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AFRICAN PROJECT REPORT

PROMOTING EDUCATION AND RAISING
AWARENESS



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INTRODUCTION

We planned a three-part project with the aim of reaching children, young adults and youth in the community, to **raise awareness** on different topics, provide practical trainings to benefit their communities and provide school supplies for 100 poor children to use for the 2019 fall term. We raised awareness about **conflict** and conflict-resolution methods to three age groups, about dangers of **irregular migration** and safe pathways for migration, about **volunteering** as a powerful tool for community development, as well as provide support to create and implement local volunteer projects.

We taught participants to use **critical thinking** and **problem-solving** exercises to train 50-100 youths on leadership for the benefit of the community. We discussed on and provide advice regarding **career pathways**. We also used practical methods to provide some form of basic **education** to children (aged 6-11) in the rural areas who may or may not have been formally educated.

Lastly, we created a **fun environment** for these children over the course of two days and provided **school supplies** for 100 extremely poor children in the rural areas of South-East Nigeria.





PROGRESS OF THE PROJECT

THE PROJECT WAS PROGRESSED ALONG THREE LINES.

SOURCING FOR FUNDS

Asides applying for funds from **Haella Stichting**, we also raised funds among board members, and from people within our network, including in Hong Kong. We also proceeded to sourcing for **materials** we needed such as toys and puzzles for children, used clothes and accessories, electronic equipment and so on.

We were able to receive some **material donations** that helped us to execute our plans. Finally, with regards to funds, we also received **in-kind donations** and subsidized rates of spaces we used. In these occasions we only paid for electricity and equipment.

PLANNING

The planning stage began before we applied for funds, and we carried on with plans while we waited to receive funds. About **nine local volunteers** were involved with the planning, excluding UID board members. They supported in different ways locally before the arrival of the board chairperson who was the only international volunteer. Tasks were allocated to specific volunteers out of these nine, who then proceeded to source for other volunteers to assist them in achieving their tasks. It included **transport** (of materials and people), **branding** (Volunteer T-Shirts which was necessary for participants to identify our volunteers), **welfare** (including preparing food and drinks for the volunteers and the participants during camping and long project days), **publicity** (those who helped to publicize the projects), **ushering** and **program support** volunteers (they performed so many different tasks, including registration, preparation of group tasks for the participants, preparations of gaming materials, other kinds of support when needed, **moral** and **spiritual support** (we partnered with several Christian groups who supported us spiritually and morally in prayers and words of encouragement to the volunteers and to the participants). Their work made our work a great success.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation phase began once we raised some funds to proceed. We started with sourcing for and purchasing the most reliable and affordable project materials, arranging **transportation** for volunteers and some participants, securing **locations**, groups began to carry out their tasks at different stages. The only international volunteer who also led the project arrived on 25th July 2019 with other project materials purchased and donated. Because not all volunteers volunteered in all the projects, we had to run different quick training sections to ensure that those volunteering and different events were equipped to carry out their tasks. There were lapses due to lack of adequate training, but we managed to the best of our ability, using what we had.



FIRST PROJECT/28.07 - 31.07.19

AGE GROUP: 12-20 YEARS OLD

LOCATION: LOCAL CHRISTIAN SECONDARY SCHOOL IN ABA, ABIA STATE, NIGERIA.

We had over 15 volunteers who worked full time and others who supported this project. Throughout the three days, the events were opened with a prayer and worship session, allowing participants to express themselves and gain strength. It involved gospel presentations by different Christian ministers, fun activities for the young adults, which they tagged (varieties, including singing, acting dramas and play-lets, other types of musical performance), and educational activities. We had over 80 children and young adults in attendance. The exact number past 80 was challenging to document as children kept coming till the third day after we closed official registration.

Unity in Diversity's part was to raise awareness and educate the young-adults on three main topics: **volunteering** as a tool for sustainable community development/empowerment, and dangers of **irregular migration**/safe-migration pathways and on **conflict resolution** methods. In addition, we created one group task, one individual assignment, and games/puzzles which fit into the overall theme of educating and raising awareness. Our groups task was a conflict resolution task focused on teaching the young-adults how to work in groups effectively, as well as identify and encouraging those who have natural leadership skills, understanding and utilizing conflict resolution methods. Our individual task focused on helping them to identify up to two problems in their community and attempting to solve one of them by suggesting solutions.



METHOD

For the group tasks, each group deliberated on the problem and discussed solutions. One group member wrote the solutions down in a cardboard paper provided by us, and in the end they handed them back to a panel of three adult volunteers who marked them blindly (that is without first knowing the names of those in the groups, and passed them on to the other markers who either agreed to updated the marks). The final marks were then used to determine the winners. The winning group was announced at the end of the day and a prize given to the most active participant of the group. We used two methods to identify the most active participant of the group; the first was by observation of our volunteers tasked with monitoring all the groups by visiting their locations, and a second was to ask from the group members to nominate (because we were short of volunteers). The latter version proved problematic because some group members were not happy that not all the group members won prizes. (These tasks are attached as appendixes to this report).

THE INDIVIDUAL TASKS

Participants were given time to think about the question and submit their answers. We also provided them with stationary from the beginning (customized books and pens) hence they used part of this to provide their answers. The same panel of reviewers reviewed all individual tasks and picked one project deserving a reward. It was a project written by a 16-year old girl. It was a project to volunteer with others at one of the orphanage homes in Aba. Her project was motivated by the loss of her mother which led to her first visit to these homes and grew into her life passion. The panel decided to award her a total of approximately 50 euros (20,000 naira) to carry out her project.

THE GROUP TASKS

We divided the participants into 10 groups according to their ages, having at least 1 adult volunteer who guided the group. The volunteers were instructed to only guide and answer challenging questions. The idea was to allow the young people critically think, reason, and come up with their own solutions. Each volunteer was given a book and a pen to note down their observations in order to provide feedback for the group members. We used the same tactics for the educational games and puzzles we shared with the groups. We had some children who were below the minimum age for this project, some of them were as young as 5, we were blessed to have a skilled volunteer who worked with their group, and their answers to the group task was also amazing. There were so many amazing solutions for the group tasks, and problems and solutions identified for them, for the individual tasks. We saved all the answers neatly, so as to refer back to them to see how we can continue to assist the communities. For example, one of the participants identified problem of sexual harassment and abuse of women in his community and his solution was to raise awareness and also educate people on how to tackle this. The sad reality is that sexual harassment and abuse (especially of children) is rampant in Nigerian communities; yet the culture around reporting it makes it a hidden epidemic.

THE GAMES

were of different kinds including puzzles. Some of them were relatively easier than others. Our volunteers spent time understanding them first before handing over to the groups, as well monitoring them. For the young adults, playing the games they were assigned was fun and challenging at the same time. It was meant to inspire them, encourage group work, but also just for them to have a good time. The participants were divided in groups according to their ages, so as to ensure good participation and the right game/puzzle that fit the right group. They had about an hour to play the games, after which we all came back together and each group shared what they learnt, or enjoyed the most, or even what they disliked about the game. We had a sign-in sheet to track who was in charge of the games, and to make sure that they were all accounted for the in the end. We lost none after this project as we had to use them for the project in the rural area.

THE AWARENESS SESSIONS

We used a mix of videos, a power-point presentation and Q & A sessions to achieve the aim of this aspect of our project. It commenced with an introduction of UID and Haella Sticthing to the participants. We played videos and pictures of children and young people volunteering for different courses. We ensured to select videos and pictures that also showed African children, and not just western children, as it was necessary to pass on the message. Our international volunteer also presented the topics to them in two different sessions. For this group the first was about volunteering and the second was about career choices. The reason behind the latter was to ensure that they made choices not purely economically motivated, but also to choose careers that are meaningful to them and that can impact their lives and their communities. Both presentations were given together with personal stories and Q & A sessions. The young people had so much questions to ask about choosing careers and our volunteers did their best to answer them.

THE SKILLS ACQUISITION SECTION

During this time the children were divided into 3 groups to acquire different skills of their choice: Bar-soap making, liquid soap making and bleach making. We had volunteers to taught them in groups. Unity in Diversity supported by providing the materials used in the teachings. At the end of the practical lessons, some of the participants took pictures with their final products and these products were shared among them to bring home to their parents and guardians to show what they learnt and how this can be useful to them and their families.



FEEDBACK



For the group tasks, the overwhelming response received from each group was that it was a rewarding exercise. Being able to understand how to settle issues amicably, especially when it is ethnically motivated and how such can lead to armed conflict was fascinating for them, including the adult volunteers who worked with them. For the games, some of them found it fun, others found it to be too challenging, some others just didn't like them.

For the awareness aspect, the volunteering as a tool for community development, won the hearts of the children. We used some videos that could speak to them at their level, as well as shared personal stories, including of the local volunteers who were present with us. It was so good that one of the boys aged 12 named Prosper Ohaegbulam chose to volunteer immediately after that section, to wash the plates of everyone in the camp after each meal; that is over 100 plates. He didn't seek publicity, he simply went to one of our volunteers and offered his help. When the news got to the rest of us, we chose to give him one of the prizes we brought, a school bag. The rest of the participants after we announced this amazing act and gave him a prize, volunteered to do all sorts of things during and after the camp. For us, it was amazing to see that we inspired a mentality and culture change in these young people.

The skills acquisition aspect was the last part of the young-adults' project and the participants expressed so much joy for this all-inclusive project. They were so happy to have learnt new skills and appreciated the fact that some of them who demonstrated great talents were opportune to go with left-over materials to practice what they learnt at home. For some of them, this wasn't only a personal enrichment exercise, but something they will like to teach their family members to commercialize it and help pay for their education and needs, especially during the holidays. Unlike other developed countries where high schoolers may undergo a paid internship or work at different outlets to save up, Nigeria is far from such arrangements for majority of school children, hence acquiring a skill such as the ones we taught them during this project, will be instrumental in impacting their lives. We only hope to build on this.

Evaluation forms were administered by our volunteers at the end of the young-adults project. Since it was somewhat new to the participants, we made several announcements to explain the form and its importance to them. Some of our volunteers also went around to provide individual support to those who needed it. Notwithstanding, some of them made mistakes in the forms, but this did not heavily impact on our ability to gauge the success of the project and points of improvement.

LESSONS LEARNT

The timing we held this project was perfect because it was during the holidays and parents usually want their children to be engaged in meaningful activities. It also meant that we could reduce the cost of hosting a three-day event, because schools and churches were willing to partner with us and provide some material donations, that would not be available when schools are in session.

We were also able to work with young volunteers some of who were on holiday from the university, which made it much easier and better for us.

Additionally, it opened our eyes to how much the topics we chose needs to be further explored in the communities and children and young people empowered to be able to make meaningful and sustainable impacts in their communities.

Our methods of group and individual tasks proved to be rewarding because in many schools in the region we visited, and for the age group we interacted with, the focus is more on individual learning. Whereas this is great, group-learning is also an amazing way of fostering community spirits and finding better sustainable solutions for such communities.

Lastly, we tried to find a way of sustaining our projects by creating a monitoring committee and follow up projects on at least a bi-monthly basis, but we failed as we did not train volunteers adequately or have the basic funds to setup such a system. This is still a challenge from the number of professional (Local or international) and international volunteers we had at the implementation stage.





SECOND PROJECT/31.07.19

AGE GROUP: 20 YEARS OLD AND ABOVE

LOCATION: LOCAL CHRISTIAN SECONDARY SCHOOL IN ABA, ABIA STATE, NIGERIA.

This was the one-day project for youths aged 20 and above. Our volunteers rightly advised that we host this project on the same day after the end of the young-adults project which ended at 4am on 30th July. The youth project followed hours later, commencing at 10am the same day and in the same location. Our volunteers did their best to stay active, although it was at a personal cost of little rest in-between such intensive projects. This back-to-back approach was also taken to reduce implementation cost and to maximize the volunteers we had.

This project was a leadership-themed project, focused on identifying and building leadership skills of the participants. In addition, we also raised awareness on our two topics: **volunteering** as a tool for **sustainable community development** and the **dangers** of **irregular migration**/safe legal paths for migration.

We had about 50 participants who attended this full-day event. Similar to the young-adults' project, we lost count at some point because some people came and some left in-between due to prior commitments.

THE INDIVIDUAL TASKS

Upon registration, participants were given the individual task to commence, so that we could collect their answers before they commenced with the group tasks. This task was the same task which we gave to the young-adults. The program opened with a prayer and worship session, after which UID and Haella Stichting were introduced to the audience. Participants were encouraged to continue the individual tasks and return them before the end of the program.

THE GROUP TASKS

Using their registration forms, we quickly assigned them to group tasks as we planned three different group tasks for the day. The first was directed at encouraging critical thinking and maximizing resources. The second and third were directed at encouraging the development of problem solving and leadership skills in a community with little resources. For us, this was not random, it was designed to reflect the nature of the problems communities in Nigeria face. The participants had about 2 hours to work on these different projects before returning to the plenary session to discuss their answers. During this time, our volunteers collected the individual tasks sheets and handed them over to the panel to commence reading it and judging on who the winner of an award will be. Our volunteers also went round observing the participants and their groups, and offering help when needed. This was also to identify the most active participants in the group. When the time allocated expired, the groups handed in their answers also written on cardboard sheets which we had provided. These sheets were handed over the panel, who at the time had finished judging the individual tasks. While they worked on the group tasks, we gave the presentations on illegal migration, which was followed by a presentation and discussion on volunteering. We spent more time on the presentation on the dangers of illegal migration because of how important this topic was to the youth. We used a combination of presentation and video to deliver the message. Then we opened the floor up for questions, discussions, comments and feedback. This session engendered much discussion due to how desperate many young participants have been with regards to the economic situation of the country.

VOLUNTEERING

The next presentation and discussion on volunteering for community development was also very successful. We found out that what we already knew to be true was still the case-Nigerian volunteers in different ways in their daily lives, but it hasn't been termed as such. Calling it 'volunteering' was necessary to drive home our point, that organized volunteering or targeted individual volunteering are valuable tools that can transform a community. The participants felt so empowered as they shared the different ways they have volunteered and their desire to continue, even in a more organized way.





CV WRITING

The last session was on CV writing: This session was added because CV/Resume and cover letter drafting (at the time of this report) was not popular among many young people in this part of Nigeria. To raise awareness on the importance of this and to also teach them how to draft these, we printed several copies of samples of CVs and cover letters both in American and European style. During this session, we shared personal stories of volunteers and their professional careers. We presented on the importance of advertising one's skills on the internet, including by using social media. Part of the discussions was focused on the importance of representing African expertise in several sectors, including important sectors such as child-education, Agriculture, culture and so on.

We also understood that laptops and computers are a luxury in Nigeria and while this remains a challenge, mobile phones are widely used, especially in urban areas and could be used to achieve same tasks as would a laptop. Therefore, we focused on teaching them how to use these phones for professional purposes to set up professional profiles on LinkedIn, twitter, facebook and so on. Following all of these, they were motivated enough to commence drafting their CVs and resumes using the samples we provided. Our volunteers spread out to assist the participants, while at the same time drafting their personal resumes and CVs (for those who didn't have one).

When the session for drafting was over, the participants handed the CVs/Resumes back to our volunteers. It was time to announce the winners of the group and individual task assignments. The panel came to the conclusion that for the individual tasks, two people had excellent proposals to tackle problems in their community through organizing a skills acquisition training for women and young ladies as a way of helping them get started with their entrepreneurial plans. We therefore awarded both of them 10,000 naira each, a total of 20,000 Naira (approximately 50 euros) to support the implementation of their projects within two to three months from the date of award. We also assigned three volunteers who will support and monitor them in Nigeria.



FOR THE GROUP TASKS,

the panel chose one group whose answers and approach to tackling the group tasks were innovative and thoughtful. The most active participant received a prize from one of our variety of prizes as a way of encouragement for them to further utilize the skills they've developed through the exercise.

FOR THE CV WRITING,

we chose two people who came up with amazing CVs in such a short time, and whose CVs reflected the level of attention they paid when the brief presentation and personal story-telling took place. We gave each of them a back-pack as a prize to encourage their work. We also gave out other meaningful prizes to people who were very active in the plenary sessions, either by asking and answering questions or genuinely engaging through sharing their own stories.

EMPOWERING YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

Following this session, we opened the floor for three people to pitch their entrepreneurial plans or ideas, and tell us the potential cost needed to get started with this idea. We did this because part of the project fund was dedicated to helping one or two people in their entrepreneurial ventures (e.g. setting up small businesses), provided they commit to investing into at least one person from the community, by transferring skills to such a person or assisting such a person with setting up an enterprise at a later time. Among the persons who pitched their ideas to us, we later selected one young man of 22 years old. The announcement was not made publicly, but in private, at the end of the event and after other participants had left. It happened that his birthday was on the same day as this event, and he also won 155,000 Naira (approximately 400 euros) to buy equipment to set up his sewing business. As a condition of the award, he pledged to train at least one person in this profession within a year. The name of this young man is Chetachi Wisdom Ochulor'. A picture of the young man with the equipment he purchased and an outfit he made is attached to this report.

We ended this part of the project by allowing people to share what they learnt, feedback and comments. We also announced that the only international volunteer who was present would spare about 1 hour and half to speak to individuals who needed personal advice or assistance.

FEEDBACK



We collected feedback through a combination of evaluation forms and oral feedback sessions incorporated into the different sessions. For the group tasks, some of the participants confessed that they had never exercised their critical thinking abilities as much as they did during the group tasks. It was a rewarding experience and will help them to approach community problems and challenges in a different way. For many of them, having resources or finding resources and mobilizing the community to do the work, was better than waiting on a corrupt or inadequate government to meet their needs. They also expressed how much fun they had working in groups.

It is important to mention that in this city where this project was conducted, the residents suffer from consequences of a very poor network of roads, malaria, typhoid and all kinds of diseases that result from these poor road networks, lack of electricity and bad public health services.

For the individual tasks, different problems were identified by the participants and they had amazing ideas on how to tackle them. We have archived them in hope of raising funds in the future to fund some (if not all) of those projects.

On Dangers of irregular Migration/Safe pathways to migration: We were amazed at how impactful this presentation was, with some of the attendees stating that their perception about migration had been changed by the mere fact of attending this program. One of them stated that he always thought that migrating at all cost would pay off so long as he reached his intended destination. But understanding how dangerous this can be, he was also thankful that we spoke about the safe pathways to migration and more importantly how to use and package one's skills within Nigeria for the most economic and communal benefit. He shared experience of his mother and how they utilized basic catering skills to cater for their family's needs. He stated that his motivation was once again activated and he would return back and encourage his family to do more locally. Other participants shared similar sentiments; hearing how impactful this was, was rewarding.

On drafting CV, Resumes and Cover Letters, the participants expressed their pleasant surprise at how they could genuinely describe their experiences in a written CV, Resume and cover letter. This was because of how we taught them to frame the duties and tasks they performed while in those positions, in a meaningful way that reflects the skills and talents the employers were seeking for. For some who only had the impression that CVs and Resumes were for people who have completed paid jobs, their mind-sets were changed by engaging in this singular exercise.

Overall, a majority of participants felt that their perspectives on illegal migration were changed, others enjoyed the CV-writing and career discussions more. A good number of participants requested more information on IT skills, including web-designing and how to commercialize one's IT skills.

LESSONS LEARNT

One of our most important lessons was the short duration we had to achieve several goals of this project. Such a leadership project should be held on a full day with breaks in-between or preferably over the course of two days, either with the option of camping (which is better) or not. This way we first provide them with group and individual tasks to stimulate conversations and discussions on community issues, then we proceed with training them on how to deal with these issues, followed by working to refine ideas that will be granted funding for execution at a later time. Lastly we can create a proper monitoring network to follow up on all participants within the next two years.

We noticed that for the individual tasks in general, there were several proposals for cleaning the street and keeping it tidy to reduce mosquito infestations and therefore Malaria which is endemic in Nigeria, to a destructive level. Our desire was to support such a project, especially because it has several beneficial dimensions, including health, safety, and economical. It also requires little funds to get started (mainly to purchase the necessary equipment and train the volunteers). Not to mention that it will attract community effort in both cleaning and educating the people on hygiene standards, as it is everyone's desire to not suffer from malaria and other related diseases.

On pitching entrepreneurial ideas: Many of them came prepared with amazing ideas, most of which would not have cost more than 500 euros to set up, and all of which were potentially life-changing for the owners, but also the community. Some of them came from students who were in institutions of higher education and were seeking ways to be economically independent and at the same time obtaining valuable education. For some of the ideas, the individuals could have benefitted from online trainings on MOOC website and the likes, but they lacked access to computers or laptops. In summary, we could not entertain them all, but kept them in file for when we can raise funds for them.

There was need for more volunteers, in addition to the fact that some of our volunteers were tired after the first three-days project, and some others wanted to join the youth leadership project to learn, not just as volunteers. It will therefore be great to find a way to have other volunteers who can replace them in such instances.

A total of 10 volunteers worked on this project, the CVs/Resumes created and the answers from the group assignments were collected and archived online by us. This can be made available when necessary.





THIRD PROJECT/06.08 - 07.08.19

AGE GROUP: CHILDREN AGED 6-11 YEARS OLD
LOCATION: AMAINYI UKWU, IHITE UBOMA LOCAL
GOVERNMENT (SOUTH-EASTERN NIGERIA)

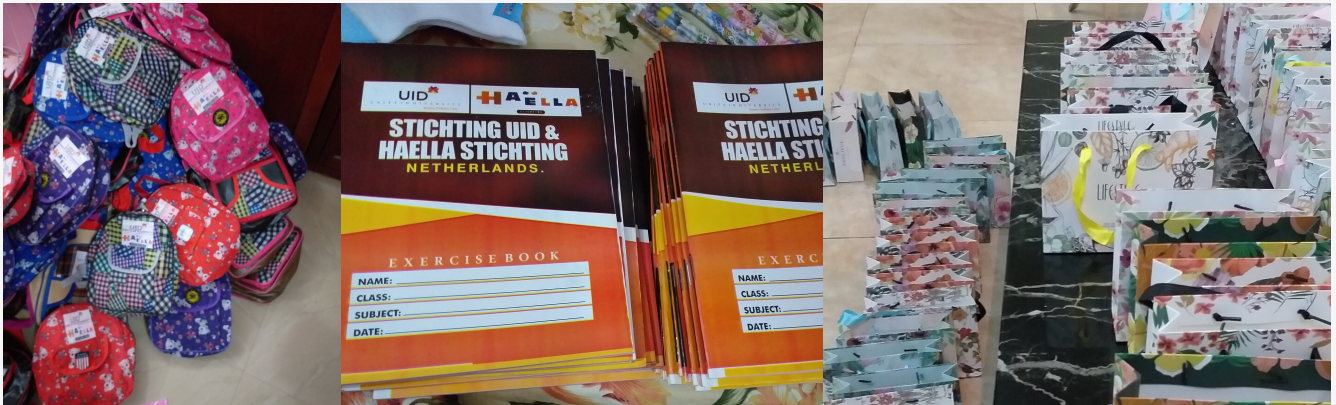
One of the good things about this last part of our three-part project was that we had some days break in-between. As the youth project ended on 31st July, the children's project in Amainyi commenced on 6th August.

Some of the volunteers who worked with us throughout the other projects, had some time to refresh themselves before joining us for this project on 5th August. Others arrived on the morning of the 6th. Given the nature of the materials needed for this project, we also worked hard to purchase the remaining ones, label them and package them properly.

Our target number for this project was 100 children, we however received nearly 200 of them which became quite a challenge to manage, especially because the materials we brought were well calculated. Thanks to God for the donations we received from some of our sponsors in Hong Kong and in The Netherlands, we were able to have extra materials to realize our goals for the original number of children we had in mind, but also for nearly 100 more.

MATERIALS

We transported several materials back to the rural location using a van from one of our volunteers. We provided the funds for to fuel the van. Materials transported included 100 school bags, over 100 school sandals, 100 different types of stationery (including pens, pencils, erasers, sharpeners etc), school stockings, 100 customized books (with Haella Stichting and UID logo), various scientific materials and more. We hosted all our volunteers and project materials.



1ST DAY

In a very large lodge belonging to the family of one of our lead volunteers. Upon arrival, volunteers got to work to offload and arrange the materials, as well as last minute planning and preparation of the location. On the night before the commencement of the project, there was a volunteer meeting and practice run. Tasks were assigned and customized T-shirts were handed down to other volunteers who were joining for the first time and specifically for this rural part. Some of them were local who reside in the location.

On the morning of the 6th of August 2019, some volunteers whose duty it was to run final preparation on the event location set out to do just that. It was hosted in a local church, therefore with the assistance of the evangelist and some of the church volunteers, the location was properly set up. Other volunteers who were assigned to register the children also set up a stand and began doing so. They however stopped registering after the number of children greatly exceeded the number we anticipated. We attempted to turn them back by asking their parents and guardians to take them back, but many pleaded to stay on, even if they would not receive the project materials. It was also extremely challenging for us because we did not have enough volunteers to handle this number of children.

The day opened with a prayer and praise session which got the children so excited and into their elements. We noticed that this way of commencing events worked well with people in the communities we served. After this, one of our local partners from the Anglican Church introduced us and the project to the children.



The Following this, we divided them into groups by their age and assigned volunteers to work with them to commence the group tasks. Getting this done took some time because of the age of the children. We translated the conflict resolution task into Igbo language as some of the children in the rural areas did not have high level English language skills that would allow them to effectively participate in these projects. Our volunteers were also able to speak in both languages whenever needed.

For this particular project, we made sure to have at least two volunteers per group, as we had higher number of group members and also because of the age of the children. Similar to our Young-adults project, we received children who were younger than we requested, some were as young as four years old. Thanks to some of our professional volunteers who were experienced in teaching children of that age-range, they handled this group amazingly.

Each group also had cardboard sheets and pens to write their answers. They were very engaged in the deliberation on the task and in finding solutions. The volunteers were also more engaged than they were in the urban areas, because the children in the rural areas were less exposed to such methods of learning. Their answers were reflective of their level of understanding and the fact that many of them were not exposed to such a multicultural environment, as they lived in rural areas where almost everyone had similar culture. However, we kept the task the same because these rural areas are part of Nigeria as a whole which is a multicultural country. Occasionally individuals and families move around within the country and would therefore be exposed to these kinds of issues. Preparing children for such a life was worth all the effort and resources.

Upon the end of this session, the volunteers collected all the group answers and returned them to a new panel of experienced teachers and a young teacher, to review and decide on the winning group. This time, the volunteers who were assigned to each group were able to identify the most active member of each group, in order for us to award them with prizes to encourage them. We also prepared lunch for the children as the first day event was for an entire day. While we waited for our catering volunteers to arrive with lunch, the groups came back to the plenary session for us to discuss the conflict resolution task they had just completed. We asked the children to share their experiences and lessons learnt.



Our most experienced volunteer teacher had her group sang the Nigerian National Anthem which is about unity, peace and justice. It embodied the message we wanted to pass across on conflict resolution, living in peace, preventing the emergence of child soldiers from conflicts that could be avoided and so on. Singing the national anthem ignited a fire of passion in the room that made nearly everyone in the room emotional."

*"Arise, O compatriots Nigeria's call obey
to serve our fatherland
with love and strength and faith.
The labour of our heroes past
shall never be in vain,
to serve with heart and might
one nation bound in
freedom
Peace and unity.*

*O God of creation,
direct our noble cause
Guide thou our leaders right
Help our youth the truth to know
In love and honesty to grow
And living just and true
Great lofty heights attain
To build a nation where peace
And justice reign"*

Following this, we served lunch to everyone, keeping them in groups to avoid chaos. Volunteers assigned to each group managed the distribution of lunch for them. This also provided the groups more opportunities to socialize. Overall it was a moment of refreshment, while our volunteers got ready for the next session which was about importance of education and career pathways.

This session was also informal and dividing the children in groups helped to keep the discussions intimate and meaningful. The volunteers shared their experience on how they chose their careers paths and gave an opportunity for the young ones to share their thoughts about a future career. It was fun and also very educational for both the children and our volunteers who worked hard to assist the children, answer their questions and advise them.

The first day closed with a plenary session where we discussed more about what the groups had done on career and education. The children were given several opportunities to share their career aspirations while everyone else cheered them on. There were several who wanted to be teachers, lawyers, doctors, engineers, nurses, pastors, pilots and even one who aspired to be a president. Many of their parents also watched from outside the room, some from the inside. The location was packed full with participants, attendees and volunteers.

Closing prayer was led by one of the volunteers and the children returned to their homes. Our volunteers retired for the day to clean up and prepare for the following day. That same night and back at the lodge, our volunteers worked through the night to package the school supplies and other prizes goodies we came with, to ensure that we could give every child something. It was a daunting task, but it was worth it. Especially because we ensured that first, those who were considered the poorest (and who we had in mind when this project was launched) were taken care of first, and other less privileged children were considered next. To achieve this, we worked with the list of names and ages provided by local partners who investigated the needs of these categories of people and shared them with us in advance.



2nd Day

On the 7th of August 2019, we returned to the location to finish up the project. Before the first set of volunteers arrived, a group of children volunteered to arrange the location; once more we were amazed at the spirit of volunteerism expressed by them. We noted down their names in order to provide them with encouragement prizes.

After set-up, we proceeded to ensure that the children returned back to their former groups and we allocated educational games and puzzles to each group, as the first order of the day. We used a tracking system to know which volunteer signed out which game/puzzle. The idea behind playing these games was to show them a different way of learning and to help them experience this. Our volunteers observed each group and it was fascinating for many of the participants and they enjoyed it.

We broke for lunch and handled it in a similar way as we did on the first day. After lunch, we got ready for the final bit, which was drawing and colouring. Once again this was done in groups, as we tracked the materials assigned to each group. We wanted the children to feel free and express themselves through this medium, so we did not ask them to draw anything in particular, just whatever they desired. As one could imagine, it got rowdy at some point, which was a sign for us to end that session. Volunteers collected all the drawings made and the materials that were left, as we returned back to plenary session. One of our volunteers used this session to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with the participants. It was a great period of discussion with the children as they all came from a Christian background. While this was going on, we were busy reviewing the drawings to pick out the best ones for prizes, as well as compiling the list of people who were eligible for other prizes, starting from the group of tasks of the previous day, to the active participants in general and children who volunteered to clean and set up the location and finally those who had amazing drawings.



DISTRIBUTION OF SUPPLIES AND PRIZES

The last part of the project was to give the school supplies and goodies bags to the children. We started with the prizes, giving our volunteers sometime to offload the school supplies and get ready to distribute them. We congratulated those who won other prizes, shared the reasons behind their win, to encourage other children.

The group that won the group task was also congratulated, so was the group of children who volunteered with us without being cajoled into doing so. From the remaining project supplies, we found different gift items to give away as prizes, including drawing books, water colour packs, Tennis hats and so on. It was a variety moment as nothing excites children as being praised for their talents and receiving gifts.

The final part of the gift giving was distributing the most important school supplies to the children. We worked our way through the list provided with the names of the poorest children. This process lasted for over two hours, as we had to be meticulous, calling each child by name and handing over the supplied carefully packaged for them and finally handing them over to their parents. The supplies included customized school bags (having UID and Haella Stichting logo), school sandals, stockings, stationery and so on. For some of these very poor children, they also received goodie bags donated by our sponsors. Inside them were chocolates and toys. We then used a majority of the gift bags to share to other poor children who were in attendance. This proved to be the most challenging of all aspects of this three-part project due to the many children we couldn't meet their needs and the quarrel that broke out between some of their parents.

At the end of this very long session, we closed with songs and prayers. The children ran off in joy with their parents. Our volunteers returned back to the lodge to quickly debrief, clean up and head back to the cities where most of them lived.



FEEDBACK



For the group task, we could not administer evaluation forms for this part of the project as it would have been difficult both because of their age and also the language challenge. Nevertheless, obtaining feedback was not a problem because many of the older children expressed their appreciation of such a learning platform that helped them to be a part of the solution. They stated that what was amazing was being able to find alternative ways of conflict resolution, as opposed to resorting to fighting or different kinds of conflicts. Some said they now knew how to handle conflicts when it arose in their environment, be it in the home, school or church.

For the career discussions, the children were thankful for the experiences of the volunteers and an opportunity to share their dreams and receive advice and encouragement that they could be whatever they wanted to be. Some of them even desired to grow up and be volunteers like our volunteers, making impacts in their communities. This was rewarding to hear.

For the Games and puzzles: Many of them had never played with such toys, games and puzzles, for them, it was a good opportunity. The most popular game both in the urban and rural project was one called “The Game of Plan”. It was a game that allowed the players to plan their future with resources provided, including some money. One of the participants in the rural project (who also won the game) stated that she was mostly thankful for the lesson she learnt, which she summarized to mean that “it isn’t how fast one runs, but how well, because someone who started slow, can overtake someone who started fast on a career path” (paraphrased).

For the drawing, some of the children had never used water-colours before and were excited to experiment with them. You could see the natural talent in them which were incredible. Some of them produced scientific drawings, others drew pictures they could see in their immediate environment. The most amazing of all was one child who drew our customized T-Shirt, showing “Unity and volunteer”. Some produced architectural drawings of their ideas to provide solutions to the problems in their communities and so on. We wished that we had more drawing and painting materials, as well as more experienced volunteers.

For the school supplies and prizes, many parents shared their joy and gratefulness with some of our volunteers and local partners. Especially because targeted the poor, there was hardly anyone of them who weren’t relieved to have had their children’s school supplies for the new school session provided, more than what they could have imagined. Some explained how they hoped for just a pair of sandals (because for them, the children could use a plastic nylon as school bags since they couldn’t afford one) and sandals were important because of the bad roads, but they received much more than a pair of sandals. The local church expressed their appreciation for what we accomplished together and the joy that we spread around the villages.

LESSONS LEARNT

Despite the discretion and tactics our volunteers and partners used to identify the poorest children in the rural areas to meet their needs, this did not help to keep the numbers to our original intended target. We learnt and were informed that it will be almost impossible to do something similar without having the number of children exceed our expectations, because of how closely knit these communities are. We are yet to find the best tactics that may work. Otherwise the idea may be to identify the number of children in each clan/community and budget for that number.

For the Games and puzzles, we did not have enough of them as we had nearly double the number of children we anticipated. The idea was to have smaller numbers in a group so that each member can fully participate in the games and puzzles.

Perhaps we could try full camping for such a project, in such a way that only those registered and who camped will be fully catered for, including when it comes to distributing supplies.

This may have its disadvantages especially for poor children who have to work to assist their parents; this will mean that they may not be able to camp and may not benefit from assistance through school supplies. We will explore different ways to make this project better.

We could not achieve incorporating sporting activities for the children. This is something we should work on for the next projects.

We hope to have a day or two following the completion of the project, where volunteers can debrief and benefit before returning back to their daily activities. raise funds for them.

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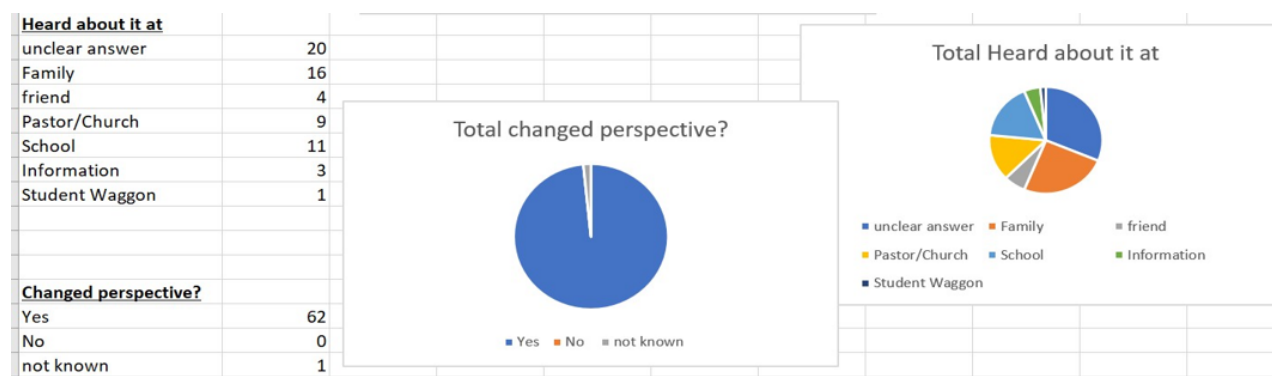
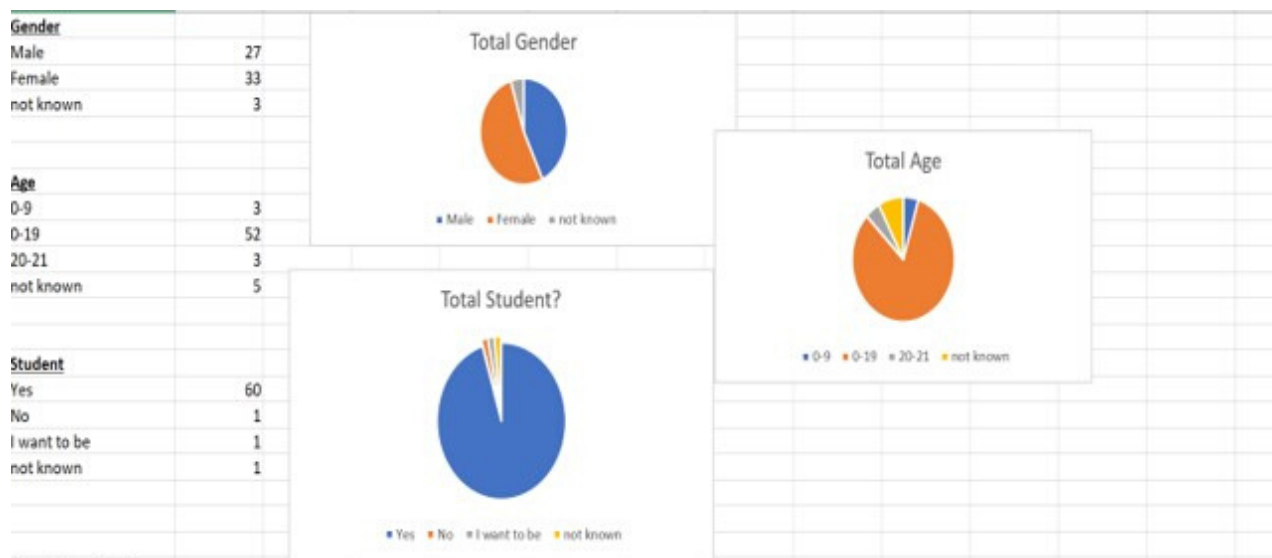


NUMBERS AND STATISTICS

| | ESTIMATED NUMBER | ACTUAL NUMBER |
|--|---------------------|---------------|
| PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED IN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PROJECT | N/A | 10 |
| VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED IN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PROJECT | 25-30 | 40 |
| PARTICIPANTS/ATTENDEES | 700 | ABOUT 320 |
| VISITORS | N/A | APPROX. 40 |

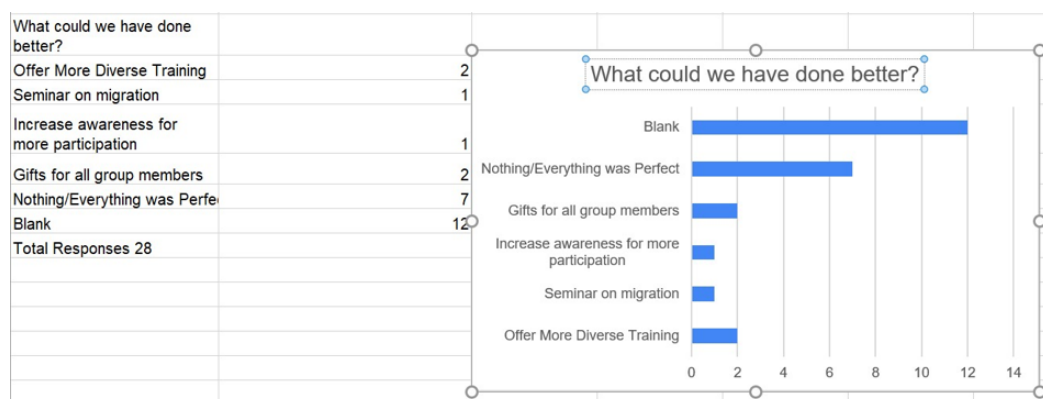
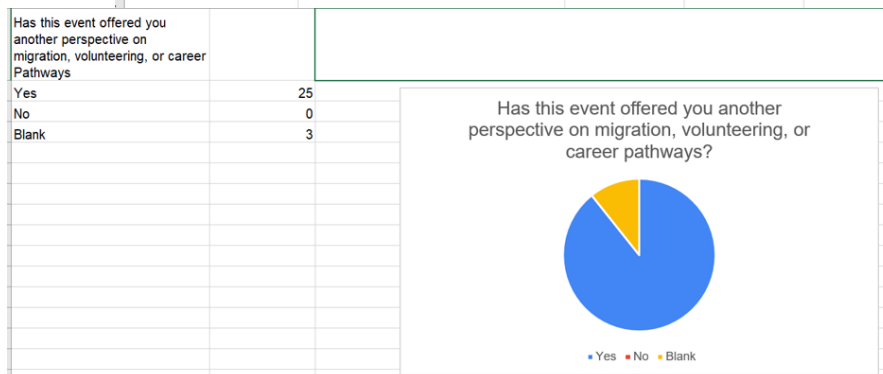
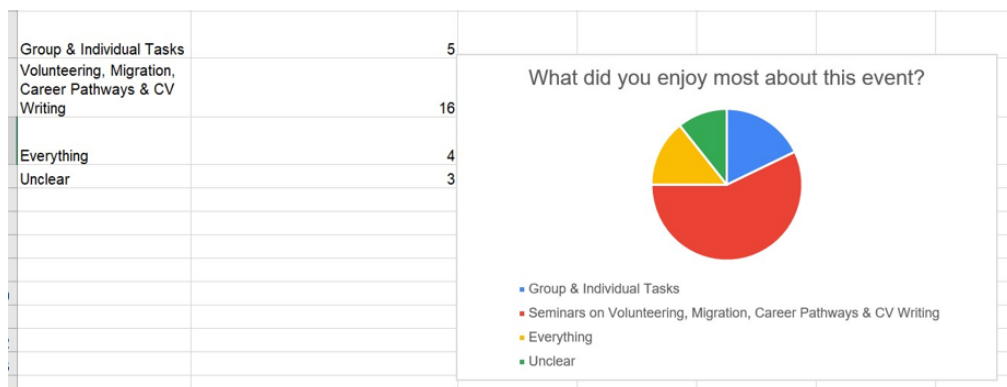
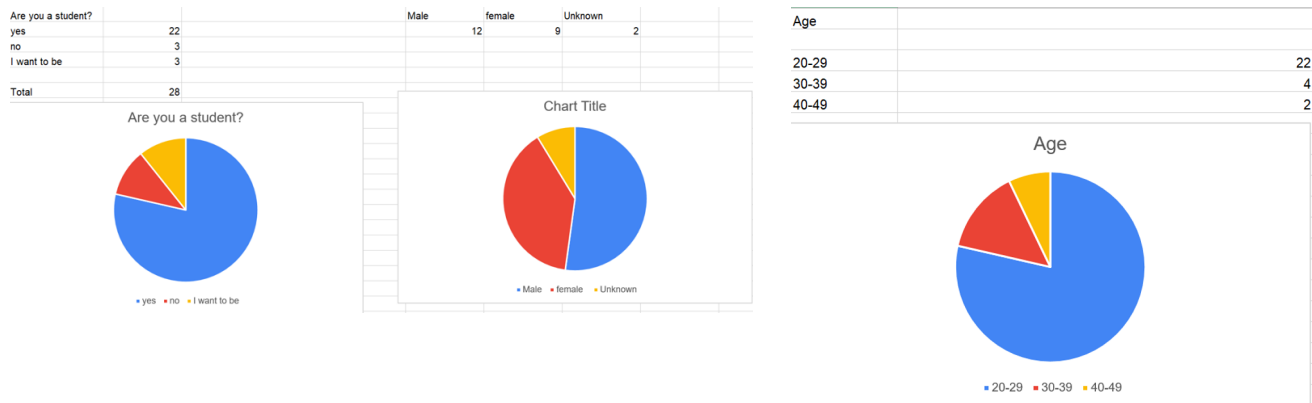
When we first applied for funds, we hoped to reach up to 750 people with 16,000 euros. With lesser funds than anticipated, we were able to reach nearly half our original target with less than 5000 Euros.

STATISTICAL DIAGRAMS FROM YOUNG ADULTS' PROJECT 28TH TO 31ST JULY 2019

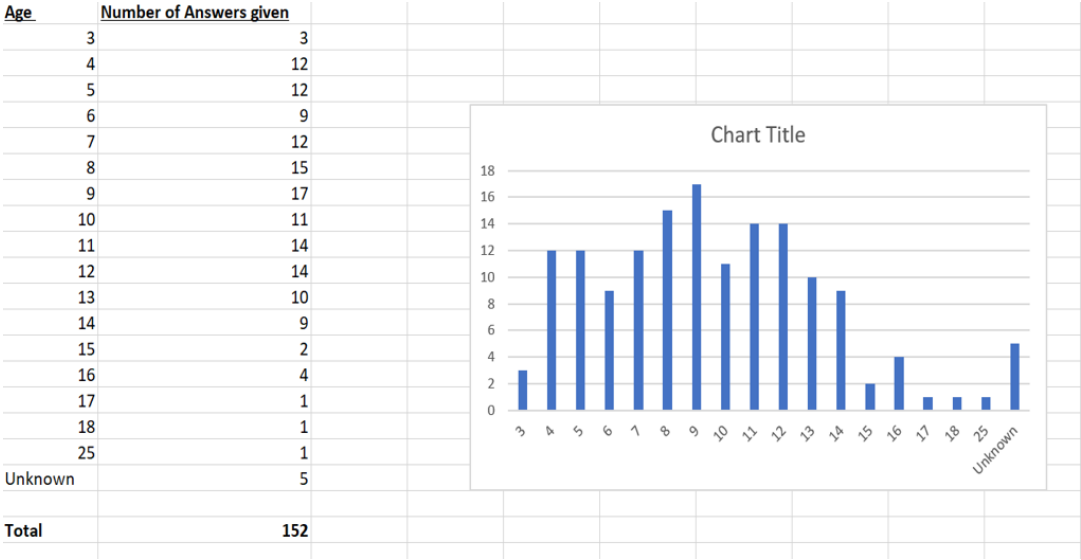


STATISTICAL DIAGRAMS FROM YOUTH PROGRAM 31ST JULY 2019

A TOTAL OF 28 PEOPLE FILLED OUT THESE FORMS, AS WE DID NOT HAVE ENOUGH TIME AFTER THE EVENT, AND ENOUGH EXPERIENCED VOLUNTEERS TO HELP ADMINISTER THE FORMS IN A TIMELY MANNER.



STATISTICS CHART FROM CHILDREN'S PROJECT IN AMAINYI 6TH TO 7TH AUGUST 2019



PROJECT ASSESSMENT



The **participants/visitors** were very grateful for the different benefits they enjoyed, lessons learnt, opportunities provided. Many of the youths felt saved from would-have-been dangers of illegal migration, after listening to our presentation. Some of them received valuable resources to begin their entrepreneurial activities. The children were so excited to have benefited from several practical teachings and prizes and for having their educational needs met. Many of them couldn't wait to go back to school to show these off.

We worked with our local partners and sponsors to **publicize the event** in their churches, schools, and within different social. Since we did not have enough funds and we needed to maximize the funds and limit the number of participants, we did not deem it fit to use newspapers or local media. However, we used social media, personal networks and word of mouth to publicize the different parts of the project.

We reached our intended **target group**. For all aspects of the projects, we were careful to reach our target groups. We were happy with the way we divided the target groups and crafted the project to be meaningful and impactful to each group.

We achieved our **objectives and goals** and exceeded our expectations given the amount of resources we had. We contributed to the best of our ability and judiciously used them to make maximum impact.

NEXT TIME,

We will ensure to have at least two-full days of training for our volunteers before commencing the project and preferably two-full days or at least one-full day of debriefing/celebration. This is crucial to also ensure that each group leader writes a proper report with their groups. Due to the limited finances we had, only one international volunteer could make it to Nigeria.

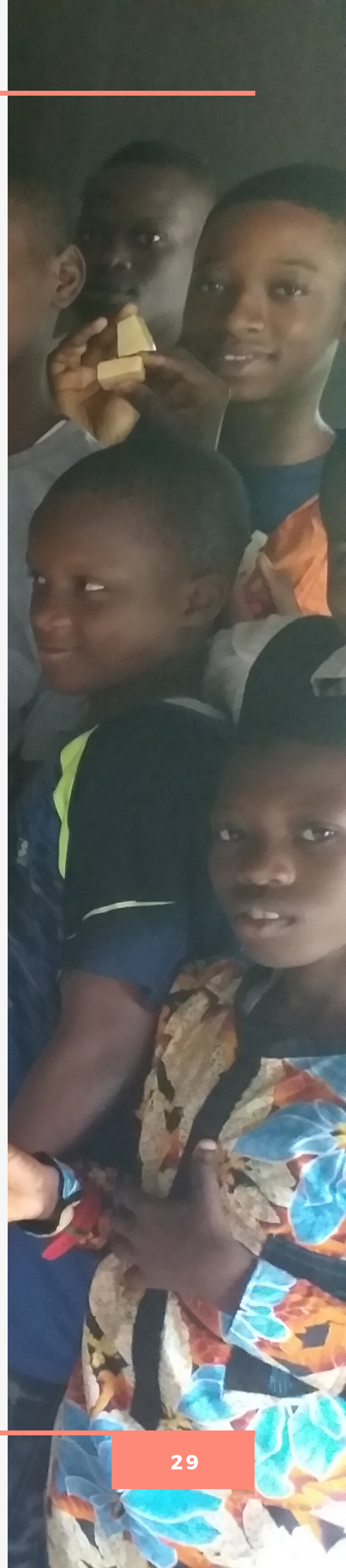
Arriving and commencing the project almost immediately with a few hours of quick training was extremely challenging both personally and also for the project execution. It meant that we had to improvise and where there was possibility of delegating responsibility to maximize time and reduce work-overload, this could not be done because it would require a lot of time to teach the volunteers the needed-skills. A training on how to write report for such projects is extremely crucial, as it is one way of impacting knowledge and transferring skills to others.

Notwithstanding this challenge, we found time in-between the busy project for quick training and transfer of skills, such as organizing and coordinating, leading a group with compassion and so on.

After the successful three-part project, we only had about an hour to quickly debrief before volunteers had to leave. This was partly because of limited resources to host one-full day of debrief and also because of short-term notice as we needed more local volunteers. Debriefing is extremely important as it helps to ensure that we not only document lessons learnt and achievement, but that we planned the next course of action and assigned volunteers to different follow-up tasks.

Due the success of the group tasks we shared among different groups of participants, it would be good to have more prizes (especially inspiring ones) to present to all group members, so they all feel appreciated and motivated to carry on lessons learnt from the group task to their communities. This was part of the feedback received from participants.

One thing that is absolutely important for this project to make more meaning is to first organize a follow-up leadership retreat, to adequately train these volunteers and plan a project together with them to utilize those skills. This will be useful as it will also reduce the number of international volunteers needed each time, and enrich the local communities. This was part of the reasons why the our board insisted on having at least one international volunteer travel to Nigeria to oversee this project, identify training needs and transfer some skills to the local volunteers. Without this method, there is a risk that projects may fall apart or deteriorate for lack of adequate resources (human and material) to manage them.



IMPACT



One of the volunteers who worked with us utilized skills acquired during this project to lead a follow-up project of her own.

In her own words,

"Dear Ms. Miracle, I must say once again that it was a privilege being one of the volunteers for such a great project. What I enjoyed most about volunteering in this project was the new contacts I made, the educational lectures, and more especially the teaching on volunteering. This really changed my perspective about life, that everything is not about money, but there are little ways we can touch lives and which one of them is through volunteering. The task on how we wish to affect lives in our own little way is another interesting aspect of the event. And am proud to say that the Education and Awareness Project 2019, gave birth to the Vocational Skill Training For The Girl Child, which took place on the 1st and 2nd of September in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. A big thanks to you once more."

Deborah Amarachi Obioma led 9 volunteers, 3 professionals and benefited 45 participants.

Secondly, one of our beneficiaries who is now an 22-years old entrepreneur has committed to training 1-2 persons in acquiring tailoring skills as a way to multiply the effect of this project.

Thirdly, our second winner of the youth group tasks just concluded skills-acquisition training for over 15 young girls in baking and catering.

What this project has reminded us is that it takes a little to make a huge difference; yet it takes proper training and coordination to multiply and sustain such projects.

NEXT STEPS IN 2020

RUN A LEADERSHIP RETREAT

Bringing back the volunteers who worked on this project in addition to new ones, is key to

multiply the impact of this project and more importantly for sustainability. During this retreat, we can observe the skills and talents the volunteers come with. Teach, train and help them acquire needed skills that can benefit their respective communities, and empower them to continue our projects in a sustainable way. This will keep young people engaged and away from crimes (especially those who are unemployed). In addition it will tackle some of the endemic problems of these communities, create a vibrant community, and most importantly reduce illegal migration and brain drain.

START A FUNDRAISING DRIVE TO SUPPORT SELECT CHILD-EDUCATION PROJECTS IN NIGERIA

Following our project this past August 2019, we discovered the school we have been supporting and which has been catering for poor children in the western part of Nigeria continues to struggle, almost to the point of closing up. We intend to continue to find ways to support such schools and children.

KNOWLEDGE STATIONS

We would love to create two knowledge stations in the two location we worked, to provide an alternative means of education for selected young people. The level of information technology illiteracy among Nigerian youths is alarming. Yet opportunities for education and commercially beneficial opportunities are just an internet click away. With poorly financed educational institutions, low acceptability rate compared to demand (over population in the face of lesser number of institutions), lack of finances, and lesser variety of important courses to select from, our knowledge station will provide fully equipped computers, laptops and (or Tablets) with access to online courses as well as volunteer teachers to can teach participants IT skills.

Such IT skills can be utilized to pursue online courses (certificate, diploma, degree), to conduct all kinds of research to jump-start their varied dreams and aspirations (it could be someone learning all kinds of skills through youtube and other internet sources), or setting up and managing their own businesses online with the help of these freely accessible knowledge stations.

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