

Ideation Hub Africa's Mentorship Immersion

February 2016 Edition: EDs' Forum

with Mr. Isaiah Owolabi and Mrs. Iyadunni Olubode



About Ideation Hub Africa

IDEATION HUB Africa is a pan-African social enterprise focused on igniting innovation and social prosperity in Africa, by equipping businesses and development actors to create value and solve burning social issues.

Our vision is accomplished by capacity building for for-profit as well as not-for-profit sectors, delivered through innovation labs, introspective coaching, tailored training as well as conference-style sessions – under **Ideative Enterprise Academy** and **Social Good Lab**.

- A. **The Ideative Enterprise Academy** is our energetic learning hub for delivering case-based and application-driven training programmes that help our clients innovate disruptively, generate results, become Masters of the Game and create change.
- B. **Social Good Lab** is the mission-driven, development-sector-focused platform of IDEATION HUB Africa equipping - social entrepreneurs, non-profit/ NGO professionals, CSR practitioners, development actors and government stakeholders - to deliver innovatively on their social purpose; through tailored learning, collaborative engagement, research and social enterprise advice.

About Mentorship Immersion

The Mentorship Immersion is one of our flagship programmes at the Social Good Lab, to provide emerging and rising development practitioners with mentorship, hand-holding and social sector insights from leading social entrepreneurs and key players in the space.

The Immersion allows participants sit in the room a Mentor, to ask questions on a wide-range of issues around growing their NGO/ social enterprise, scaling their impact as well as leveraging the wisdom drawn from their career experience.

About our Mentors



Iyadunni Olubode is the Executive Director of LEAP Africa Ltd./Gte. She has two economics degrees; a B.Sc. from the University of Lagos, Nigeria and M.Sc. in Energy Economics and Policy from the University of Surrey, UK.

Iyadunni started her career in the treasury department of Intercontinental Bank Plc and subsequently moved into management consulting. She comes to LEAP with specialised skills in strategy development and execution, talent management, project management and business development. During her career at Accenture, she was involved in reorganising enterprises, developing strategies and managing talent for leading public and private sector organisations. She has also worked as an independent development consultant on a number of public sector initiatives.

Iyadunni is passionate about socio-economic development and has a deep commitment to developing people and enabling them to reach their full potential.



Isaiah Owolabi is the Project Director and Co-founder of HACEY'S's Health Initiative, a non-governmental organization which helps to support and empower vulnerable children, women and young people in Africa to live a healthy and productive life.

He has over six years of experience working to champion youth led development for sexual and reproductive health interventions and incorporating business models for such intervention.

Isaiah previously worked as a **trainer** for the **National Directorate of Employment in Nigeria**. He also served as a **monitoring and evaluation officer for Peace Child International at the 5th World Youth Congress in Istanbul, Turkey**. He is the author of the book, "HIV/AIDS – The future of the infected and affected" and a contributing author to the Girls Sexual Health Promotion Training Manual.

Isaiah holds a B. Sc in Human Physiology, certified proficient in Management by the Nigerian Institute of Management, a One Young World Ambassador, Fellow of the United States Consulate Carrington Youth Fellowship Initiative, member of the International AIDS Society, Young Investigator Award Winner for his presentation on oral contraceptives at the International Union of Physiological Science Congress in Japan and a 2012 finalist for the Commonwealth Youth Award for Excellence in Development.



Snippets: Profound Thoughts Shared by the Mentors

Isaiah Owolabi

- HACEY'S Health Initiative started Oct 17, 2007 with a couple of friends and I during our final year in the university as a call to solve reproductive health issues amongst women and youths. We never wanted to get just anything done because we were young but because we were qualified, so we decided to focus on character and competence.
- You can achieve anything you want with character and competence. You can't buy loyalty but you need to understand each other's strength and weaknesses as a team. Build and competence and always supply great content. Competence is very key!
- The world is always evolving and so does your strategy.
- Work on developing your social capital. If you build it, raising funds for your social venture will be easier!
- Have policies in place and make sure your records are in place too. Stay accountable and always make sure to document all processes.
- You don't need to know how to write the best proposal in the world, just submit yourself to people competent at it.
- Content and accountability is the language you are speaking in this sector



Iyadunni Olubode

- Always show up early and take your seat at the front in any event you attend. It helps you engage more, make the most of the event and likely to strike powerful connections ahead of others!
- Introduce your initiative passionately and sound excited about the work you do. Show energy whenever you talk about your initiative. Wear your passion.
- There are three key roles that distinguishes a leader from everyone else;
 - (i) **The Visionary Evangelist-** He is someone who wants people to buy into that vision. The more time you spend investing in your vision, the less scary it looks to you. You clarify your vision by talking to people, researching etc. As a leader, you need to be able to light the way for others and demonstrate great optimism in the future you envisage!
 - (ii) **Master of Execution-** You must deliver on the vision, take the action required, manage your team effectively, as well as develop problem solving skills, critical thinking and execution skills. Don't be afraid making mistakes; but don't repeat the same mistake again, or else, it means you are not growing! Leaders develop other leaders.
 - (iii) **Relationship Builder-** You need people to execute that vision and you can only achieve that if you have a relationship with them. You need to have the capacity to build relationships, know what you are good at and who to work with. Know yourself!
- You need to know why your initiative is important and the hole you are filling.
- Non-profits trade in impact, so it is critical you know how to measure your impact.



Three things that have kept me grounded in the work: (1) Being a believing Christian - the God factor, (2) I am smart, very intelligent and hardworking and (3) In every challenge I face, I map out the things that are outside my circle of influence and those within it. Dimensioning every problem empowers us to solve them and apportion the responsibilities rightly.

- Do what you can do and get help for the ones you cannot.
- Passion dies; you need to constantly remind yourself why you started the journey.
- Mentoring helps, learn from mentors. The onus is on you to determine what you want from a mentoring relationship, so set goals. Also use the mentoring counsels judiciously to improve your work!
- You have to stay humble and be willing to take feedback because *feedback is the breakfast of champions*.
- Take yourself seriously and don't let anyone minimize your dream.

Passion Session: Open Q and A Segment with the Mentors

- 1. Question-** (1) how do I attract the kind of talent I want and keep them even with limited resources?
(2) How do I know the part of my interventions to make free and the ones to make paid?

lyadunni's Answer to Question 1

- Some companies allow CSR engagements(volunteering) for their staffs
- Hire for attitude, passion and train for skill
- Find passionate people
- Offer volunteering/Internships
- Give value proposition for the people that work with you.
- Start looking at hiring full time staff for stability and pay them a fair minimum wage. Something good enough for them to take care of their basic needs.

lyadunni's Answer to Question 2

- Try what works and raise restricted income
- Develop a strategy that will enable you earn from other sources. A good example is the annual international conference organized by WEF every year. The income they make from the conference sustains the business for the rest of that year.
- Find one thing you can do as an organization that will generate the income you need as an organization.

Isaiah Owolabi's Answer to Question 2

- At HACEY'S, we started a social enterprise that directly makes money for HACEY'S. We started a farm.
- We also started consulting for organizations on their CSR projects

2. Questions

- Do you have mentees? What are the processes of selecting them?- *for lyadunni*
- How do you get funding to attend international programs and conferences? *For Isaiah*
- How do you build references with organisations that you have worked with as LEAP AFRICA and HACEY'S HEALTH INITIATIVE? *For both speakers*
- How do you build a framework when you get funding from other organizations?

Isaiah Owolabi's Answers

- On the question of getting funding to attend international conferences- The first conference he was invited to attend was fully sponsored by MTN South Africa, he received a phone call invite from them.
- Some funding requires that you have been a part of their meetings
- Social capital is key in getting funding
- Don't churn out sub-standard content

Iyadunni Olubode's Answers

- You must have proven results before you expect people to start investing in you. Uses the "THE SUCCESS is an ICEBERG" illustration.



- There is so much you can do without funding
- Partnerships; Relationship management is very important.
- It doesn't matter if you get a "NO", cultivate an on-going relationship with partners and prospective funder; keep them on your mailing list and keep them in the loop of what you are doing per time.
- Make connections for your partners. Show interest in what they do and support them in any way you can and when the breakthrough comes, be prepared to manage it well.

3. Question- At what point should a social entrepreneur working with a private organization step out to fully focus on what he/she desires to do? What is the proper transitioning time?

Iyadunni Olubode's Answers

You have to own your decision, manage your finances well and save up for the "lean" times that may come after you start your own enterprise.

4. Question - How do you scale up the impact of your work?

Isaiah Owolabi's Answer

- You will find that some social impacts cannot scale up with time, process and technology. Let it go and move on
- Have the end in mind before starting any project.
- Grow your projects, and then upon reviews, see if they can be developed it into a stand-alone programs.

Thank You to our Partners!