Youth Peace and Nation Building

Nigeria
Titus Oyeyemi

Project Summary

Elevator Pitch

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

A 20-year long nation building concept through which Nigerian children will actively contribute to peace and progress during their entire 20 year of school life/tenure.

About You

Location

Project Street Address
Project City
Project Province/State
Project Postal/Zip Code
Project Country

Your idea

Year the initiative began (yyyy)

2003

YouTube Upload

Project URL (include http://)

http://www.africanprojectsforpeace.org

Plot your innovation within the mosaic of solutions

Which of these barriers is the primary focus of your work?

Culture/environment of conflict exposes and enlists young men in violence

Which of the principles is the primary focus of your work?

Create credible choices and opportunities

If you believe some other barrier or principle should be included in the mosaic, please describe it and how it would affect the positioning of your initiative in the mosaic:

How can youth contribute to and get rewarded for their contributions to peaceful and progressive nation building?

Innovation

Describe your program or new idea in one sentence.

A 20-year long nation building concept through which Nigerian children will actively contribute to peace and progress during their entire 20 year of school life/tenure.

What makes your initiative uniquely positioned to create change in your community?

The 20-year long tomorrow concept is a process rooted in the community, like a tree growing right through the soil and spreading its branches for all people to enjoy its shade and benefit from its fruitfulness. The 20-year long tomorrow for peace and nation building aims to disorient Nigerian children from violence but empower them for peacebuilding. Starting from age 5, Nigerian children are encouraged and empowered to make positive contributions in their grassroots communities. Through the 20 year long tomorrow concept for peace and nation building, community-based and oriented children achievements are identified, highlighted, rewarded and replicated through an emerging nationwide community development process. The uniqueness of this process is accentuated in the fact that children do not necessarily compete for individual or personal recognition, but are collectively contributing to nation building. Beyond mere character or behavioral modifications and interventions, the 20 year long tomorrow work with children to cultivate lifestyles that will encourage them to give back and contribute to their community future.

Describe how you organize and carry out your work?

20 year membership in segues of 4 Youth Peace and Nation Building proactive grassroots peacebuilding clubs: 9 years membership of African
Children of Peace Clubs targeted at children (5-12) in nursery, kindergarten and primary schools; 6 years of the African Youth Peace Alliance Clubs targeted at teenagers (13-19) in junior and senior secondary schools; 4 years of the KAIROS Peace and Love Clubs targeted at young adults in institutions of higher learning, and 1 year of New Peace Legacy Club at NYSC.

What is your plan to scale and expand your innovation into your community and beyond?

The concept of 20 Year Long Tomorrow Concept for Peace and Nation Building which is the integral part of the Youth Peace and Nation Building Program segues into the Community Peace and Nation Building Programs of my organization - African Foundation for Peace and Love Initiatives. Ministry of Education of each of the Federation are approached and encouraged to accept the founding our four Youth Peace and Nation Building Clubs in their schools (public and private). At the directive of the State Ministry of Education we work with Tutor Generals in charge of the various Education Districts and Zones, who in turn direct principals of schools to assigned teachers to us who we train and certify to operate our peace clubs at co-curricular activity level in their schools. The trained and certified teachers are given the titles of chaperons so that they can take charge of under-age children in their clubs. Each level of the four clubs use specially designed peace and nation building peace curriculum.

What other resources, institutional, or policy needs would be necessary to help sustain and scale up your idea?

In addition to issuing constitutions and chartering the individual peace clubs in the schools, we work with the appropriate officials of the Ministry of Education, District and Zonal officials, who monitor our work in the various schools in which our club are founded. We also train our own Peace Visiting Secretaries to monitor and liaise with the trained assigned teachers (Chaperons) on the functionality of the peacebuilding clubs. We also appoint some trained teachers as Zonal or District Supervisors, who work with our Clubs Monitoring Committee, which meets at regular intervals to discuss progress, developments, and implications.

In institutions of higher learning such as polytechnics, colleges of education, and universities, we work with the institutional authorities for the registration of the KAIROS Peace and Love Clubs, appointment of Staff Advisers, co-operation with students union, and campus communities. We organize orientation for incoming and returning students.

We mobilize membership of the New Peace Legacy Clubs during NYSC orientation camps and encourage them to work for nation building.

Impact

Describe your impact in one sentence, commenting on both the individual and community levels.

Young Nigerians and their teachers are glad that an alternative has been presented to them through which they can reject violence but embrace peace.

What impact has your work achieved to date?

Through our Youth Peace and Nation Building programs we have been able to re-orient militant students to peace, especially in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria, such as polytechnics, colleges of education and universities. The proclivity and preponderance to resort to violence at any slight provocation which were prevalent five to ten years ago are reducing in our institutions of higher learning. Students are now being presented alternative means to resolve their conflicts peacefully without resorting to violence or destructive actions. Secondary schools teachers are benefiting from training in basic conflict resolutions and conflict management in their schools. Teenagers are also learning basic conflict resolutions, peer mediation and peacebuilding skills through their Youth Peace Alliance Clubs at co-curricular activity level.

We have engaged our African Children of Peace at various street rallies, community mediation, mediation among royal houses and monarchs, etc.

Negotiation is going on with Ministry of Education of several states of the federation to adopt our various structured peace education curriculum at mainstream subject curriculum level

Number of individuals served

Individuals served include students at all level of educational institutions in Nigeria, teachers, campuses and campus host communities, and the public at large.

Community impact

Community peace and nation building should start from the schools. By promoting Youth Peace and Nation Building, a large, active and vibrant sector of the grassroots communities are engaged, encouraged, and empowered to show case their contributions to community peace and nation building. At the co-curricular club level, young Nigerians as young as 5 years of age are impacted with leadership skills, democratic process of decision-making, group participation, cultivation of peaceful lifestyles that can enhance community and nation building.

Society at large

Our 20 Year Long Tomorrow Concept is an integral part of our vision of Africa, the Future Land of Peace. We trusted that if we can work with African child from nursery, kindergarten, primary school, through junior and senior secondary school education, to tertiary and beyond, the African society will become more peaceful in years to come. We are already seeing the impact because of the enthusiasm which Nigerians of all walks of life are showing in our programs.

What measure do you use to gauge your impact and why?

We are seeing less and less violence in our schools, communities, and societies. Members of our Youth Peace and Nation Building clubs are invited to participate in school and community conflict mediations. More and more secondary school teachers are embracing the program reporting more peaceable classrooms. Children are engaged in more peer mediation. Members of our Youth Peace and Nation Building clubs are participating at local, national and international levels in peace poster competitions, exhibitions, intercollegiate and international day of peace programs.
Sustainability

How is your initiative currently being financed and how would you finance further expansion and/or replication?

95% of our finances in the last 5 years are derived from family foundation, groups of friends, and churches. Though State Ministry of Education participate by releasing secondary school teachers to the symbolic launching and teacher training seminars, workshops, and conferences, the governments are yet to contribute financial assistance of any kind to our programs. As the program continues to get entrenched and receive more buy-in from government governments, we believe that the financial bases will be expand to include government grants, international donors, community and business organizations. As at now, small financial base is curtailing the need to rapidly expand the program, perform more activities and reach out to more schools in the community at a quicker rate.

Provide information on your current finances and organization:

Our monthly budget is nearing N2.0 million per month. Staff and employees are increasing and therefore gulping about 30% of all staff, employees, field and office running expenses. The Founding President/CEO in the person of myself, the assigned teachers, work as a volunteer for the program. All other employees are paid salaries and allowance commensurate to graduate employment. We spend money 40 to 50% of our annual budget to organize and sponsor programs such as symbolic launching of our Youth Peace Alliance Clubs at Education District Level, procurement of seminar, workshop and conference materials for assigned teachers, registration of KAIROS Peace and Love Clubs at institutions of higher learning across the country. Many institutions have adopted and included our orientation materials for use of returning and incoming students.

Who are your potential partners and allies?

We are working in collaborations with State Ministry of Education, Youth and Development, Ethics, and Religions, Youth Organizations, British Councils, local and international community intervention programs.

Who are your potential investors?

We are seeking investors outside immediate family members and groups of friends.

The Story

What is the origin of this innovation? Tell us your story.

The Youth Peace and Nation Building Program is one of the several channels through which I aspire to turn my vision of Africa the Future Land of Peace into a mission. I founded African Foundation for Peace and Love Initiatives with a view to promote culture of peace among Nigerians of all walks of life. I was motivated to start the organization to contribute to peace in Nigerian schools precisely because my daughter escaped with her life during a campus riot with a host communities at the Ilaro Polytechnic in August of 1996 during which hundred of young students lost their lives.

Please provide a personal bio. Note this may be used in Changemakers marketing material.

I received my Master of Divinity from Oral Roberts University, Tulsa OK in 2002. I received my Master of Arts in Peace Studies from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary at Elkhart Indiana in 2004. I wrote my Master Thesis on the topic Equipping the New African Peacebuilder. I am currently working on my Doctoral Dissertation from the University of Phoenix Online. The problem area of my dissertation is the Need to to teach peacebuilding as a mainstream curriculum in secondary schools in Nigeria.

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