

ECHOES FROM LIFE

2016



...From Underserved to Serving



Youth + ICTs = Socio-Economic Opportunities

Profile

Paradigm Initiative is a social enterprise that builds an ICT-enabled support system and advocates digital rights in order to improve livelihoods for under-served youth. Our programs include digital inclusion programs – such as the Life Skills. ICT. Financial Readiness. Entrepreneurship (LIFE) training program and Techtuary program – and a digital rights program, Magoyi. Across our offices in Africa, we work to connect under-served youth with improved livelihoods through our digital inclusion and digital rights programs.

Having worked with government, civil society, private institutions and international organizations including the United Nations, PI has worked in ICT education, telecenter support, ICT applications in rural areas, etc. PI's projects include Life skills. ICT. Financial readiness. Entrepreneurship (LIFE); Internet Safety, Security and Privacy Initiative for Nigeria (ISSPI) and Techtuary. PI opened an ICT Policy Office in the Nigerian capital city of Abuja, in April 2013, to focus on Internet Freedom and other ICT Policy-related issues. With the support of the Rockefeller Foundation, PI has commenced the replication of the Life model in South East and North West Nigeria.

PI has strong competencies in ICT capacity building, research and reports. We have trained numerous non-profit organisations and educational institutions in the use of ICTs for Development, ICTs in Learning, Social Media, Website Maintenance and more.

Over the past seven years, PI has trained over 200 NGOs and schools from 24 states across Nigeria on the use of ICTs for Development. We have also completed Social Media training/consulting, in-house capacity development and web/mobile development projects for various organisations.

Research assignments and reports completed include:

- Research/Analysis on Nigerian Civil Society Involvement in the World Summit on the Information Society
- Research on Youth Involvement in the African Information Society Space
- Research on eAdvocacy and Technology Use by Civil Society in Nigeria
- Research on Internet Activity during Elections for the Open Net Initiative (Harvard, Cambridge, Oxford, Toronto Universities)
- Research on Possible Internet Censorship in Nigeria, for Harvard University's Berkman Center for Internet & Society
- Research on Digital Lifestyle of Connected Nigerians
- Research on Internet Freedom in Nigeria; and Research on Social Media Use in Nigeria's 2011 Elections.

PI's directors are:

- Prof. Pat Utomi (Chairman)
- Dr. Seyi Adebayo-Olubi
- Nick Jeckogian
- 'Gbenga Sesan (Executive Director)
- Dr. Jummai Zainab Umar-Ajjola
- Dr. Aida Opoku-Mensah

The organization was officially registered with the Nigerian Corporate Affairs Commission (with registration number CAC/IT/NO30547), as Paradigm Initiative for Information Technology Development, on December 16, 2008.

We can be contacted by:

Telephone: +234 1 342 62 45 (PI HQ, Yaba, Lagos) | +234 1 291 39 26 (Ajegunle)

| +234 9 291 63 01 (Abuja) | +234 8 229 10 47 (Aba) | +234 6 443 34 30 (Kano)

eMail: hello@paradigmhq.org

Website: <http://www.paradigmhq.org>

Twitter: [ParadiqmHQ](#) | Facebook: [ParadiqmHQ](#) | YouTube: [ParadiqmHQ](#)

Our Partners

"From under-served to serving"(from the LIFE project and other PI projects) are made possible through the kind support of our board, staff, partners and volunteers including program alumni. We thank you for your kind support, and look forward to working with you towards weaving more stories from Ajegunle, Aba, Dakata, South East, North West Nigeria and other communities!

234Give

Ajeromi Ifelodun Local Government

Ashoka

Access now

British Deputy High Commission

Citizen Lab

CommonWealth Foundation

CIVICUS

Doran Foundation

DHL Nigeria

FATE Foundation

Facebook

Google

HBS

Internews

Intel

Korean Agency for

Digital Opportunity and Promotion

Lagos Innovation Council

MainOne Cable Company

Microsoft

Mozilla

Phase3 Telecoms

Peery Foundation

Rockefeller Foundation

Schwab Foundation for Social
Entrepreneurship

TVC Labs

United States Embassy (Public Affair
Section)

United Kingdom Trade & Investment

University of Toronto

World Bank Civil Society Fund

World Economic Forum

LIFE PROJECT



LIFE is a train-the-trainer capacity building initiative that uses relay training model and positive peer pressure concept to transform a notorious slum in Nigeria, as a model intervention for other underserved communities. Following weeks of training in ICTs, applicants (selected every quarter) are also trained on entrepreneurship and then matched with companies to undergo internships or supported to pursue their entrepreneurial interests in order to transform their lives by giving them a chance to improve their livelihoods. These youth, who would not have otherwise had the opportunity to get a job and acquire with necessary skills and an opportunity to actually begin a career that may end in the pursuit of their entrepreneurial dreams or positions in the companies where they intern.

PI initiated a baseline study from May to July 2007, in which questionnaires from 242 respondents (chosen due to its notorious nature as Nigeria's most popular slum) were evaluated. The average age of respondents was 15 with a gender ratio of 1:1. With a spread of occupations between 23 artisans, 24 undergraduates, 41 primary school students, 79 high school students, 39 non-specific students, 23 in transition between high school and university students and 10 with no stated occupation; we noticed 9% Personal computer ownership rate, 44% computer literacy level, 100% with ICT learning challenges, 94% acknowledgement of ICT application importance and 87% with high expectations for ICT/Entrepreneurship training opportunities. With the extremely high unemployment rate, low entry barrier for the initiative and the opportunity to demonstrate the possibility of the model through Ajegunle, the idea was too exciting to be left unattended.

Unemployment is a major issue in Nigeria because of the continued dependence on existing jobs. The height of the vicious cycle is revealed in the fact that each year, millions of students graduate from high schools and colleges but only 10% of college graduates are able to get decent jobs. Underserved communities, such as Ajegunle, account for majority of these unemployed youth - many of who are involved in criminal activities and various vices such as cybercrime whose negative impact on the society is high.

Focusing on combating unemployment in underserved areas is therefore deliberate because of the pressing need for an institution with adequate expertise. It has also been established that poverty, political instability and restiveness across Nigeria benefit from the increasing number of frustrated youth who have nothing to do. In the past, much of the problem has been left unattended because of the lack of a sustainable model that

can allow actors reach out to areas where the youth cannot pay for services they may be offered. This major issue has been addressed through the LIFE Project. Our approach provides a sustainable low-cost model that not only allows the participants access to training at no cost, it actually provides them an wholesome opportunity that includes capacity building, work placement, opportunity to give back and they are able to participate in the overall vision of improving the livelihoods within their own communities through the establishment of our community innovation Centre.



Techtiary: THE INTERVENTION



With official figures from the Nigerian government on unemployment at 24.9% and a minister revealing that only 10% of graduates get decent jobs two years after graduation, we invite you to imagine the opportunity to reverse the trend of producing job seekers, and producing competent ready hands and employers of labour. Imagine what the best of today's young Nigerian code-spinners and ICT gurus-in-the-making – to who are exposed to the technical, business and leadership requirements of ICT innovation – can contribute to Nigeria's economy, technology businesses operating in Nigeria and the businesses that these young (wo)men build.

Techtiary, as PI's response to this huge need, is based on analysis of the current circumstances and our team's experience with national and global best practices spanning a period of over 10 years – and over 30 countries. **Techtiary** is a platform that showcases, connects, adds value and inspires. The platform fills an existing gap and will also provide a place where budding Nigerian technopreneurs can showcase their work, connect with resources, add value to market and inspire innovation, while building a sustainable business that they will run after graduation. **Techtiary** features an annual event, and also searches for unconnected tech enthusiasts who have the potential of building on globally accessible technology products or leading a new product development cycle for local companies.

PI commenced hosting **Techtiary** Workshops across Nigeria in 2011 (Warri, May 2011), which continued through 2012 (Umuahia and Minna, Q3 2012) in preparation for a multi-day event, the annual **Techtiary** Gathering, which held December 10-12, 2012. The pilot **Techtiary** activity in the Computer Science department of Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife Osun State, Nigeria fed into the first annual **Techtiary** forum and provided a dedicated example of what young people can do with technology, especially under supportive conditions. The 5-year intervention program at Obafemi Awolowo University's Computer Science department introduced Year 1 Computer Science/Engineering students (now in Year 5) to the concept of tech entrepreneurship, challenging them to start out with an idea they would love to implement as a full-time business by the time they graduate, connecting them to mentors (within and outside the campus environment), supporting qualifying participants with industry-specific Student Industrial Work experience Scheme (SIWES) placements and supporting them to complete their Final Year Project based on the idea they started developing in Year 1. More universities are also signing up including the Lagos State University and the Benson Idahosa University in Benin City.

The annual **Techtiary** Forum in 2013, a 3 day event which held in Lagos Nigeria had over 250 computer science/engineering students from over 15 tertiary institutions across Nigeria in attendance. **Techtiary** Workshops have held in 2014 in South East and South-South Nigeria with over 20 schools represented and about 2300 students reached. The **Techtiary** Workshops are planned to host about 1,000 students per 2-day session, and with over 100 tertiary institutions across Nigeria; the workshops can reach a potential size of 100,000 students directly. The aim is to see about 100 students from our partner campuses also sign up for the 5-year intensive campus programs that will see students of Computer Science/Engineering develop focused skills that will enable them create innovative products for their businesses or corporations they can add value to upon graduation. The **Techtiary @School** Project will see us work with about 50,000 students across various tertiary institutions in Nigeria through the 2-day workshops and the long-term engagement with students.



ICT POLICY INTERVENTION



PI has worked with stakeholders including Microsoft, World Bank Civil Society Program, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, the National Assembly and others, on policy advocacy concerning Internet Freedom and cybercrime. Activities completed with the stakeholders include roundtable discussions, public conferences, advocacy visits and the production of advocacy materials – including a music video featuring popular Nigerian artistes. PI has also completed numerous researches projects and published a number of articles including:

- The North West PI internet Policy Training (March 2015)
- The South West PI Internet Policy Training (June 2015)
- Office of the citizen Hackathon (in partnership with EiE Nigeria and BudgIT)
- Part of the plenary on Internet and Human Rights at the Nigeria Internet Governance Forum.
- Internet Freedom in Nigeria (2010 to date).

PI opened an ICT Policy Office in the Nigerian capital city of Abuja, in April 2013, to focus on Internet Freedom and other ICT Policy-related issues. With Support from organizations such as Internews, Association for Progressive Communications (APC) and Google, our ICT Policy work as go ne from discussions to on-the-ground action.

From releasing Policy Briefs (most recent was released in December 2013) to advocacy, co-hosting online discussions, training other non-profits and engaging stakeholders to draft an Internet Freedom Declaration for Nigeria, PI is working hard to ensure that the Internet remains free and open in Nigeria.



Recent events are:

- The south-south PI Internet Policy Training (March 2015)
- Digital Broadcasting Roundtable in partnership with Association of Progressive Communication (APC)
- Open Society Initiatives (OSI) (18th February, 2014, at the Sheraton Hotels & Towers, Lagos)
- Being on the Cybercrime Panel during the AITEC Africa Conference (March 2013).
- 2017 Internet Freedom Forum, Lagos (April 2017)
- Tech4Good Day June 2017

ECHOES FROM AJEGUNLE

Lagos, Nigeria





Efe Aromabi

Before AjegunleLIFE training, Efe wasn't doing anything. He had been learning as an apprentice, the art of re-wiring motor vehicles but he left because he didn't like the job. He got to know about the program through a friend, Ebitimi Major, an alumni of the program.

"The program improved me a lot," said Efe. "I used to be a very shy person and I was unable to work with the basic Microsoft office tools. Through the program, I gained confidence in myself and I started to use the computer productively."

After the program, Efe handled a friend's business while he was away from the country for about 2 months before he secured an internship job with Paradigm Initiative (PI). He was on probation for a period of 3 months, and was then retained. He worked with PI for over a year before he resigned in order to further his studies.



“ ”

I used to be a very shy person and I was unable to work with the basic Microsoft office tools. Through the program, I gained confidence in myself and I started to use the computer productively.





paradigmhq.org /
athon

Mordi Grace Amarachi

After secondary education, Amarachi went in search of a job in an attempt to assuage the financial burdens of her family. She found a teaching job in a primary school. But a friend came to her house and told her of the LIFE program, convincing her to drop the teaching job for a shot at an experience of a life time. She decided to try.

"The opportunity to meet with accomplished facilitators and the alumni was wonderful. I was able to improve my communication skills. Every aspect of the program was wonderful."

Amarachi had once been a story and song writer, but she had dropped this favourite pastime. During the training, her mind began to go back to it and she was encouraged by a fellow student, Dayo who said she should always follow her dream. She is now working on a collection.

Amarachi is a part-time student of Yaba College of Technology where she is studying Business Administration, and she currently works in a clearing agency.



“ ”

The opportunity to meet with accomplished facilitators and the alumni was wonderful. I was able to improve my communication skills. Every aspect of the program was wonderful.





Ibiyemi Ekundayo

Dayo lived in Ibadan. He came to Lagos for holidays and heard about the LIFE program through his late cousin (Maduabuchi Miracle) who was on the program at that time. Miracle convinced Dayo that every young person needed the training because she has found direction, as a result of attending the program. Dayo enrolled after giving it some thought. He was glad to have been selected.

Dayo had purchased a laptop which wasn't used for any other thing than games and movies. "I honestly didn't know how to do anything else on it" said Dayo, "but the training has helped me move beyond that level. I was quite proficient on the applications we were taught and after my training, I started volunteering at the center to teach Microsoft Word."

Dayo is also learning catering service currently, and getting ready with all the skills he had been taught for launching his own catering business. "I have already set my short-term goals, and I believe with the entrepreneurial skills I have been taught, I am about to launch into another level of life."



“ ”

Dayo had purchased a laptop which wasn't used for any other thing than games and movies. "I honestly didn't know how to do anything else on it" said Dayo, but the training has helped me move beyond that level. I was quite proficient on the applications we were taught and after my training, I started volunteering at the center to teach Microsoft Word.





Tochukwu Anokwu

He was a tricycle rider before he enrolled on the LIFE program. Daily survival was paramount. He had no idea how to move from the constraints of daily life towards his dream. When he heard about the program from a friend, he was at first nonchalant. He did not want to have his hopes raised unnecessarily. Then he heard about it the program again on TV, so he decided to apply. He wasn't selected on the first attempt, but he was accepted second time.

"Through the LIFE program, I acquired a sound knowledge, better than what I learnt in a particular computer institute where I spent almost 3months yet wasn't able to use MS Word. I also cultivated the habit of reading books, learnt how to get useful information from the Internet, my self-esteem improved and I believed more in myself. I unlearned certain things as well, like the habit of not dumping refuse on the floor."

After the program and a thorough knowledge of business, Tochukwu decided to acquire a tricycle ('Keke Napep') on hire purchase. (The one he had been riding was not his. He was riding and delivering money earned to the owner daily). He got his and started to use it for commercial transportation. Now he is done with the payment. He is still running his transportation business and saving some money. He has plans to further his education as soon practicable.



“ ”

Through the LIFE program, I acquired a sound knowledge, better than what I learnt in a particular computer institute where I spent almost 3months yet wasn't able to use MS Word. I also cultivated the habit of reading books, learnt how to get useful information from the Internet, my self-esteem improved and I believed more in myself. I unlearned certain things as well, like the habit of not dumping refuse on the floor.



Tosin Ikuyinminu

After secondary school, Tosin's parents wanted him to get a job while waiting for his admission into higher institution. He got his first job working with a beverage company called Kniepe Nigeria Limited at Apapa Factory.

The first time Tosin heard about the program was years before, when he overheard his elder brother talk about a computer institute, but Tosin had no idea it had been Paradigm Initiative (PI)'s LIFE program. Then a friend re-introduced him to it. "He made me develop interest from our conversations, and I decided to enroll," said Tosin. "I got the form, registered, did well on the interviews and commenced the training with PI even though I was still doing the night shift on the factory job."

After the training, I could handle work very well with Microsoft office tools, do some graphical designs using CorelDraw, I could surf the internet on my own and write a business plan. I had such a great experience with the entrepreneurship classes and life skills sessions. PI made me discover myself and gave me a sense of direction, which I never had since leaving secondary school.

By the time Tosin was concluding AjegunleLIFE training, he had made up his mind for consulting in communications and business development. He started by founding a network called the 'Communications Intelligence Concept (C.I.C)'. The network is focused helping the younger generation communicate better and in order to improve their relationships and lifestyle. C.I.C uses social media platforms, training programs and events to accomplish its purpose.

Tosin also interned with GINA Consulting, an opportunity he got through Paradigm Initiative. "Working with GINA consulting was an interesting and awesome experience," said Tosin. "What could have taken me two years to learn took me only two months literarily. My learning experience was vast and fast." Currently, Tosin is a student of Olabisi Onabanjo University Consult, Lagos studying Mass Communication.



“ ”

After the training, I could handle work very well with Microsoft office tools, do some graphical designs using CorelDraw, I could surf the internet on my own and write a business plan. I had such a great experience with the entrepreneurship classes and life skills sessions. PI made me discover myself and gave me a sense of direction, which I never had since leaving secondary school.



Okoye Chisom Gloria

Before PI, Chisom was idling, having just finished secondary.

She had heard about the LIFE. program (PI) from an outreach the organization had conducted at her school, but she had told herself that it was all too good to be true, and she hadn't given it any further thought.

But out of the boredom, she decided to give it a shot after discussing with her mother. She wasn't selected the first time. Chisom felt very bad and hopeless. But after several weeks, she got a text message from PI encouraging her to pick up the form again. Of course she was at first reluctant. But she eventually summoned the courage to try again. She was selected.

"The program helped me with people-relations, and took away the shy nature in me. I really appreciate the Life skill sessions." says Chisom.

Chisom is currently studying Computer Engineering at Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State. She is a group leader during practical sessions, teaches tutorials to her course-mates and also helps them with issues such as formatting of PCS, repairs and maintenance.



“ ”

The program helped me with people-relations, and took away the shy nature in me. I really appreciate the Life skill sessions.

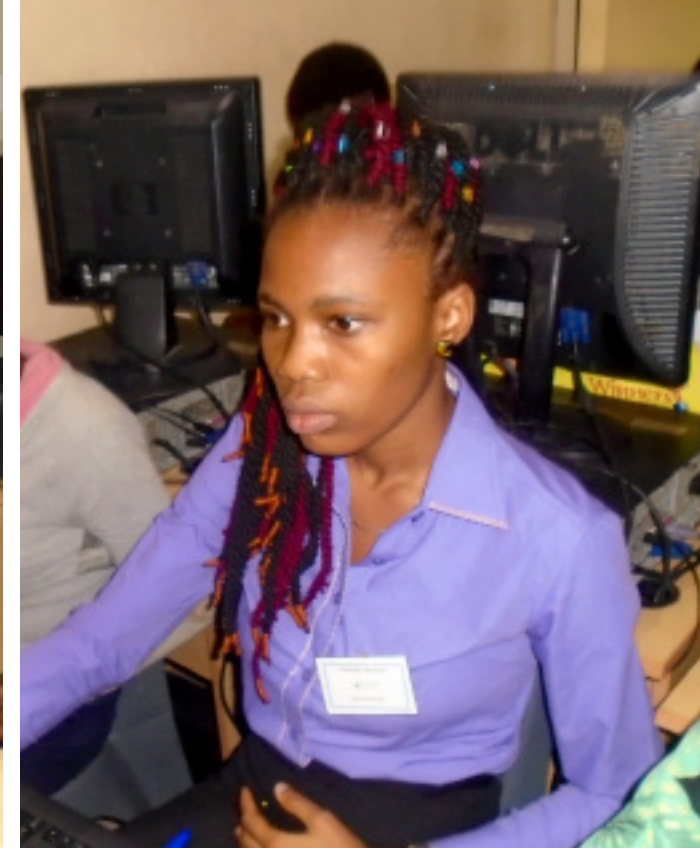


Agwu Chidinma Blessing

Chidinma was a sales representative before she heard about the program from her brother. He told Chidinma of the opportunities that came with the program and this inspired Chidinma to be a part of the program.

"The program changed my perspective on everything," said Chidinma. "To start with, we had to dress corporately to class on certain days which I detested at the time. We also had to be punctual or we risked losing our place on the program. But these practical life-skills training and other lessons we were taught in the class were most helpful to me."

Currently, Chidinma has gained admission into the University of Benin and she is studying linguistics. "Paradigm Initiative has helped in re-shaping my life, awakening me to the greatness that lies ahead of me. Thank you." She says.



“ ”

Paradigm Initiative has helped in re-shaping my life, awakening me to the greatness that lies ahead of me. Thank you.



Christopher Efiawhare

Before the program, Christopher had taken the A-Level program examinations into the University of Ilorin, Kwara state. He was home awaiting his result when he overheard his brother, Jonathan and friends talking about the program. He picked an interest and decided to give it a try.

"I became skillful with using the computer." Said Christopher, "the entrepreneurship classes stirred a drive in me to do something profitable with my life and not be totally dependent on my parents or anyone else."

After the program, Christopher's results were released and he passed the exams. Today, he is not only a student of the University of Ilorin, studying Civil Engineering; he also owns a dry cleaning business in the school and works as a housing agent.

"The program left many of us completely changed." Said Christopher. "Within few weeks at the hub, our families usually witness that we are becoming more responsible, respecting everyone, and doing something meaningful with our time and talents instead of idling away."

“ ”

I became skillful with using the computer. The entrepreneurship classes stirred a drive in me to do something profitable with my life and not be totally dependent on my parents or anyone else.



Michael Okereke

Michael testifies that growing up on the streets of Ajegunle was very challenging situation. Survival was all he could think about. And after he was done with secondary school, his sense of hopelessness only grew. There was nothing to go on to. A friend told him about the AjegunleLIFE program. He could hardly believe that such opportunity existed in Ajegunle, training young people on ICT skills free of charge. He applied and was selected.

"The program improved my self-esteem, my outlook to life." Said Michael. "The entrepreneurship sessions made me feel as though there was still hope for me to achieve greatness in life."

After the training, Michael decided to focus on music, which had been a favourite pastime to a whole new level. "I began to think of how to impact other young people within my community. So I decided to train on music." Michael is currently running a music school, with ten students enrolled. Their first graduation will be in December 2016 where those who complete the lessons will be handed certificates



“ ”

The program improved my self-esteem, my outlook to life. Said Michael. The entrepreneurship sessions made me feel as though there was still hope for me to achieve greatness in life.





Hude Olakunle Joel

Joel got to know about Paradigm Initiative from his sister. The entire family had noted the change in her following her training. Joel decided he wanted the same for himself, and he was not disappointed.

“Going through the AjeGunleLIFE training made a positive impact in my life as well.” Said Kunle. “For instance, with what I had learnt in the ICT sessions, I was able to work during the elections as an INEC adhoc staff. Also because of the exposure I had at PI, I enrolled in a tutorial centre afterwards in order to further improve my communication and writing skills.”

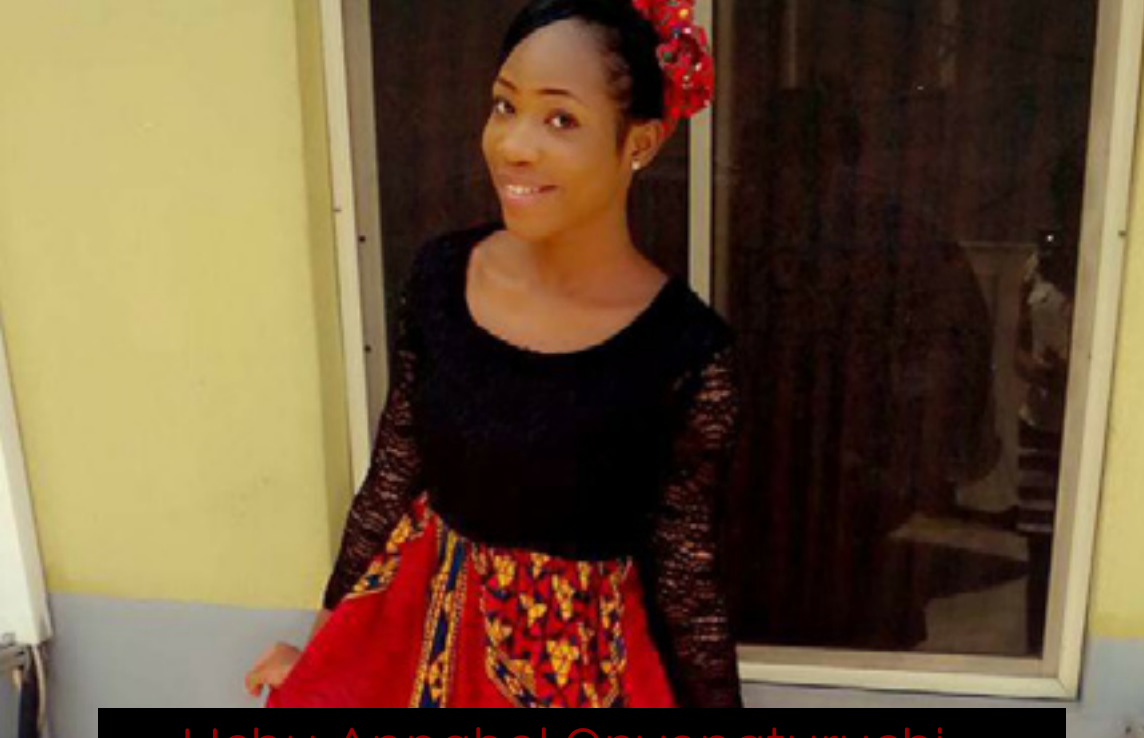
Presently, Joel works at Dream Future School of Entrepreneurship where he teaches computer classes. He also works part-time in a business centre. His immediate business plan is to own a business centre of his own, especially focused on helping students who do not know how to use a computer to navigate the computer based test that have now been introduced nationally.



“ ”

Going through the AjeGunleLIFE training made a positive impact in my life as well. For instance, with what I had learnt in the ICT sessions, I was able to work during the elections as an INEC adhoc staff. Also because of the exposure I had at PI, I enrolled in a tutorial centre afterwards in order to further improve my communication and writing skills.





Uchu Annabel Onyenaturuchi

Annabel was working with her mum at her event planning business after secondary school education. An alumnus of the training informed her mother about the AjegunleLIFE training. "She had me apply and I was selected for the seven weeks training. I was captivated even from the interview session. I had never attended such, it was eye opening for me." said Annabel.

After the training, Annabel had the opportunity to teach young girls the ICT skills she had learnt on the training by volunteering for W-TEC, an organization that is into technology training for young girls. She also taught young children in her neighbourhood the basics of computer, and introduced her friends to the training.

Annabel put to use the skills she learnt during the entrepreneurial classes by opening a hair-dressing business which she runs from home. She is always busy, with hardly any spare time not attending to a client. She is also making enough to support herself and has quit asking her parents for money.

"Sometimes I compare my life to others, and I found out that I am better, for having been on the LIFE program." She said. "I am able to take care of myself, save money and also help others with what I have learnt. I was able to find my confidence and the discipline I needed to succeed at my goals." Annabel recently gained admission into Abia State University to study Mass Communication.

“ ”

Sometimes I compare my life to others, and I found out that I am better, for having been on the LIFE program. She said. I am able to take care of myself, save money and also help others with what I have learnt. I was able to find my confidence and the discipline I needed to succeed at my goals

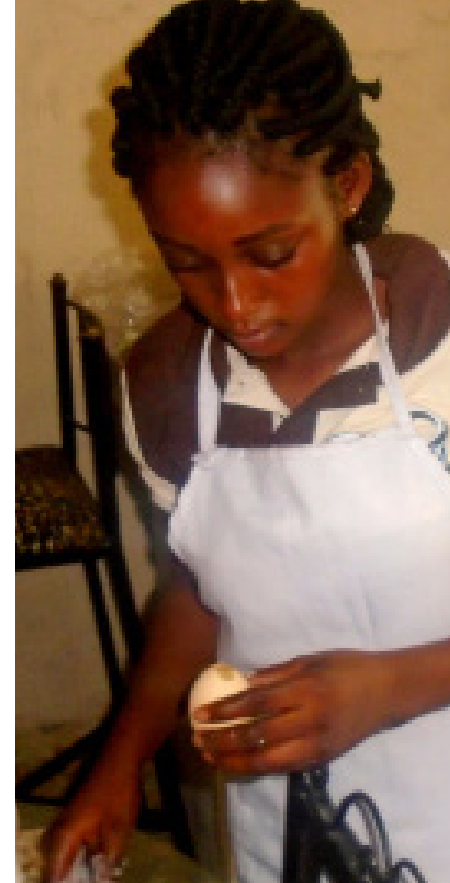


Alice Augustine

Alice stayed at home after secondary school doing nothing. Then she met a friend who had just completed the LIFE training Program and who couldn't stop raving about how the program had impacted her. Alice was convinced she needed to enroll.

Before the program she had no ICT skills whatsoever, couldn't use the computer and didn't know the first thing about entrepreneurship. But all these changed in just seven weeks. Currently Alice volunteers with the Women in Technology Organization (WTEC), where she trains other young girls on the digital literacy and how to be safe on the internet.

Alongside this, she is attending a catering school where she is learning how to bake. She intends to start her own baking business soon.

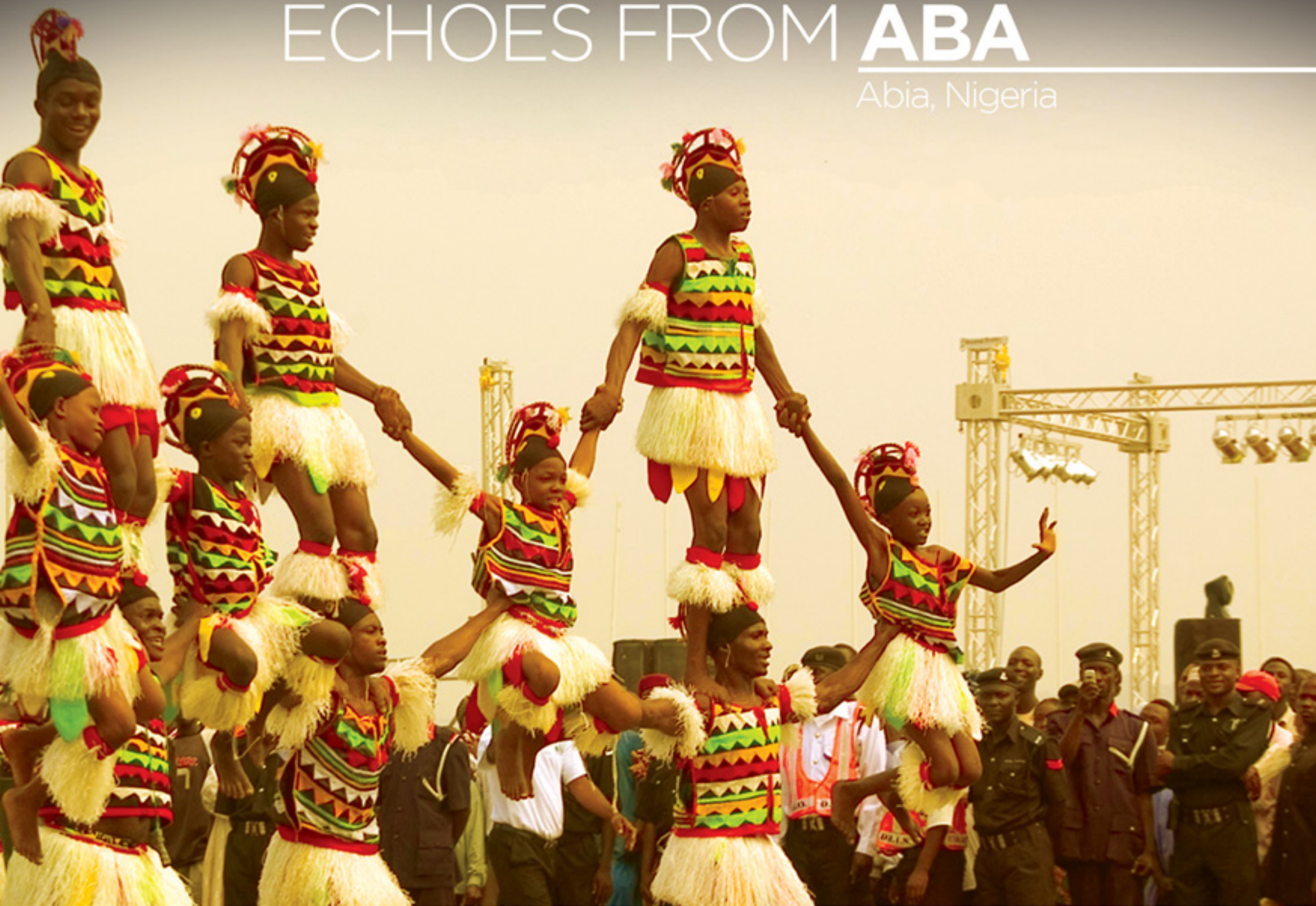


“ ”

Before the program she had no CT skills whatsoever, couldn't use the computer and didn't know the first thing about entrepreneurship. But all these changed in just seven weeks.

ECHOES FROM **ABA**

Abia, Nigeria





Sylvester Nwankwo

Sylvester suffered from low self-esteem due to his lack of ICT skills. His unending search for a job made matters worse, and an intervention was urgently required. A friend told Sylvester about Paradigm Initiative (AbaLIFE) and he could not wait to start. He picked up the application form without a second thought because he was desperate about overcoming the barriers that separated him from his dream opportunities.

Sylvester is a teacher today. After school, he works as a home tutor, and it doesn't stop there. Sylvester also completes jobs for clients from western countries online on 'Upwork' and 'Fiverr,' both freelancing platforms. Describing his experience both on the training and afterwards, he has this to say; "Aba LIFE program turned my life around literally. I didn't think I could do anything, but not only have I learnt skills that helped me get a job, I gained the confidence to engage clients online, bid for jobs and win. I never dreamt of such opportunities since I was born.



“ ”

Aba LIFE program turned my life around literally. I didn't think I could do anything, but not only have I learnt skills that helped me get a job, I gained the confidence to engage clients online, bid for jobs and win. I never dreamt of such opportunities since I was born.



Gold Innocent

Gold had been 5 years at home since finishing secondary school in 2010. She wanted to learn more, but finances were a constraint. There was no money to pay for even computer training at N15, 500 (about \$78) for six months. Her guardian could not afford it. Gold heard about Paradigm Initiative (Aba LIFE) on radio, where the program officer engaged the audience talking about the relevance of ICT skills, how the training was equipping young people in the town and the process of enrollment. Gold had a few unanswered questions.

How could 8-weeks of training deliver all those skills that were mentioned? The computer school where she had previously enquired ran for six months! Another nagging question was about money. The program officer had mentioned that training was free except for picking up the form at N1000 (\$5). She couldn't believe there were no hidden charges. But she was determined to give it a shot.

"The first day I stepped in the office, I was amazed at the quality of what I was going to be getting for free - the classrooms equipped with projectors screens computers for each student, the serene environment and welcoming warm colours!" The training opened Gold's eyes to opportunities. And she spent some time volunteering at the centre after her training to start with. "I wanted to help other girls who were like me get started on their path to greatness." Today Gold is a staff of U.O.O Nigerian Plc (Estates Management Division) Aba branch, working as a front desk officer. "I got the job because of the useful ICT skills I picked up at the LIFE training." She says.



“ ”

The first day I stepped in the office, I was amazed at the quality of what I was going to be getting for free the classrooms equipped with projectors, screens, computers for each student, the serene environment and welcoming warm colours!



Ransom Muojekwu

Ransom had developed deep emotional problems including depression, low self-esteem, and suicidal inclinations, after he found that he had failed Mathematics on the Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations (SSCE). It was while attending a coaching class in order to sit for the exams again that a friend introduced him to the Aba LIFE program.

The program changed Ransome's life, restoring his confidence. "I started to realize I had other talents and abilities and my life had a purpose. I was no longer angry with life or suicidal as I my self-esteem improved. As a matter of fact, along the way I was ashamed of being ever suicidal because I learnt that was a quitter's mentality and I had learnt that I can achieve anything I set my mind on if I don't quit."

Currently, Ransome had not only passed his exams, he has gained admission into the university to study computer science! He also works part time as home-tutor, teaching mathematics to many other youngsters who find it difficult. "Sometimes I teach for more than 4 hours at a stretch. Mathematics has become a passion, and I sometimes move on to counsel the young people I teach in other areas of life using my own experience."

Ransom also volunteers at Aba LIFE training in his spare time.



“ ”

I started to realize I had other talents and abilities and my life had a purpose. I was no longer angry with life or suicidal as I my self-esteem improved. As a matter of fact, along the way I was ashamed of being ever suicidal because I learnt that was a quitter's mentality and I had learnt that I can achieve anything I set my mind on if I don't quit.





Anthony Ifediora

Anthony was an assistant teacher in a school in Port-Harcourt. He came back to Aba when his mother broke the good news to him that there is a standard ICT training centre in Aba, where he could learn free of charge. His mother had learnt this from one of her own friends, whose son had previously completed training at the center.

It was the ICT training that caught his attention, but once at the center, he realized that he needed the Life-skills and Entrepreneurship training even more.

By the end of the training, Anthony had made a decision not to return to the teaching job just as a means of survival. He had picked up the courage and skills to pursue his dream business. With the help of his family, he started a business centre where he creates documents and offers graphics designing services for businesses. He also helps businesses write their business plans, and recently started to produce and sell perfumes.

Despite his busy schedule however, Anthony volunteers to train on graphics design at Aba L.I.F.E. It is very important to him to give back in this way.



“ ”

By the end of the training, Anthony had made a decision not to return to the teaching job just as a means of survival. He had picked up the courage and skills to pursue his dream business. With the help of his family, he started a business centre where he creates documents and offers graphics designing services for businesses.

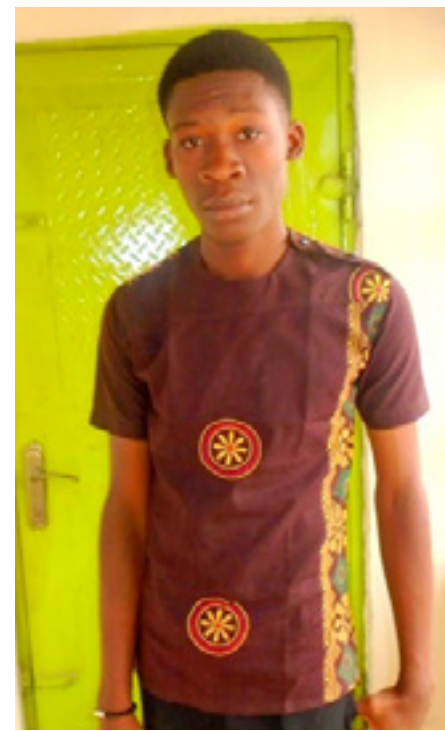


Chukwudi Ogbonnaya

Like many others, Chukwudi was done with secondary school and was home doing nothing. An old classmate told him of AbaLIFE but his parents were at first skeptical, until they heard it for themselves on the radio. Then he was permitted to pick up the application form. One of the happiest days of his life was when he received a text message that he had been successful in the interviews and had been selected to participate in the training.

Chukwudi applied himself to every aspect of the training, but the entrepreneurship classes picked his interest a lot. "I guess I have always been inclined to business, I just didn't know the first thing about anything. The classes helped me developed the skills and the right mindset I needed." After his training, and with help from his family, he immediately started a small business of selling wall security wire and others fencing security fittings. "I no longer depend on my parents," He now says proudly, "unlike some of my friends who are still idling at home and being a burden to their parents. I even contribute financially to projects in the family now from my business proceeds."

Chukwudi continues to work very hard at his business. He looks forward to being able to pay for his own higher education someday soon.



“ ”

I guess I have always been inclined to business, I just didn't know the first thing about anything. The classes helped me developed the skills and the right mindset I needed.



Udochi Sunday Winsoul

Udochi spent several months job-hunting to no avail following his secondary education. This brought on despair sometimes. His mum came home from her outing one day and told him about a certain training centre that had helped her friend's son who attended, get a job. Udochi did not take his mum seriously, until he met an Alumni of the program who was sensitizing young people in his church about the training. This time he got interested and went ahead to pick the form and begin the process of joining the training.

He enjoyed the ICT classes and graphics design class in particular. Armed with these skills, he resumed his job-hunt after his training at the Aba LIFE centre. Within a short time, he landed a job as an assistant graphics designer in a business centre in Port-Harcourt. This gave him the opportunity to further hone his skills and also learn an additional skill, 'photo editing.'

Udochi now works on his own as a graphics designer and photo editor. His passion is to teach these skills in order to empower other young people the same way he had been empowered by the Aba LIFE program.



“ ”

He enjoyed the ICT classes and graphics design class in particular. Armed with these skills, he resumed his job-hunt after his training at the Aba LIFE centre. Within a short time, he landed a job as an assistant graphics designer in a business centre in Port-Harcourt

ECHOES FROM **DAKATA**

Kano, Nigeria





Abdulrazak Umar

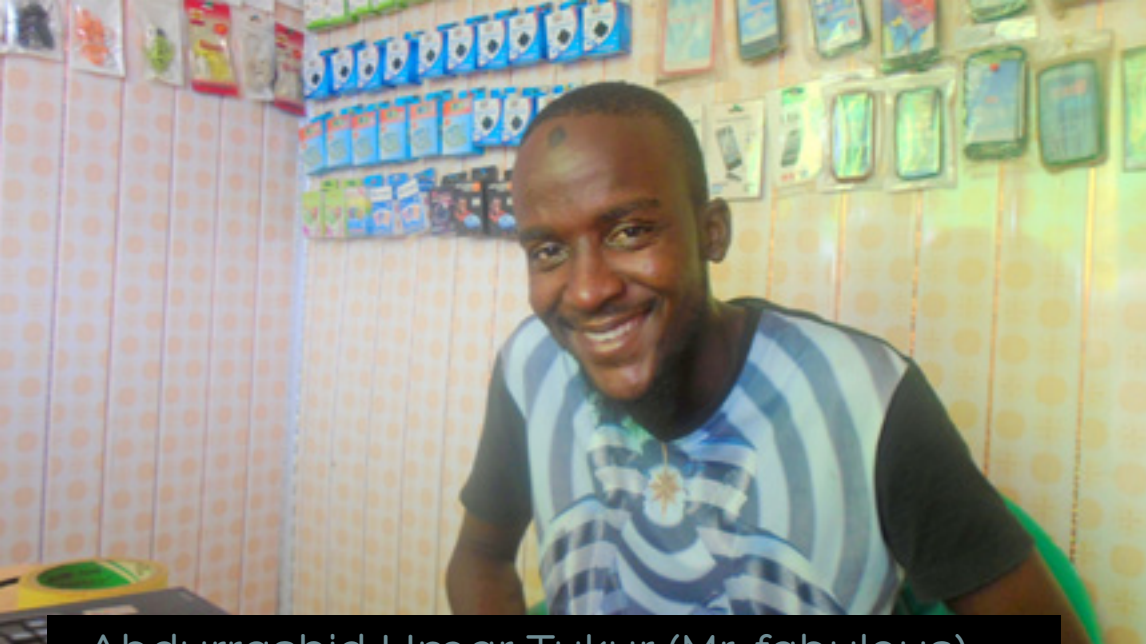
Abdulrazak Umar joined his elder brother in the (painting) business after his secondary school. But a friend persuaded him of the importance of attending the Dakata LIFE training, so he took some time off to learn.

The training was eye-opening for Umar. He paid particular attention to skills that had potential to help him improve on the family business. One of such skills was the introduction to Social media. Umar began to use social media to advertise his works and to persuade people about his skills and this began yielding positive results. "In the end," says Umar, "I believe that the LIFE program has moved me closer to achieving my goals in life. I thank Mr. Umar Amir Abdullahi for encouraging and helping me gain essential life skills and I thank Paradigm Initiative for the opportunity.



“ ”

I believe that the LIFE program has moved me closer to achieving my goals in life. I thank Mr. Umar Amir Abdullahi for encouraging and helping me gain essential life skills and I thank Paradigm Initiative for the opportunity.



Abdurrashid Umar Tukur (Mr. fabulous)

Abdurrashid heard about the DakataLIFE center for the first time through a friend that had been on the program. He was at once very interested in being part of the program. During the 8 weeks of training, he witnessed that his ICT skills improved greatly. But he was even more captivated by the entrepreneurship and life-skills training. "Before this program, I had no knowledge on entrepreneurship and I did not know what to do with my life. I was also lacking in self-esteem and confidence, especially with regards to communication but the training helped me overcome all these problems." He said.

Abdurrashid now manages his own small business, selling phones. He is also a part of 'Jumia J-force,' using this platform to also grow his business. "We learnt during our training to be creative and not to be job seekers, but job creators. So I am looking forward to growing my business to achieve that feat. By next year, I will open a shop of my own."

After his training, Abdurrashid picked interest in and began to attend events relating to youth and community development. One of such is the 'Youths Leading Sustainability on SDGs' organized by Mufarka Youth Development Initiative in partnership with the 'American Corner Kano,' and the 'World Entrepreneurship Day' organized by junior chambers initiative(JCI) and the Kano Startup and Digital Marketing Network. In his spare time, he works on community development projects (SDGs).

"I have no words to thank Paradigm Initiative for changing my life. I would like to become a journalist and an activist after I graduate from the university." says Abdurrashid.



“ ”

Before this program, I had no knowledge on entrepreneurship and I did not know what to do with my life. I was also lacking in self-esteem and confidence, especially with regards to communication but the training helped me overcome all these problems.



Abubakar Ado Muhammad

"When PI arrived at our community, my brother Aminu Ado encouraged me to apply and he picked up the form for me." says Abubakar.

After he started attending the training, everything changed for Abubarkar. Apart from computer skills which he had never learnt anywhere before, he was also deeply impacted by life-skills training such as on time management and self-awareness. "For instance I will never forget Mr. Tosin because he was the one who taught us that if we wanted to shake hands with someone, we have to look them in the eye directly. And Mr. Amir, is one of my models who advices me on ways to improve my tailoring skills."

After the training, Abubarkar began to show his designs on WhatsApp and people call him to ask him to sew for them. "Now I'm a punctual person and I know how to write a business plan and set goals. Lastly, I have to thank PI profoundly. Thank you!!!



“ ”

After he started attending the training, everything changed for Abubarkar. Apart from computer skills which he had never learnt anywhere before, he was also deeply impacted by life-skills training such as on time management and self-awareness.





Ibrahim Adamu Sa'idu

Ibrahim was born in Yankaba Kawaji Kano, and he grew up in Sauna Nepa Kawaji. After secondary school, he applied to the College of Arts, Sciences and Remedial Studies Kano to study Mathematics Education. But even this did not give him exposure to ICTs. He knew nothing about computers, even while at the remedial college.

A friend who was an alumni of DakataLIFE told Ibrahim about the program. At first he refused, but his friend pressed on. At last, Ibrahim picked the form, went through the interviews and was selected. "I found there were other things I knew nothing about aside computers," says Ibrahim; "including simple time management skills, how to write a business plan or how to use social media effectively. PI changed my life entirely."

On completing the DakataLIFE program, Ibrahim opened a barbing shop he called El-Ahmad Barbing shop. "PI taught me how to manage the risks in business, about advertising, innovation and so on. I am very grateful to PI staff and volunteers because they are always eager to change the life of youths through their programs."



“ ”

I found there were other things I knew nothing about aside computers, says Ibrahim; including simple time management skills, how to write a business plan or how to use social media effectively. PI changed my life entirely.



Imran Ibrahim

Imran sat home for several months after completing secondary school, doing nothing. Every day, he battled the discouragement that ensued from failing his Senior Secondary Certificate Exams and worried about where to go on to in life. He was desperately searching for options, any institution that might help him generate new ideas, when he came across the DakataLIFE program. One of Imran's friends was talking about it and asked if Imran would like to join. Imran decided to join the program.

"I learn a lot of things within a short while," says Imran; "but I particularly enjoyed the Microsoft packages, Graphic design and the Life skills training."

When he was done with his training, Imran picked up barbing. "Simple things I had learnt during the training such as punctuality has helped my business tremendously. Everyone has a talent, but without knowledge, even the most talented will continue to be losers." He says. Imran regularly returns to volunteer at the centre. "I cannot thank this organization enough for this opportunity."



“ ”

I learn a lot of things within a short while, says Imran; but I particularly enjoyed the Microsoft packages, Graphic design and the Life skills training.





Khadijah Muhammad

Khadijah Muhammad graduated from secondary school June 2015. She learnt to make bags afterwards but this wasn't a skill she took seriously. She was also a technology enabled girl ambassador under an organisation named 'Girl Effect' but she didn't take that seriously either. "I thought since I was a girl, there wasn't any need to exert myself. I will move from my father's house to my husband's house anyway. I will always be someone else's responsibility." Khadijah said.

She heard about Paradigm Initiative from a friend and at first she was reluctant but her mum encouraged her and so she picked the form and went through the process. Khadijah loved the I.C.T classes. "I found it easy to grasp everything and operating the system proficiently made me feel very intelligent and proud of myself." She said.

"When we got to the entrepreneurship classes, I had to ask what I had been doing with my life!" She immediately began to work out how to improve the business of making bags which she had neglected. She started by creating awareness on social media and making new bag designs that were affordable. Within a month, Khadijah started making profit! In her exact words, "I am now serious with life and business. I can describe myself as a committed, responsible young entrepreneur after going through DakataLIFE program. In the next five years, I see myself as an established bag designer, holding a degree in nursing, a young philanthropist and house wife."



“ ”

I found it easy to grasp everything and operating the system proficiently made me feel very intelligent and proud of myself.

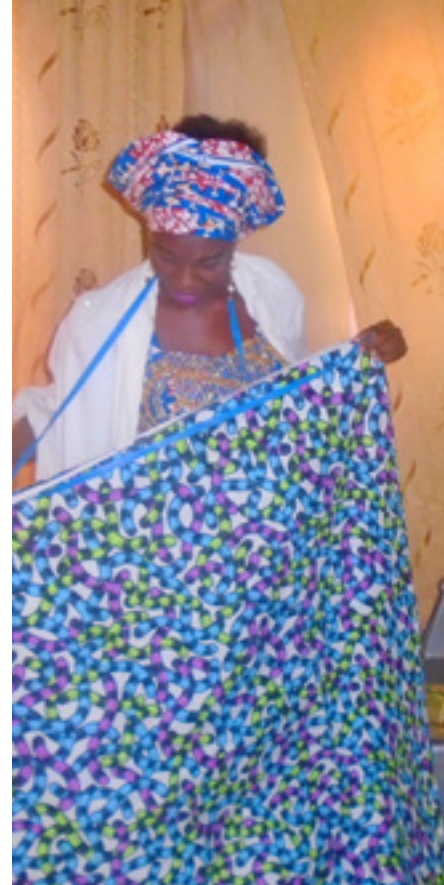


Sumayyah Mu'azu

Mu'azu Sumayyah had been into tailoring once she was done with his secondary school. But he took a break from his business to attend the LIFE program.

"The LIFE Program helped me a lot and I have experienced a lot of changes in my life such as being able to manage my time, my finances, and myself generally. I can also communicate better and above all, I now have good self-esteem. The training also gave me practical steps to follow in order to improve my business and achieve my dreams of becoming a renown tailor." Said Sumayyah.

Sumayyah is currently back in business and doing very well.



“ ”

The LIFE Program helped me a lot and I have experienced a lot of changes in my life such as being able to manage my time, my finances, and myself generally. I can also communicate better and above all, I now have good self-esteem.



Saleem Suleiman Sani

After secondary school in 2015, Saleem got a job in a bookshop keeper, but he had very little interest in what he was doing. Two (2) month on, his senior secondary certificate examinations results were released. Saleem failed. He walked out on his job as book-keeper, disappointed with life.

Then his father began to talk about a certain computer school. His father eventually went ahead with Saleem's elder brother to pick up the form for him. "When I learnt that the form was only N500 and we were not going to pay for the training, I told myself that the training was going to be low-grade and worthless. But I was so wrong!" After only a few days in the program, Saleem had to start finding the facts about the organization. He then learnt that PI is a not-for-profit organization, committed to the development of the Nigerian youth.

Saleem had a phenol experience from his first day on the training until the last. When he was done and handed the letter of completion, he approached a cyber-café and asked to be allowed to practice. The café owner disagreed initially, but when Saleem showed him his letter of completion, the café-owner agreed. Then within a short while, Saleem started working in the café. When the front desk officer at the Dakata LIFE centre left, Saleem applied for the job and was chosen of the 3 that applied! But he had to leave after two months because an opportunity came for him to further his studies.

"PI has really impacted me, teaching me many things. I really appreciate their profound generosity toward me." said Saleem.



“ ”

When I learnt that the form was only N500 and we were not going to pay for the training, I told myself that the training was going to be low-grade and worthless. But I was so wrong! PI has really impacted me, teaching me many things. I really appreciate their profound generosity toward me.



Zubairu Ilyasu

After his secondary education, Zubairu had been trying to find where to learn how to operate a computer but to no avail. One blessed evening, his neighbour told him about DakataLIFE program. "I followed him to the program office to purchase his own form. He had to lend me some money to buy mine because I have no money on me." Both Zubairu and his friend were called for interviews and were eventually selected into the program.

"We all thought that the program was mainly on computer skills, we did not know there was the entrepreneurship part to it!" said Zubairu. "The program was a life changing one. I learnt how to make use of Microsoft Word to create my curriculum vitae and other things. I was able to create my own C.V and use it to get a job at Pathfinder Private School. During the program, I learnt to make good use of my time and to be a responsible citizen in the society. I also learnt how to market online using social media platforms. I knew nothing about computers before but with this program, I can now conveniently use a computer, and I have learnt much more than that. I can also set up a business of my own with little capital."

Zubairu is equipping his students at the school where he teaches with the knowledge of Microsoft-Word. He teaches them how to type and save their work. Zubairu hopes to continue his education and obtain a degree.



“ ”

The program was a life changing one. I learnt how to make use of Microsoft Word to create my curriculum vitae and other things. I was able to create my own C.V and use it to get a job at Pathfinder Private School



Sunusi Haruna

Sunusi was surprised about the DakataLIFE program when a friend mentioned that the training was a free training. He told himself he should get the form. He had been told that the form only cost N500. But when he got to Paradigm Initiative's training Centre, (DakataLIFE centre), Sunusi was further surprised - by the furnishing, air conditioners, lots of computers, and other training aids. He could not wait to receive the text message announcing to him that he had passed his interview, and had been admitted into the program.

Before, the program Sunusi could not do anything on computers, but now; Sunusi feels certain he can work in an office, using a computer to complete his tasks. He has other passions though - music. He is currently working on his album containing tracks performed both in Hausa and English languages, and to be released in October. He has done a special track on this album dedicated to appreciate PI - DakataLIFE program.



“ ”

Before the program Sunusi could not do anything on computers, but now; Sunusi feels certain he can work in an office, using a computer to complete his tasks. He has other passions though music
He has done a special track on this album dedicated to appreciate PI - DakataLIFE program.



Adama Muhammad

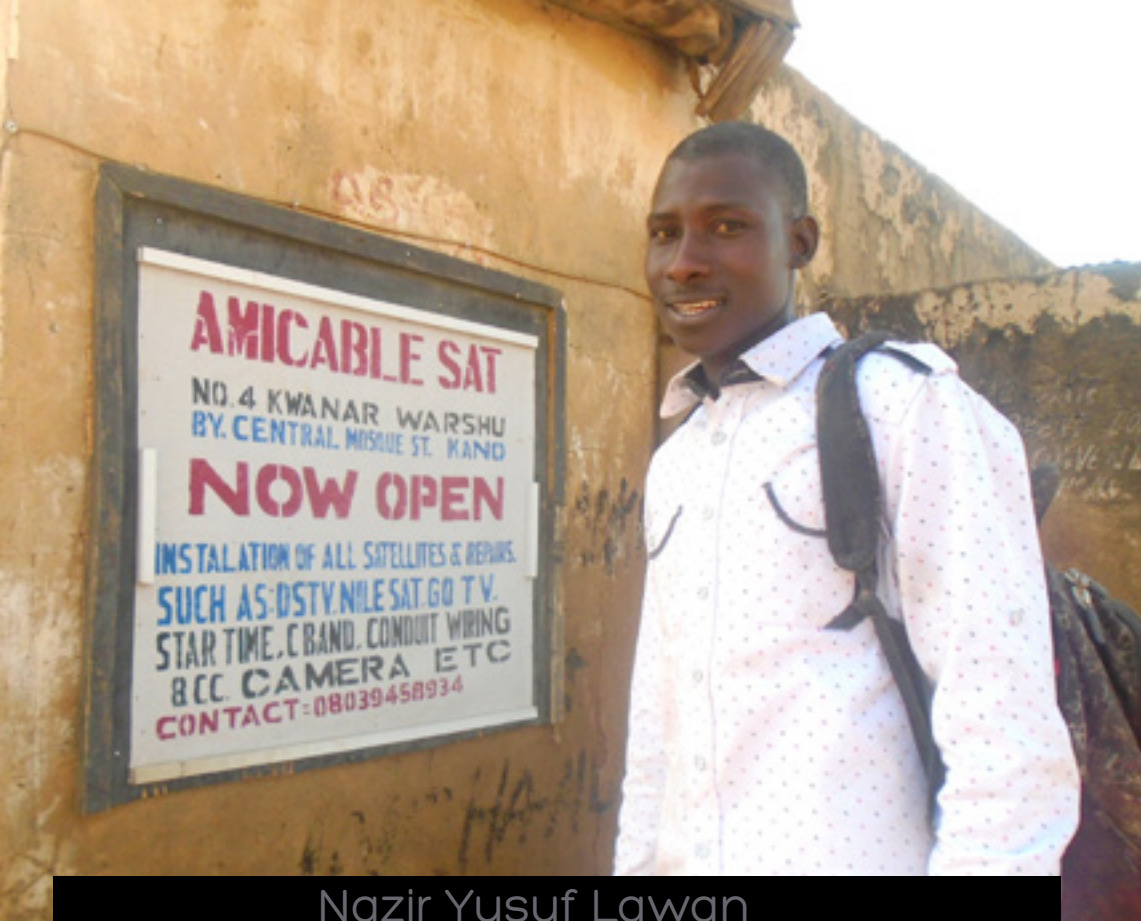
Adama Muhammad had no knowledge of computers. A friend advised her to join Paradigm Initiative's DakataLIFE program and so she did.

On the program, Adama learnt to use various computer applications. She also learnt about time management and how to set up small businesses. Following her training, Adama set up a small business selling recharge cards, and it has been profitable. She has also gained admission to Kano School of hygiene to study Environmental Health technology.



“ ”

Before the program Sunusi could not do anything on computers, but now; Sunusi feels certain he can work in an office, using a computer to complete his tasks. He has other passions though music He has done a special track on this album dedicated to appreciate PI - DakataLIFE program.



Nazir Yusuf Lawan

Nazir heard of DakataLIFE innovation centre for the first time from his father. His father had shown him the fliers of Paradigm Initiative. He had been extremely busy assisting his father with business, trying to raise money to pay the entrance examination fees into higher institution.

Still, he rushed to the centre to pick up the form on that fateful day, and was lucky to be selected.

Following his training, Nazir opened a new business entirely. "Even though I knew how to install satellite, I had never taken it seriously. At the DakataLIFE centre, I learnt how I could start a small business venture and manage the risks. So I opened a satellite installation centre at the Dakata market which I called AMICABLE SAT. I have been advertising my services on social media using Facebook and Whatsapp. I also designed a new signboard with the aid of graphic design skills I had gained, where I wrote all my contact address and services."

Nazir's business is doing well, and he hopes in a short time to raise enough money to continue with his education.



“ ”

At the DakataLIFE centre, I learnt how I could start a small business venture and manage the risks. So I opened a satellite installation centre at the Dakata market which I called AMICABLE SAT.



LIFE

Life Skills - ICT - Financial Readiness - Entrepreneurship

Get Trained in:

Design Tools, Web Development, Business Development (Microsoft Build Your Business), Workshops, Content Management Systems

2017 SESSIONS:

Class A
February 13 -
April 21, 2017

Class B
May 29 -
August 4, 2017

Class C
September 11 -
November 17, 2017

Training
is
FREE