skills, they have walked the streets with envelopes in search of employment but failed to secure employment. But have they ever thought of starting something small that will generate an income for them?

I believe that there are opportunities everywhere only that one needs to open his/her eyes get up and go to grab the opportunities. People often say "opportunities come but once", to

me, I believe there are numerous obvious opportunities, even what is perceived as failures can be turned into an opportunities. For instance, a survivor of Mental Health can regain his/her situation by engaging into an income generating activity.

I was inspired by my encounter and experience while working with people with and survivors of mental health in Uganda three years ago. These were people who had lost hope, because they thought they will not succeed in life, they fed from dust bins, roamed the streets naked, but after psychiatric attention and counseling, today most of them are the managers of their own businesses and employers. The yard-stick here is not to waste too much time blaming the past, not to allow your circumstances to determine the magnitude of your desires and dreams; they can still make it if they chose to.

I have been in Nigeria for five months and I am impressed by the determinations of the young people who come in to make enquiries, some go on to start their own businesses. Here; I speak directly to all unemployed young people. Have you ever explored the other option of becoming an entrepreneur by starting something small that will generate an income for you? The fact here is that there are no easy solutions to poverty or unemployment, it is therefore, important that we create opportunities and the story starts here in Youth Business Initiative-Nigeria (YBI-N), what you need to do now is to come to our office with your business idea and join the family of those young people who have realized the feeling of independence and being in control after successfully securing soft loans to start their own businesses.

Remember that to succeed in life, one must decide to succeed. You have to learn how to succeed and persevere till you succeed. Set your goals now for its only when you have set a goal for yourself that you can pursue it vigorously. Don't forget that you are the future of this nation and the world out there is waiting for you, therefore, as a young person the time is now to start exposing yourself to the risks, rewards and the critical skills needed to succeed in life.

As I conclude, volunteering has not only shaped my career future, it has also exposed me to various cultures where I have gained valuable experience that has enabled me to widen my network.

Poultry Farmer, Mr Elijah Abiodun Daramola YBIN Entrepreneur of the year 2008

Elijah Daramola was very happy to receive a loan from YBI Nigeria to help him with his poultry farm, but he did not know that there would be a worldwide competition that he would be asked to participate in. When he was informed that he was amongst the ten finalists he was happy, but when he was told he was one of the last three finalists, he was over-joyed, because he never imagined that his small poultry farm would be recognised at an international competition. The competition aims at identifying and celebrating the achievements of YBI entrepreneurs around the world.

His joy knew no bounds when he heard that he would be going to Edinburgh for the final stage of the competition. He had never been overseas and this would be his first time. He found Edinburgh beautiful and everything he had expected except that he did not see the men walking around in kilts! His knowledge of Edinburgh was based on what he had read in his secondary school text book. The people were friendly, warm and accommodating starting from Mr. Leon who received him at the airport, the delegates, the YBI team especially Mr. Andrew Devenport who let him ring Nigeria to speak to his mother, the PSYBT team, especially Mr. & Mrs. Mark Studivick. His one regret was that he was not able to visit a lot of places because of the tight schedule, but he was most fascinated by Edinburgh castle especially the architecture. He also enjoyed staying in Radisson Hotel and having dinner at Harvey Nichols, Preston fields Hotels and the National library. When he was interviewed by the panel of judges, he discovered that rather than alienate the contestants, the judges helped broaden their knowledge and emphasised the necessity to remain focussed in whatever you do in order to achieve your goals.

The award has changed Elijah's life in so many ways, he has had so much exposure, starting from Edinburgh to Nigeria, and he has an international network now which would not have been possible. He in turn has been able to influence people who heard of his award and want to emulate him. He also had the privilege of meeting for the first time Chief Emeka Anyaoku, the former Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, who is the Chairman of YBI Nigeria. Chief Anyaoku gave him fatherly advice on how to run his business. He had read about Chief Anyaoku in school, but never dreamt he would meet such an eminent person.

His award has affected his family, friends and community in a positive way. His family is very proud of him, especially his mother who was so proud and impressed when the documentary maker Claudio von Planta came to his town in Osun State to see his farm and film Elijah on his farm. His siblings are most impressed with Elijah's achievements and they all want to be like him now. The community saw the documentary being made, they are all proud of Elijah, a lot of them come to him for advice concerning their business and farming. Three of his friends based on this have decided to set-up their own poultry business, two have already gone ahead to do so. Everyone has been affected in a positive way.

Elijah's mentor, Kunle Koledafe is extremely proud of Elijah and believes Elijah will go far with his business. He is happy that he helped him prepare for the competition because he believed that Elijah would make it. He has always seen Elijah as a young brother and feels exceptionally proud that he received an award.

YBI Nigeria never fails to mention Elijah Daramola's success as their success. Elijah met the representative of the First Lady of the Federation, the Minister of Women's Affairs at the YBI Nigeria fundraising event held on June 5, 2009 in

Lagos. He has been interviewed by the media, he has also given talks to prospective clients. Elijah is YBI Nigeria's main success story. Many clients on hearing about Elijah now believe that winning an international award is possible and want to be like him.

Elijah had a problem where due to in-law family squabbles he was asked to leave the land he had been using. With the documentary and the award, he had a new lease on life and was able to acquire his own land, but a long distance from his former land. He was able to encourage his staff to set up their own businesses based on their training and experience gained whilst working for him. They were really happy for him that he got his award and was able to continue with his business as a result. His customers were also happy that the business would continue and they can purchase eggs and poultry.

The media coverage for Elijah involved the print media especially. He was presented to distinguished members of the Nigerian Society. He received an award as the best all round client for YBI Nigeria at the YBI-N fund-raising 2009. In receiving the award, he was also the spokesperson for all the clients. There has been renewed media interest in YBI-N because of Elijah's international award.

The money has been spent wisely by Elijah. His business has experienced tremendous growth in the last few months. He has been able to increase his layer birds to 600 and now has fish tanks that can adequately raise 2,500 fish from juvenile to table size; he also has fingerlings production equipment and vats that can produce between 20,000 to 30,000 fingerlings for interested farmers. He is seriously working on moving his farm to a personal plot before the middle of 2010.

Elijah's future plans involve massive expansion and running an integrated farm. The introduction of fingerlings and fish farming was as a result of the increase in demand of the product in the Nigerian market, also the demand of the trainees who want to learn not only poultry farming but also fish farming.

The income from the two he believes will be used for the expansion and setting up of a feed milling section when he moves to his new site. This will be in line with the vision and business plan of the business where integrated farming will be practiced. His motto is "growing together", so he intends to take his staff and trainees along in his business.

The idea of the feed mill is because his knowledge of mixing his own feed was the main reason that made him a finalist. As a result his farm will now serve as a training institute for anyone in the community who wants to have basic knowledge of farm practice, thus empowering them and in turn creating jobs for others. When he achieves this, his objective encapsulated in his motto will be fully achieved.

His idea of an integrated farm is in line with his belief that in order to maintain a steady flow of income you have to create multiple streams of income and this entails having more than one type of business, but it is best if these businesses are complementary. In his own case, the waste from the poultry is sold to farmers as manure and maggots generated from poultry waste are used as fish meal.

Elijah believes that young people should develop entrepreneurial spirit and not just wait for government to help. He advises them not to die with their dream. He took the seed money given to him by YBI-Nigeria and translated his dream to reality.

A Most Satisfying Friendship!

Kunle Akinkugbe

Promoter of a few small businesses, Friend and Trustee of YBI Nigeria

I have been associated with YBI Nigeria for several years, initially as a third party service provider on event planning through Accenture, then as a 'friend' and now as an even closer friend or 'Trustee' to use the official appellation!

Having worked with Accenture on their events over a number of years, I had developed a very good working relationship with many of the staff and had always admired the focussed, efficient and ethical way they chose to go about their business as committed agents of change. For me, their jobs weren't always profitable, however, they were almost always pleasurable and always provided sufficient challenges to ensure a genuine satisfaction at every successful conclusion.

I have taken the trouble of this pre-amble because the success of any project relying on voluntary contributions, depends not only on the reputation of those vested with the oversight of it's activities, but just as much on those driving it and those choosing to be associated with it!

Essentially, I was drafted in by Accenture management (two of whom I sit along-side today as Trustee), to help plan a fund-raising event. In the process, it quickly became obvious that it was not Accenture that needed my help but YBI Nigeria and the more I got into the planning, the less likely it seemed that I would be presenting a bill for my services! Still we pressed on and not so soon after this realisation, it became clear that there was an urgent need for a pool of resourceful individuals who could be called upon to render specific services pro-bono, outside of the clearly defined roles of mentor and loan panellist! From that point onwards, I became a self-styled 'Friend' of YBI Nigeria, happy to devote some time, energy and meagre resources to further a very worthy cause!

Empowering and enabling the youth, especially those with a drive to succeed, is one of the pillars that the future of Nigeria's development rests. Natural born entrepreneurs, no matter how

gifted, still need guidance from trained and skilled hands, working with them and monitoring their progress at every point. This is the task entrusted to the mentors and a critical success factor of the YBI global initiative. The services of the calibre of individual with the depth and breadth of experience volunteering his services as mentor or panellist, would simply not be available to YBI clients, even on a commercial basis. Perhaps then, those 'friends' taking on such specific roles and responsibilities translate at this point to being role models or in keeping with the familiar, 'relations' (but only the type you look forward to seeing, of course!).

So why is supporting YBI Nigeria as a friend so important? The easy answer is because friends do so much more for each other, are more committed and are there for each other in the long run. In addition, it is the small-time, small scale entrepreneur that holds the promise of a tangible, brighter future for most of our youth; a future of self-employment, self-reliance, self-sufficiency, self-esteem and self-actualisation and friends like us are best placed to help make this happen!

All over the world, the youth, through creativity, vision and application of learning and insights, have changed the way in which we live and work in many fundamental ways. In so doing, they have created wealth in some unlikely areas which might otherwise have continued to suffer neglect. Their spirit of enterprise has given hope for tomorrow and the day after and the day after that, ad infinitum! Young people with a livelihood to nurture and build, will focus on this given the right orientation and we can then expect that the pursuit of the values of hard work and leadership through integrity will be seen as a viable and sustainable route to success.

There is a lot of personal fulfilment in being a friend of YBI Nigeria and I whole-heartedly encourage those who are considering how to make a difference to jump right in...the experience is uplifting and will buoy you perpetually!

YOUTH BUSINESS INITIATIVE-NIGERIA WELCOMES THE NEW CEO

Ejide Ukelonu is the new Chief Executive Officer for YBI-Nigeria. She was appointed to the position on April 1, 2009. She replaces Mr. Gbenga Kashim YBI-Nigeria's former General Manager who sadly passed on in 2006.

Ejide is a lawyer who worked for over 20 years with the Nigerian Institute of international Affairs in Lagos, before joining the team at YBI-Nigeria.

She brings with her a broad experience within the fields of International relations and Administration. She has travelled extensively throughout her career to many countries around the world including Britain, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Italy, Malaysia, USA and Zimbabwe.

She welcomes the challenge of leading the hardworking and dedicated team at YBI-Nigeria made up of Business Development Officers, Volunteers and Admin staff, to achieve the ultimate goal of YBI-Nigeria which is to empower Nigeria's youth.

The new CEO is happy to be here and believes it is a privilege for her to serve in a position where she can truly make a difference and also give back to the community.





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Make a Difference !



Help keep our
Skilled Unemployed Youths
off the streets, by sowing seed money
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Youth Business Initiative - Nigeria has done this since 2001 (and will continue to do so).

We are an NGO set up to provide assistance to Nigerian Youths (18 - 35 years), who have acquired some skill but are either unemployed or under-employed and wish to become self-employed.

We have in the past nine years provided soft loans to them and have many success stories.

Please make a difference to the lives of our youth by donating to YBI Nigeria.

Editorial Team: Ejide Ukelonu/CEO, Simon Olagai/VSO