



Kingdom of the Netherlands



**WORK IN
PROGRESS!** alliance



OXFAM

THE WORK IN PROGRESS! ALLIANCE PROJECT

Success Stories || Achievements
Challenges || Lessons Learnt



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BUTTERFLY WORKS



WORK IN PROGRESS



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ABOUT THE WORK IN PROGRESS! PROJECT

Nigeria, with nearly 200 million people, boasts one of the world's largest youth demographics. Rising youth unemployment necessitates sustainable solutions to unlock the potential of both youth and SMEs for reduced unemployment and enhanced economic development.

The Work in Progress! Project aims to enable young people from diverse backgrounds to generate sustainable living wages and create optimism about their future in Nigeria, Egypt and Somaliland.

PROJECT DURATION

The project spanned 8 years and comprised 2 phases:

- **Phase 1:** January 2016 - December 2019
- **Phase 2:** January 2020 - December 2023

PROJECT PRINCIPLES



YOUTH-LED



PARTICIPATORY



FEMINIST

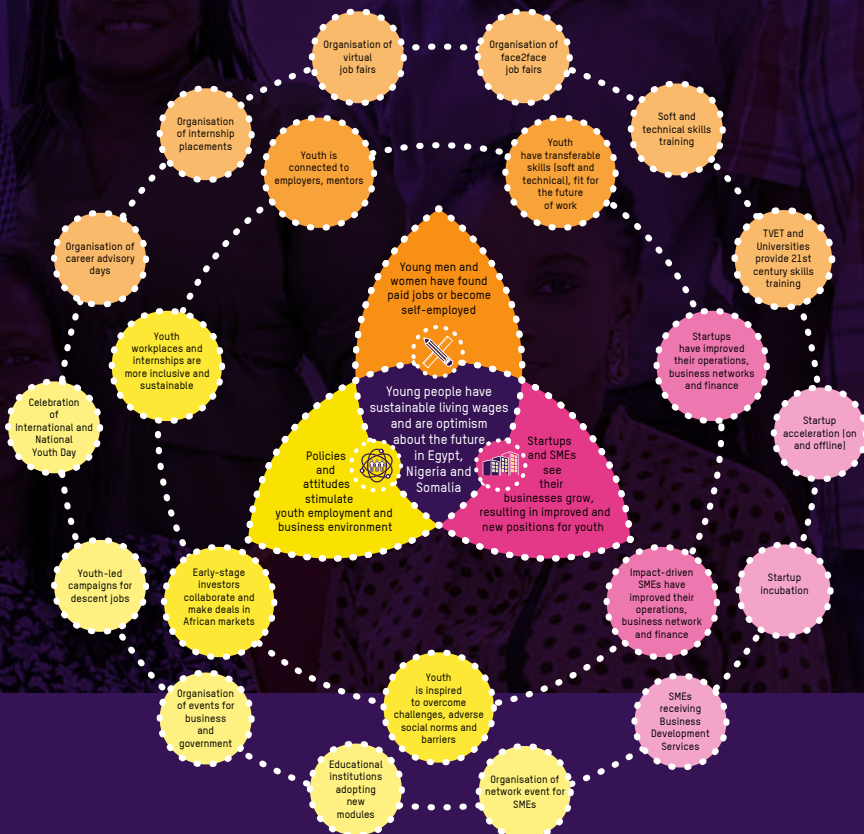


CO-CREATED



LEARNING-ORIENTED

THEORY OF CHANGE



WiP's theory of change comprises three key pathways: aims to empowering diverse young people to achieve sustainable incomes and foster optimism about their future. Two pathways involve service delivery through competence development, while the third centers on influence.

THEORY OF CHANGE: PATHWAYS



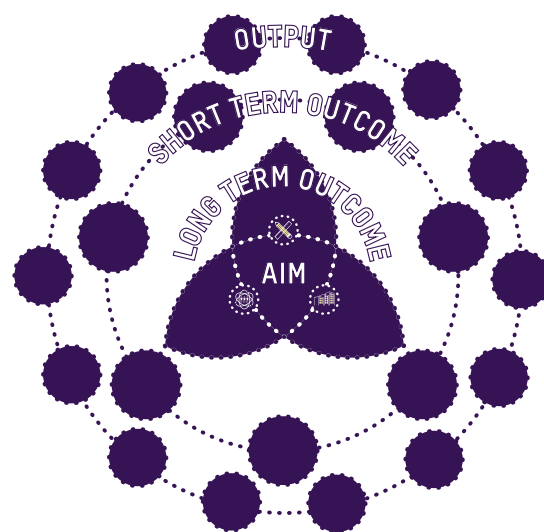
Supply of skilled youth



Developing market demand



Cultivating and enabling environment

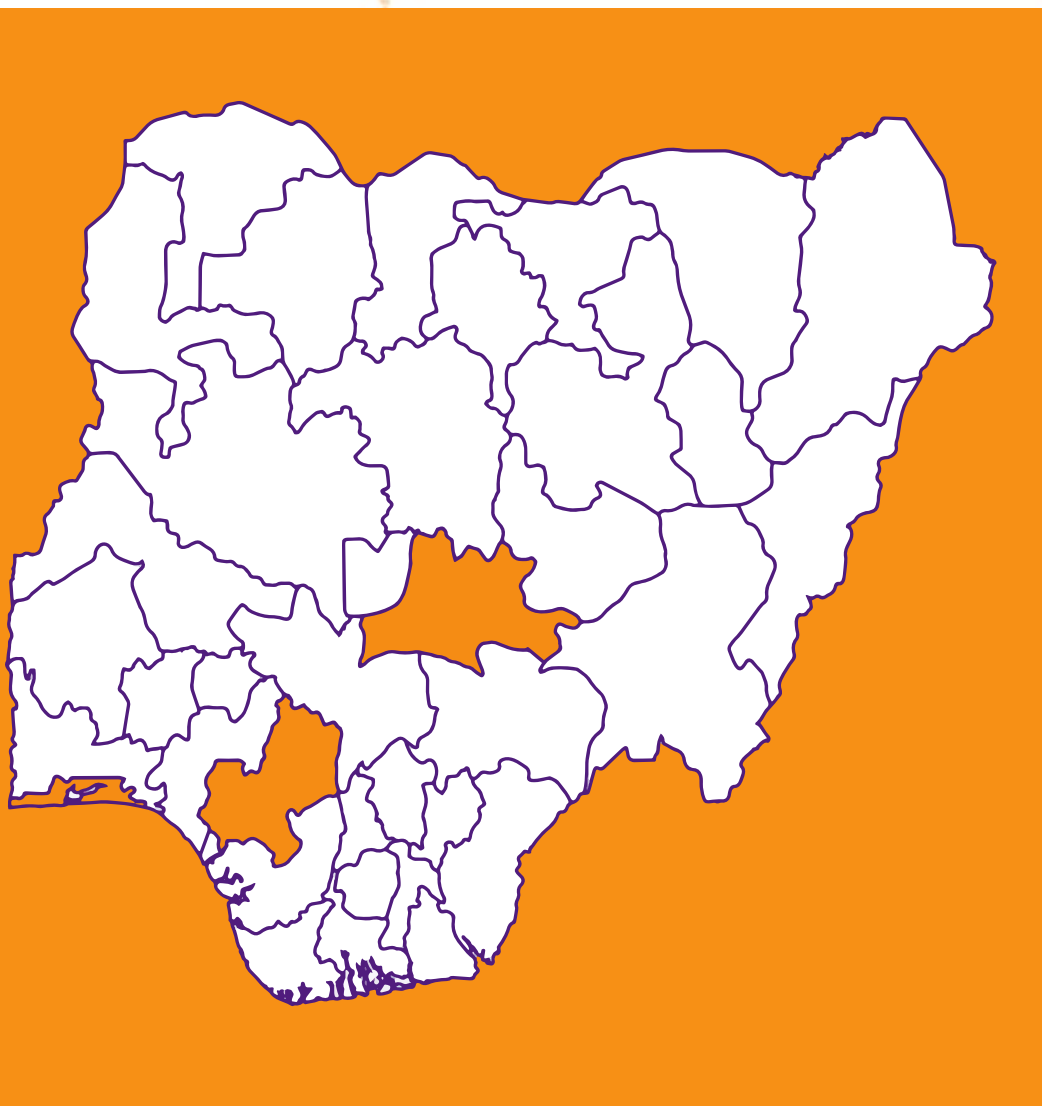


Netherlands •

THE WORK IN PROGRESS! PROJECT IN ACTION

The Work in Progress! project spanned across four countries (**Nigeria, Egypt, Somaliland, and the Netherlands**), making a global impact.

Within Nigeria, the project was implemented in **Lagos, Edo, and Nasarawa states** for local transformation. These regions were the focal points for positive change and development, thanks to the efforts of the Work in Progress! project.





PROJECT PATHWAYS



PATHWAY 1

Supply of Skilled Youth

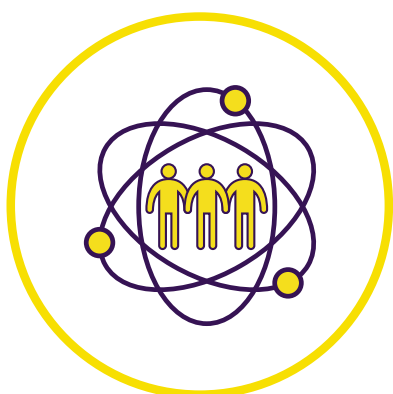
The projects under this pathway aim to train youths in relevant 21st-century soft and technical skills, such as web design, UI/UX, software development, etc., while also connecting skilled youths to paid employment opportunities or assisting them in setting up their own enterprises.



PATHWAY 2

Developing Market Demand

Under this pathway, we focus on accelerating impact-driven startups and Micro, Small, & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) by providing business development services and grants.



PATHWAY 3

Cultivating an Enabling Environment

Advocacy to influence youth policies and legislation to create an enabling environment for youth to be economically empowered.



Project Partners

The success of this program is a testament to the invaluable contributions of our dedicated partners. Their unwavering commitment, expertise, and collaborative spirit have been instrumental in achieving our shared goals and making a meaningful impact.

Funding Partner



Kingdom of the Netherlands

WiP Alliance Partners



OXFAM



Implementing Partners



PROJECT INTERVENTIONS

Our implementing partners were crucial cornerstones of our mission to drive positive change and create a lasting impact. These dedicated organizations worked with us to implement impactful initiatives that transformed lives, communities, and businesses.



Impact SME Development Programme (iSME)



ENTERPRISE
DEVELOPMENT
CENTRE
PAN ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY



High Growth Coaching Programme (HGCP)

SLA
She.Leads.Africa



- Career Kickstart Programme
- BITS Academy
- Data Science
- Tech4Women (T4W)
- Enterprise Development Training

Poise
NIGERIA

We reflect on the journey of the Work In Progress! project, offering a comprehensive overview of our accomplishments, the hurdles we've encountered, and the invaluable lessons we've gained along the way.



Project Achievements, Challenges, & Lessons Learnt



Impact SME Development Programme (iSME)



Key Achievements

- **Improved Business Processes:** Through training and business consulting services, the program has supported SMEs to improve on their business processes, foster innovation and aid in adopting Circular, Sustainable and Environmentally friendly practices.
- **Increased Employment Opportunities:** The program contributed to job creation by supporting SME growth and expansion. This resulted in the creation of new employment opportunities for young people, helping to alleviate poverty and improve livelihoods in their local communities.
- **Increased Access To Finance:** The program facilitated and prepared the SMEs for improved access to financial resources. This included securing loans, grants, or investment opportunities to help SMEs grow and expand their businesses.
- **Strengthened Market Linkages:** The program aided in establishing collaborations and linkages between SMEs within various cohorts, both locally and internationally. This resulted in SMEs gaining access to new customers, business opportunities and establishing new relationships & partnerships.
- **Strengthened Advocacy and Influencing:** The program engaged in promoting circular economy best practices and sustainability in business for SMEs through education via Webinars and radio programs.



Challenges

- **Security Challenges:** Some parts of the country proved difficult to access due to deteriorating security situation, and also due to issues like inadequate road infrastructure or absence of airports.
- **Ensuring 50% female participation** or more for businesses meeting the eligibility criteria.
- **Covid Pandemic:** SMEs experienced shocks and economic uncertainties during the Covid-19 pandemic. Project activities had to be moved virtually and all stakeholders needed a bit of time to adjust to the current realities at the time.
- **Rising Inflation:** Constant inflation & devaluing of the currency led to the increase in the prices of goods & services.

Lessons Learnt/Best Practices

- **Tailored Business Consulting:** The program highlighted the significance of providing customized business consulting support to SMEs based on their unique needs, challenges & aspirations. Recognizing the diverse nature of SMEs and addressing their specific needs can enhance their chances of growth & scale.
- **Capacity Building:** The program emphasized the importance of investing in training & building the capacity of not just the Entrepreneurs but also their key staffs. By so doing, it becomes easier for SMEs to improve their overall operational efficiency, management capabilities, and competitiveness.
- **Access to Finance:** This continues to pose a substantial hurdle for SMEs. The program addressed this challenge by offering opportunities for SMEs to compete for grants and providing them for investment through activities like the Pitch Deck Exercise.
- **Gender Mainstreaming:** The program recognized the importance of promoting gender inclusion and women's economic empowerment by ensuring 50% female participation on the program.
- **The Learning Retreat** provided valuable insights to the program, fostering a collaborative environment where SMEs, consultants, EDC, and Oxfam had the opportunity to mutually learn from one another. This also provided an avenue for businesses to build business relationships & partnerships with each other.
- **Post Training Support:** SMEs require post training support to ensure they adequately implement all the recommendations & expert advice from their business consultants. This was not well emphasized during the project and needs to be prioritised in future project developments.

High Growth Coaching Programme (HGCP)



Key Achievements

- Successfully implemented the Startup Acceleration & High Growth Coaching Program for 8 years, supporting the growth and development of over 100 female entrepreneurs.
- Developed a comprehensive curriculum that covers key business management and entrepreneurship skills, such as financial management, marketing, and sales, as well as soft skills like leadership and communication.
- Built a strong alumni network, providing ongoing support and mentorship to past program participants.
- Established & facilitated the development of strong networks and partnerships with other organizations, including corporations, foundations, and academic institutions, to expand the program's reach and impact.
- Provided opportunities for Startup participants to raise funds for their ventures through pitch competitions, investor meetings, and other channels.
- Successfully adapted the program to a hybrid model after the COVID-19 pandemic, leveraging technology and online resources to ensure continued program delivery and engagement.



Challenges and Lessons Learnt

- **Participants Dropout Rate:** We faced the challenge of participants dropping out during the program and this affected our targets for the program. In order to mitigate this risk we resolved to bring in additional two women into the program and to have a waiting list of Startups in case any participant drops out.
- **Staff Turnover:** We faced the challenge of team members leaving the organization. In order to mitigate, we brought in additional staff to understudy & ensure institutional memory is not lost with program team members leaving the organization.
- **Not Receiving Enough Quality Applications:** Marketing & outreach campaigns were intensified and implemented using different strategies to meet our target not only in Quantity but in Quality. We organized Info sessions on application; Calling and sending email reminders; Reaching out to our Alumni network for recommendations; Sharing the opportunity with partners & female membership organizations; Created an application guide for the application; organized IG Live sessions with applicants and coaches with a strong following.
- **Disagreements Between Business Coaches and Entrepreneurs:** We created processes within the program to ensure these issues are addressed properly and they include: Contracts stating dispute resolution methods and confidentiality; Recording sessions between coaches and coach; Proper onboarding for both coaches and coaches to guide them on the relationship; Train the Trainer sessions for business coaches.
- **Scouting for Investors:** The team struggled with bringing investors on board the program. Recommendations: The team started scouting for investors at the beginning of the planning phase. Also, leveraging on our networks to reach investors.

Training for Young People



Key Achievements

- Over the years, we have transformed lives, empowered people, and **increased the livelihood of over 3,135 people** in the Career Kickstart training, **over 1,000 participants in the Digital Design Academy**, **150 participants in the Data Science training**, and **over 100 participants in the Pre-Incubation Enterprise Development training**.
- Successfully organized **25 Job fairs in Nasarawa, Lagos and Edo States**, and achieved up to **60% employment success rate** on the project over the years. These include FTE & internships.
- A **Youth Revolving Funds Scheme** was set up in Lafia by the Nasarawa State Government and the Bank of Industry. The Youth Revolving Funds was borne by the feedback we got from participants in the Career Kickstart Training in Lafia seeking funding for their business ideas. The scheme provided a matching fund of **N500 million to support young entrepreneurs in Nasarawa state**. So far, 11 participants have benefited from the scheme and are still counting.
- Development of a Learning Management System and a **Virtual Job Fair Platform** was also completed during the project. The was also developed to promote access to remote learning and employment opportunities.
- **Successful partnerships** with different organizations and government agencies in the implementation of this project such as The Nasarawa State Government, the Edo State Government, The Federal Ministry of Labour & Employment, The Consulate General of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Lagos and the Youth Employment Coalition of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Nigeria.



- The publication of the second edition of the **40 First Jobs Book**. The book's second edition featured 40 successful personalities in Nigeria who documented their first job experience to motivate the young generation.
- NABTEB Diploma certificate accreditation: Through **partnership with the National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB)**, the Bitschools & its certificates were certified by the NABTEB Board & these certificates are equivalent to the Ordinary National Diploma certificate & accepted for work and employment in Nigeria & beyond.
- The **participants were empowered with relevant skills** that enabled them to improve their livelihoods. Some of the participants who probably had no prospect of furthering their education or even becoming skilled personnel are now able to take themselves through school and cater for their families.
- Over the years we have also recorded participants bidding for and winning competitions where they make use of the skills, they have learnt from the Bit school to their advantage.
- **Employer of Labour**: The impact of the soft skills, live projects & business management modules of the training have encouraged some of the graduates of the Bitschools to set up their own businesses. One noteworthy is a Tech business called Brannium Technologies that is run and founded by an Ekobits Alumni, have attended recent job fairs and recruited graduates from the Bits school as staff. Also, a graduate of the Tech4Women training, founded Greake Digital Agency in October 2020 after her graduation, and she works with a team as the UI Designer/Software Developer.

Challenges and Lessons Learnt

- **Increased Employment opportunities for participants in the Lafia**: We learned to explore different ways of Job placement such as engaging a recruitment officer, Virtual Job fair platforms & physical Job fairs. We also realized that most of the youth in Lafia are business-inclined; hence, we worked with the government to create the Young Revolving fund scheme to cater to the growing youth population who are interested in setting up businesses in the state.
- **Increased Inflation**: The inflation rate skyrocketed during the implementation years, and we managed it well by factoring inflationary corrections & making use of 6-monthly average of the most exchange rates during budgeting.
- **Staff Turnover**: During the 8 years, we had a few staff turnovers for persons that were playing active roles in the project. We were able to close the gap by ensuring proper staff handovers & adequate filing of project documents. We learned to create a pool of volunteers to fill in the gap for staff turnover.

- **Birth of the Entrepreneurship Training Program:** Based on the participants' feedback we got in the Employability Skills Program (Career Kickstart), we realized there was a need to introduce a tailored training on the Entrepreneurship program by young people.
- **Creating Job Linkages:** Successful partnerships with other WiP partners & different stakeholders to provide employment opportunities & ensure recruitment of our trained participants. Stakeholders like EdoJobs, YES Coalition and recruitment firms in Lagos have helped us in achieving this. Partnerships between Ekobits & EDC (Enterprise development center) has ensured continuous job placement for graduates of EkoBits, EdoBits, and Tech4Women.
- **COVID-19 Pandemic, Social & Political Disruptions:** Through the introduction of Virtual programs, we were able to overcome the COVID-19 disruptions, fuel scarcity, elections, social movements and many more. Also, with the introduction of Virtual training and its incentives (data allowance), we were able to secure project continuity during the period. However, we learned that physical sessions are more effective for the Bits school.
- **Participants Selection:** This was a challenge considering that we had limited slots on the program. In some years, we received over 1000+ applications out of which we can only select a specific number of participants based on the programs set criteria. This sometimes became overwhelming but insightful as well.
- **Participants Drop-out:** This occurred due to either the desire by the participants to further their education in schools or personal family reasons. This issue was managed by organizing meetings with the parents of the participants to keep them upto date with their kids' performances, & seek their support to ensure active participation, and sometimes, enrolling more training participants than needed to accommodate for potential dropouts. We also learned that proximity to the training centers was an issue for some participants and support for transportation would go a long way to keep them and ensure no dropout.
- **Low Participation of Female Students:** Getting female participants requires a different approach; orientation and mindset shift are required as most of the young females still think Tech is for males.
- We also faced some challenges like **power outage**, computer systems developing issues overtime, & internet issues at the Bitschool academy.
- **Managing participants' expectations** during the training programs implementation was a challenge because of the partnerships with the various State Government but we were able to set the record straight & manage expectations through the orientation programs.



Success Stories

In the heart of our project lies a tapestry of remarkable journeys, each woven with dedication and resilience. We shine a spotlight on some individuals that have flourished through the Work In Progress! project. These tales of triumph serve as a testament to the transformative power of collaboration, innovation, and unwavering determination.

Empowered in tech through Ekobits

Before I got into Ekobits, I had a little knowledge of tech, I could do some basic things with the computer like typing, but nothing too in depth. Also, my people skills, communication and leadership skills needed a lot of work, I tend to be a very shy person in general.

Oluwabusayo Ojo

FEMALE | 20 YEARS | EKOBITS



Ekobits not only prepared me for the job market but transformed my confidence, allowing me to excel in public speaking and embrace new career opportunities.

Even before concluding Ekobits, I knew a lot had changed in my life. With Ekobits, we got to experience firsthand what a working environment would feel like.

We were given so many projects that at times I felt tired and was ready to give up, but now that I'm working, I now know that it was all a way of training and preparing us for the job market. I currently work as a technical consultant with Innovior, a tech company.

Another change I got from Ekobits is that I tend to be shy when talking to people, but during Ekobits we had to make at times weekly presentations with a lot of participants; initially, it was very difficult for me, but by the end of our 1-year training, I could comfortably make presentations without any fear, and this has not only been beneficial for my career but also for my personal life in general. I currently contribute to some open-source projects, and a lot of these projects involve public speaking and meeting with a lot of people; many of these activities would not have been possible without Ekobits.

Broadening the imagination through technology

Before joining the Ekobits programme, I was working menial Jobs, trying to make ends meet. This did not leave me with enough resources. I also had little knowledge of technology and IT skills.

Jason Okeoghene Atakoru

MALE | 26 YEARS | EKOBITS



This has truly changed my life. Now I have a well-paying job with the skills I gained at Ekobits and can communicate and deliver a clean and extensively researched presentation.

Joining the Ekobits programme has changed my life. I had the opportunity to learn a lot about computers and improve my knowledge on IT skills.

Ekobits opened my eyes to the possibilities in IT and technology sector. It broadened my imagination and allow me to view the world in a different light. But not just IT and technology also in the aspect of etiquette and mannerism.

This has truly changed my life. Now I have a well-paying job with the skills I gained at Ekobits and can communicate and deliver a clean and extensively researched presentation in front of any crowd of persons.

Inspiring transformation: from stuck to best web developer

Before the program, I felt stuck in my career due to a lack of computer knowledge and limited opportunities caused by financial constraints.

Onoja Salem

MALE | 21 YEARS | EDOBITS



The Edobits Academy's Web Development training turned my life around.

Edobits Academy's Web Development training turned my life around. Before the program, I felt stuck in my career due to a lack of computer knowledge and limited opportunities caused by financial constraints.

Edobits Academy provided me with top-notch instructors, a well-structured curriculum, and hands-on experience that helped me become a Certified Web Developer. In fact, I even graduated as the overall best student.

Today, I'm pursuing a career in blockchain development and attribute much of my success to Edobits Academy's transformative impact on my life.

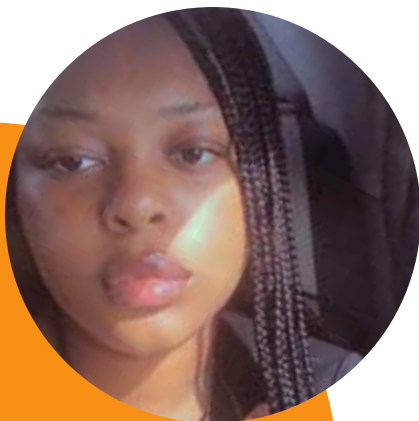


Changing the narrative: my **success** story

I have always been fascinated by the tech industry and I didn't think I had what it takes to get into the space. It was something I had interest in but would just admire from afar.

Kelechi Ibeh

FEMALE | 20 YEARS | EDOBITS



The learning process still continues for me because I would like to better myself and be able to earn more than I currently do. All this would have been impossible to achieve without EdoBits Academy.

I have always been fascinated by the tech industry and I didn't think I had what it takes to get into the space. It was something I had interest in but would just admire from afar.

When I had the opportunity to participate in the Bits Academy, it was a welcome opportunity for me to build my technical and soft skills.

Right now I am a front-end developer and I'm currently using the skills I learned in EdoBits as a means of livelihood.

The learning process still continues for me because I would like to better myself and be able to earn more than I currently do. All this would have been impossible to achieve without EdoBits Academy



From a novice to a certified techie: my **transformational** journey with Edobits Academy

I knew I needed to gain a skill that could help me secure gainful employment and improve my financial status, but I didn't know where to start.

Emmanuel Oyibo

MALE | 18 YEARS | EDOBITS



Since completing the Web Development and Creative Design training at Edobits Academy, my life has been transformed in ways I never imagined.

Prior to being accepted into Edobits Academy, I had no knowledge of computers, and my family's financial situation limited my opportunities for growth. I knew I needed to gain a skill that could help me secure gainful employment and improve my financial status, but I didn't know where to start. I felt stuck and overwhelmed by the prospect of learning a new skill, especially in the field of web development, which I knew little about. I lacked the resources and guidance needed to pursue my career goals.

Since completing the Web Development and Creative Design training at Edobits Academy, my life has been transformed in ways I never imagined. I gained a lot of experience at Edobits, and this has helped me secure employment opportunities with multiple companies both in Nigeria and abroad. The training for the program was well-structured, and the instructors were excellent at breaking down complex ideas, making it easy for me to understand. I appreciated the program's hands-on approach, which gave me the opportunity to work on actual projects.

As a result of the program intervention, I am now a Certified Web Developer and Creative Designer and have gained practical experience working with various companies. Overall, I am grateful for the transformative impact that Edobits Academy has had on my life.

Becoming a professional graphics designer

Ever since I've graduated from Tech4women I've never been broke (financially down). Before coming to Tech4women I usually have this disbelief in myself that I can do anything right... but being part of this programme has helped changed that.

Oluwabukola Alonge

FEMALE | 20 YEARS | TECH4WOMEN



Ever since I've graduated from the Techforwomen programme, I have been able to fend for myself financially with my designer skills. I've never been bothered about tomorrow because I know tomorrow has already been sorted out.

Coming from a home that was financially unstable, I wanted to learn a skill because all my siblings had to learn skills one way or the other. I wanted to learn catering then even though we couldn't afford to pay. My interest in catering was defeated and couldn't attend school as well because I could not afford to.

I didn't want to be like my siblings that learnt hair making and fashion designing. I wanted to be different and realised I had to do something about my situation. This was when I attended the Tech 4 Women training and trust me, it was a game changer. Ever since I've graduated from Techforwomen I've never been broke (financially down). Before coming to Techforwomen I usually have this disbelief in myself that I can do anything right. I always had negative beliefs in myself that I won't ever make it in life, how on earth will I go to school? Who is going to pay my educational fees? Those were the thoughts in my mind.

But ever since I've graduated from the Techforwomen programme, I have been able to fend for myself financially with my designer skills. I communicate with different people all over the world. I've never been bothered about tomorrow because I know tomorrow has already been sorted out all thank to Techforwomen for molding me into the person I am today.



The unique Change

I wanted to be more than a cleaner but the big question I always get was "Are you computer literate?". This question kills all my hopes of getting a better job until TechforWomen found me just in time.

Nwantu Faith Titus

FEMALE | 21 YEARS | TECH4WOMEN



The soft skills classes were an eye-opener. I was taught how to speak, how to dress, how to be outstanding in a working environment. I put all those skills to action and I got four awards in my office in December 2022.

TechforWomen made me know my worth, that I could work in an organization not as a cleaner but as something better. I had to quit my job so I could participate I later get a part-time job so I could cope and not drop out half way. In every step of the way I learnt something new and it makes me even a better person. I didn't even know I was doing somethings wrong. I hated working with a group of people, TechforWomen taught me how to work in a team and achieve a goal without complications. I want to say a big thank you to my trainer Miss Ope for her dedication and patient attitude to her job, she has really trained amazing women and I am glad to be one of them.

The soft skills classes was an eye opener. I was taught to how speak, how to dress, how to be outstanding in a working environment. I put all those skills to action and I got four awards in my office on December 2022. The Project Manager Miss Adebukola Latifat never failed in visiting us and encouraging us with her words of advice I loved the energy she put into helping us know the importance of the program.

I want to say a big thank you to Oxfam, Work in Progress, Butterfly, and Poise for giving me this great opportunity it has changed my life and I know that as grow I will always be grateful because you all brought me this far. After my program I got a better job and I am having fun where I am thanks to you all, God bless you.



A better employee

I am a better employee, enthusiastic about my job and career. I am more confident, outspoken. I can boldly say I have every skills required to excel in my career and life in general.

Grace Orioye

FEMALE | EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS TRAINING



The training helped me have a clear career path and clear goals. I am no longer going with the flow. I am now confident to know what I want and I am rigorously chasing after it

Before the training, I was a timid person and didn't have a clear career path. I was lackadaisical towards work and there were ethics, skills and culture required at the work place that I knew nothing about.

The university curriculum did not make allowance for soft skills to build students capacity in the workplace.

The training helped me have a clear career path and clear goals. I am no longer going with the flow. I am now confident to know what I want and I am rigorously chasing after it.

I am a better employee, enthusiastic about my job and career. I am more confident, outspoken. I can boldly say I have every skills required to excel in my career and life in general.

Once again, thank you for this opportunity!

A young **empowered** entrepreneur in Lafia

In running my business, I experienced some challenges and was unable to expand the business to meet up with demand and also increase my market size.

Anze Umbwa Jennifer

FEMALE | ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING



From an unregistered small-scale bakery to a registered business with a strong brand, I've grown beyond my wildest dreams. Now, I'm not just baking cakes; I'm creating opportunities and employment

Before the Enterprise Development Training (EDT) which I participated in, I was running a small scale business which was not formally registered to operate. My business was a mini bakery which was into the production of cakes, pastries and natural drinks. In running my business, I experienced some challenges and was unable to expand the business to meet up with demand and also increase my market size.

During the EDT programme, I had the opportunity to learn new skills and also developed new ways to grow my business. Now, I have been able to register my business with the Corporate Affairs Commission in Nigeria. I have also purchased raw materials in bulk and acquired a new equipment to aid production.

I have been able to build a strong brand identity and an online platform which helps me to reach a wider range of customers. Within a short period of time, my business has expanded and I have been able to employ someone to assist me with production and deliveries.



Transforming dreams into data: a journey of **learning & growth**

The data science programme was the pivotal intervention that transformed my aspirations into reality. Through comprehensive lessons, hands-on projects, and mentorship, I gained a deep understanding of data analysis, machine learning, and statistical techniques.

Godsgift Olomu

MALE | DATA SCIENCE



The data science program was the pivotal intervention that transformed my aspirations into reality.

Before embarking on the data science programme, I was a curious individual with a passion for technology and a desire to break into the field of data science. However, I lacked the structured knowledge, practical skills, and confidence needed to navigate the complex world of data analysis.

The data science programme was the pivotal intervention that transformed my aspirations into reality. Through comprehensive lessons, hands-on projects, and mentorship, I gained a deep understanding of data analysis, machine learning, and statistical techniques.

The program provided me with real-world experience, equipping me with the skills necessary to tackle complex data challenges. Through this training, I have been able to pursue opportunities.



Where passion meets **value**

Paperbags by Ebees is an eco-packaging company that provides packaging for SMEs in food service, agriculture & fashion in a way that is accessible & affordable for these businesses.

Nnorom Chidiebere

PAPERBAGS BY EBEEES | HGCP



The COVID pandemic boosted demand for our products, attracting significant grants and funding as investors recognized our remarkable traction during these challenging times.

I joined the High Growth Coaching Program (HGCP) because from research I observed that my business needed visibility and support from a reputable organization like She Leads Africa. The programme helped my company achieve its goals of getting more visibility and attention on the business. There are two significant changes that have happened to my business in the last few years since participating in the programme. The first one is increase in demand, sales and revenue from the pandemic. Secondly, access to funding in grants.

The COVID-19 pandemic favoured my business as it helped to increase demand for our products as many businesses that use our products needed to source a local alternative. The result from this led to the business attracting a lot of grants and funding as investors could see from the business data that we gathered a lot of traction in the midst of the pandemic. I got up to \$45,000 from SAFEEM Accelerator program. I also got \$23,000 from Orange Corners Nigeria Accelerator Program. The business got N7.5million from NEPC through Tony Elumelu Foundation.



Bole's **journey** from Port Harcourt, Lagos and to the world!

Bole Boxx is a food and beverage business that brings the southern Nigerian delicacy fondly known as "Bole (roasted plantain) and Fish" to Lagos and the world.

Ibiwari Omoifo

BOLE BOXX | HGCP



The most significant change I've seen is the revenue increase, enabling us to expand to a new location. Our business has grown by 35% since 2021, thanks to the enhanced visibility gained through HGCP.

Since joining the High Growth Coaching Programme, Boleboxx has gained more visibility. The business has grown from a regular business to one that has structure beyond the founder's vision. The business has created an advisory board to ensure that business continues to grow and is accountable.

The most significant change I have experienced is the increase in revenue which has allowed us to expand our business to our next location. The revenue has increased due to the visibility the business has received. The business has experienced 35% increase since 2021 and I foresee more increase with the new office location in the works.

I describe herself as shy but on the HGCP, I was taught how to be confident. Practicing my pitch before my fellow founders and pitching before actual investors built my communication and presentation skills



Seed to fruit: **revolutionizing** nutrition for a new world

Frootify is a nutrition technology company that provides access to health and simplified nutrition. The business promotes preventative and curative medicine using nutrition and diet.

Adenike Badejoko

FROOTIFY | HGCP



One major takeout from the program was applying some of the modules we learned into my business, having a network of industry peers, and having investors invest in the business.

When I joined the High Growth Coaching Programme, I was looking to be in a community of women entrepreneurs. She Leads Africa posits itself as a community of upwardly mobile women-business owners, career women, and so on. I was also partly seeking to be on a platform that would showcase us to investors. I wanted to be in a network of women doing great things.

HGCP gave us publicity, during the program when my interview was published on the website and when I won the pitch competition. I also had two investors from the investors run, from an organization and a venture capital firm. This gave us an opportunity to look into our pitch and position our business.

In general, the program supported us to build the capacity of our founding team members, reworking our operations, and people management. The major takeout from the program was applying some of the modules we learnt into my business, having a network of industry peers and having investors invest in the business. For instance, when we announced the HGCP win, we had an angel investor invest in us. It boosted our credibility. The funding we have received increased our supply chain and affected our revenue marginally. I am more confident in myself as an entrepreneur.



Empowering women in healthcare: the Jasmine Ultra Blue Solutions story

Jasmine Ultra Blue Solution (JUBS) is a health solution provider that provides convenient health services to clients.

Susanne Ogunleye

JUBS | HGCP



I have grown both personally and professionally, and I am now stronger and more confident than ever before.

I believe that the personal growth I have experienced since participating in the HGCP is the most significant change at Jasmine Ultra Blue Solutions because it has transformed my mindset and boosted my confidence in my ability to grow my business.

When I first started this business, I was a stay-at-home mom and had doubts about my capability to succeed. However, the HGCP equipped me with the knowledge and skills necessary to take my business to the next level. As a result, I now see my strength and have become an inspiration to other women who may be facing similar doubts.

The difference between the Susanne who joined the program in 2021 and the Susanne in 2023 is like night and day. I have grown both personally and professionally, and I am now stronger and more confident than ever before. This growth has had a positive impact not only on me but also on our company as a whole.



Kazih Kits and our circularity model

Kazih Kits designs and produces uniforms and accessories for security and safety operation.

Chinedu Azih

KAZIH KITS | iSME



Circularity Ignorance would make you blind to resources within you, but training would refresh you and open your mind to possibilities and greatness.

When we enrolled in the Oxfam WIP program, the concept of circularity and repurposing waste was entirely new to us. Prior to this, our production process generated a substantial amount of waste, enough to fill five waste drums each day. Managing this waste presented a constant challenge, often requiring negotiations with local workers for clearance, as we couldn't solely rely on the weekly pickups.

In my eyes, waste had been nothing more than something to discard without a second thought. However, the turning point arrived during the qualifying interview for the iSME programme with one of the consultants Mr. Biyi for the Oxfam program. One of his thought-provoking questions centered on our approach to handling leather and fiber waste. My response echoed my earlier viewpoint: waste was essentially worthless, so we disposed of it. Mr. Biyi's response, though, left an indelible impression: "Once you become a part of the Oxfam program, you will unlock the hidden possibilities within your production waste."

Currently, our business is turning our waste materials into wearable fashion items and we are also supporting local women in our community to get trained.

Thriving through Oxfam: a journey of confidence

Yetroselane is a Fashion hub where we manufacture, and retail womenswear proudly made in Nigeria.

Yetunde Akande

YETROSELANE | iSME



Oxfam's program was a turning point in my entrepreneurial journey. They identified my brand's potential and offered not only a growth platform but also the confidence to believe in myself.

The Oxfam program holds a special place in my entrepreneurial journey. Oxfam saw the potential in my brand's dreams and generously provided me with the platform to not just thrive but also to believe in myself.

Through their program, I've unlocked countless possibilities for my business that I never knew existed. In my moments of doubt and uncertainty, Oxfam's support and belief in me through EDC and my amiable consultants gave me the confidence to push beyond my perceived limits.

Thanks to Oxfam, I've not only pursued my dream but also built it into a reality with many unlocked potential.

Building **resilience** and unlocking growth: our WiP story

Afrimash is the number 1 farm marketplace for quality input and technical support.

Ayoade Oyedotun

AFRIMASH | iSME



One major takeout from the program was applying some of the modules we learned into my business, having a network of industry peers, and having investors invest in the business.

For me and for Afrimash, the Oxfam WiP programme came at the perfect time, and it was completely transformational. Three major things stood out for us.

First, it helped us develop a resilient system. Also, it prepared our company for a new form of growth, especially international partnerships. Thirdly, I like the fact that the training was both general and personalized.

The general class trainings helped us learn new things while the personalized ones helped to improve the things we were doing well and fill up gaps in our system.

*A visual narrative of our experiences,
endeavours, and the impactful
moments that have defined the Work
In Progress! project.*



Pictures
Pictures
Pictures
Pictures



















Oxfam is a confederation of 20 affiliates operating globally in 85 countries, working to see a world without poverty. We are a worldwide development organization that mobilizes the power of people against poverty. Around the globe, we work to find practical, innovative ways for people to lift themselves out of poverty and thrive. We save lives and help rebuild livelihoods when crisis strikes, and we campaign so that the voices of the poor influence the local and global decisions that affect them.

Our work in Nigeria is hinged on three pillars:

1. Accountable Governance
2. Gender Justice
3. Just Economies

Oxfam in Nigeria strives to fight poverty and inequality by empowering civil society organizations and advocating for change in Accountable Governance, Economic and Food Systems, and Gender Justice. Our aim is to create a transparent, inclusive, and just society in Nigeria through collective action and empowerment.

The Future is Equal!

For more information about Oxfam, contact:
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About Us

A man with a beard and glasses is speaking into a microphone. He is wearing a dark blue shirt. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and a window with greenery outside.

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Oxfam in Nigeria



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