# Teachers Without Borders Nigeria-Empowering & Connecting Teachers to Information and Each Other

**Raphael Ogar Oko**

**Elevator Pitch**

Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.

**About You**

**Location**

**Project Street Address**

Suite 3, 2nd Floor, Standard Plaza, Behind Wadata House, 2 Kutsi Close, Off Aminu Kano Crescent, Wuse 2, Abuja

**Project City**

Abuja

**Project Province/State**

Federal Capital Territory

**Project Postal/Zip Code**

23409

**Project Country**

Nigeria

**Your idea**

**Country your work focuses on:**

Nigeria

**Website URL**

http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/pages/nigeria

**What stage is your project in?**

Operating for 1-5 years

**YouTube Upload**

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThSwN_R-8Qw

**What is the average monthly household income in your target community, in US Dollars?**

<$100

**Innovation**

Describe your idea in fewer than 50 words.

TWB Nigeria is closing the education divide through teacher mobilization, professional development, connecting teachers to information, each other, and inspiring teachers to take initiatives that address community needs. By empowering, connecting and celebrating teachers online, onsite, on-air and on-the-road, we are improving lives to realize education for all Nigerians.

What makes your idea unique?

The uniqueness of our idea lies in the fact that we utilize the wisdom and numerical strength of teachers, the single largest professionally trained group in Nigeria. Our innovative programs and strategies incorporate unique curricula, investment in community outreach, and a commitment to sustainability and growth. We are volunteer driven and we adapt a "bottom – top" approach working to empower one teacher at a time and growing with the teacher who reaches out to others thereby creating a network of educators committed to educational reform and the realization of
educational opportunities for all, transcending religious, ethnic or other affiliations. We work across all borders to bring educators of diverse fields to create a common understanding and speak with a common vocabulary – teaching to improve learning and learning to make the world a better place.

Our approach to education is unique because we seek not only to educate teachers for intellectual development but we integrate the principles of emotional and character development thereby providing a balanced education that address the heart, the head and the hands. We deliver our programs through many channels as we are online (www.teacherswithoutborders.org), on-site (in schools and states in Nigeria), on-air (The Voice of Teachers radio show on Kapital FM 92.9 FM Abuja, Nigeria) and recently, are “on-the-road” (with a special van tagged the Wall-less classroom that is moving around city motor parks to deliver educational programs and services). The complementary approach through the online, on-site, on-air and on-the-road channels is most unique among all.

What is your area of work? (Please check as many as apply.)

- Children & Youth
- Education
- Education reform
- Girls' development
- Mentorship
- Youth development
- Development & Prosperity
- Adult education
- Community development
- Fundraising
- Information technology
- Mentorship
- Microfinance
- Networking
- Philanthropy
- Poverty alleviation
- Technology
- Disability
- HIV/AIDS
- Infant mortality
- Reproductive and maternal health
- Human Rights & Peace
- Women’s issues

What impact have you had?

Teacher access to Certificate of Teaching Mastery (4,100); Millennium Development Ambassadors (1, 386); Voice of Teachers radio show on Kapital FM 92.9 (3 million listeners every week for 18 weeks), TWB presented 3,000 volumes of books, journals, magazines and other educational resources on HIV/AIDS to the Management of the School of Nursing and Midwifery, Gwagwalada, Abuja for the HIV/AIDS Library Project; distributed over 200 computers to teachers, teacher training colleges and community centers, providing literacy training to over 200 motor park workers in Abuja; enrolled and provided micro-credit to 42 women; membership strength of over 3000 teachers, initiated a nationwide “Teaching Tour” and addressed over 5,000 teachers in more than 12 states on the need for professional development to meet the challenges of teaching in the 21st century and with 72 volunteers working in various schools and communities

Describe the primary problem(s) that your project is addressing.

Our work to improve teacher professional development is a tool for addressing the myriad of problems facing our nation. With a population of over 140 million, Nigeria has both challenges and the potential to make a large impact in the region. 12 million Nigerian children aren’t in school; one in five children die before the age of five; and there are nearly two million orphaned from AIDS*. Teachers Without Borders Nigeria believes that by expanding teacher training and professional development, communities will find solutions to these issues. We are committed to meeting teachers where they live and work, providing the resources and access to opportunities they need so that they can become leaders and find local solutions.

Professional development and training is critical for a strong national education system and our programs and initiatives serve to address the gaps in the formal training provided in our country.

Describe the steps that your organization is taking to make your project successful.

We have developed key steps to make our projects successful and they include:

In general, the empowerment of our membership and partnership with others

Online: TWB Website includes a Nigerian membership drive; national citizens have the ability to make Groups, take and create courses, and participate in the online social network without membership fees. Our Millennium Development Ambassadors have created a website dedicated to promoting the role of teachers in achieving the MDGs (www.mdgambassadors.org)

On-site: Conducting face-to-face workshops and seminars for teachers as well as establishing Community Teaching and Learning Centers. The CTLC at Tungan Wakili is providing training for Muslim women on literacy, launched micro-credit scheme and computer education for youths.

On the road: Mobile borderless classrooms at 4 major Motor Parks in Abuja.

Impact

What will it take for your project to be successful over the next three years? Success in Year 1:

Consistent capacity building of membership, availability and accessibility of relevant information and communication technology as well as modest funding and building of partnership with more core stakeholders in the education sector.

Success in Year 2:

Strengthening our Partnership with other stakeholders, utilization of online, onsite, on air and on-the-road tools in programs and services delivery. Increased membership and capacity of volunteers.

Success in Year 3:

Training of more teachers to take leadership role in community programs, strengthening of our partnership with educational institutions and establishments as well as effective utilization of innovative tools.

Do you have a business plan or strategic plan? (yes/no)

We have developed a networking strategic plan to increase membership to 12,000 teachers and to track our growing membership, have invested resources into capacity building of leadership to track our projects, partnerships, and impacts. With an increased capacity and visibility, along with an expectation of greater impacts, our plan targets 12,000 teacher membership and 4,000 millennium development ambassadors. We have outlined set of targets and processes for programs; an exponential increase in membership; chapter development; consistent organizational procedures and communications systems; and a concrete plan for diverse revenue streams that reduce dramatically our dependence upon grants and donations.

What are the three most important actions needed to grow your initiative or organization? STEP 1:

Reaching Out and Empowering Teachers
The need is great for teacher training; by partnering with local schools, universities and government agencies we share the Certificate of Teaching Mastery program that fills in the missing gaps needed to meet the current demands of this profession. For example, our partnership with the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria has enabled us to reach out to more teachers who in turn are joining and signing up for our professional development courses online, onsite and on air.

What are the three most important actions needed to grow your initiative or organization? STEP 2:
Retaining Membership and Connecting Them to Information and Each Other as well as providing guidance and resources

The Certificate of Teaching Mastery Program provides the foundation for professional growth; however, TWB Nigeria recognizes the importance of mentorship and leadership training so that new leaders are prepared to continue to expand the reach. TWB membership is free and teachers can access free online courses, collaborate with international colleagues and continue the professional enrichment experience. When resources are limited we find solutions, for example TWB Nigeria donated 3000 books, journals and magazines on HIV/AIDS to FCT School of Nursing and Midwifery, Gwagwalada.

What are the three most important actions needed to grow your initiative or organization? STEP 3:

Celebrating Teachers that are making the difference in their communities. TWB Nigeria has launched a new stage of development by creating the Millennium Development Ambassadors (MDAs) program. We designed this program to utilize teachers and community educators/leaders to address the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in their families, schools and communities and ask proven and emerging leaders to help find solutions to ensure that Nigeria achieves the MDGs by 2015. Training the growing network of MDAs to work in communities to eradicate poverty and hunger, achieve universal education, addressing health issues, environmental sustainability and local partnership is very crucial.

Describe the expected results of these actions.

• Increased membership to 144,000 teacher organization well trained to support the educational reform process in Nigeria
• Establishment of 150 Community Teaching and Learning Centers, delivery of educational programs through the radio, TV as well as in remote places thereby creating access to education for all
• The mobilization of 36,000 Millennium Development Ambassadors who shall work in all 36 states of Nigeria to ensure that Nigeria achieves the UN MDGs by 2015. The establishment of an online teacher training college by TWB in Nigeria as well as the creation of a Voice of Teachers Studio for the recording of the Teachings of Nigerian Teachers on audio/visual CDs for use by learners

What was the defining moment that led you to this innovation?

The challenges that I faced as a teacher in the course of my teaching career inspired me to look into the many difficulties that educators are facing – lack of adequate professional development programs after initial training, disconnect among teachers and the general negative public perception about teachers as people whose reward cannot come to them on earth led me to the idea that we need to empower teachers, need to connect teachers to information, to each other and to resources, and we need to celebrate teachers who are very passionate about their profession and compassionate toward children. In the year 2000, Nigeria’s former President, Olusegun Obasanjo launched the National Rebirth program and challenged Nigerians to come up with strategies to renew the Nigeria nation. I felt it was the moment I was waiting for, and realizing the potentials and numerical strength and geographical spread of teachers, I took up the idea of mobilizing teachers for the national rebirth of Nigeria and have never given up on this calling unto this day. I believe that with teachers well mobilized, empowered, connected and celebrated, we can bring the change we desire to reality. As I began the search for a platform, I found and joined Teachers Without Borders, which has provided me the vehicle for the realization of my dreams and my calling to serve. As I drive, I am seeking to mobilize and move along with many other teachers in Nigeria, my colleagues in additional African countries, and around the world.

Tell us about the social innovator behind this idea.

The innovator behind this idea is Raphael Ogar Oko, who graduated in 1990 from the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria where he obtained a B.Ed degree in Curriculum Studies and Educational Technology/Mathematics. Upon completion of his B.Ed degree, he was awarded the 1990 Best Graduating Student Award from his department. Following his bachelor’s degree, Raphael took graduate courses at the University of Port Harcourt from the Curriculum Studies and Educational Technology Department as well as from the Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science Department. Pursuing his call as a teacher, Raphael taught mathematics at the high school level. He also completed the Nigeria National Youth Service Corps program, where he taught at the Federal College of Education, Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria and was later employed as a graduate assistant with the University of Port Harcourt. Raphael’s passion for “education without borders” led him to receive several post-graduate education training with nonprofits in teacher education, character and peace education, family life education, and educational reform strategies. Raphael is also the recipient of the Ambassador for Peace Award given out by the Universal Peace Federation in Nigeria which honored him for his unrelenting efforts to strengthen the education system in his country. Raphael is personally devoted to the TWB vision of addressing the many challenges facing humanity by building the capacity of teachers and thus nurturing them to make the changes needed in their communities to ensure a better future for the world.

How did you first hear about Changemakers?

Dr. Fred Mednick, founder of Teachers Without Borders suggested I share my programs with Ashoka and the Changemakers community.

Sustainability

What would prevent your project from being a success?

• Inability to reach out, mobilize and empower teachers with professional development skills. Since the idea involves connecting teachers to information and to each other, the project will not succeed if I am unable to reach out and mobilize teachers.
• Inability to retain membership and create effective networking programs
• TWB Nigeria has designed a program that addresses the needs of our communities and because of this, the momentum builds and leaders are empowered to act; however, we recognize that communication and mobility are critical to our success. We strive to continue building partnerships in and outside Nigeria and nurture new leaders through the Millennium Development Ambassador Program so that we secure a sustainable future and continue making a difference in education.

Financing source

yes

If yes, provide organization name.

Teachers Without Borders

How long has this organization been operating? (i.e. less than a year; 1-5 years; more than 5 years)

More than 5 years
Does your organization have a Board of Directors or an Advisory Board?
TWB Nigeria is registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission and has a Board of Trustees

Does your organization have any non-monetary partnerships with NGOs? (yes/no)
yes

Does your organization have any non-monetary partnerships with businesses? (yes/no)
yes

Does your organization have any non-monetary partnerships with government? (yes/no)
Yes

Please tell us more about how these partnerships are critical to the success of your innovation.

• Our partnership with the World Association of NGOs (WANGO) has provided enough access to other non-profits as well as in the promotion of literacy programs in rural communities. Networking with others has provided us the opportunity to learn from others and also teach others.
• Our partnership with Multi Links Telkom Ltd is providing us with communication technology tools that we are providing to unemployed youths and disabled persons for small scale business in motor parks and market places.

How many people will your project serve annually?
More than 10,000

What is the total number of employees and total number of volunteers at your organization?
12 staff and 72 volunteers

What is your organization’s business classification?
Non-profit/NGO/citizen sector organization

Have you received funding from any of the following groups? (Please check as many as apply.)
None of the above.

Source URL: https://www.changemakers.com/educationafrica/entries/teachers-without-borders-nigeria-empowering-connecting#comment-0