



IMPACT REPORT 2023

Driving Social Impact Across Africa

From the Chairman's Desk

It gives me immense pleasure to present our 2023 Impact Report, a testament to Sterling One Foundation's unwavering commitment to fostering human development and reducing poverty across communities in Nigeria and Africa. 2023 marked the halfway point in the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by UN Member States in 2015, with an interlinked blueprint of 17 goals to transform our world. With an existing significant gap across all the goals in Nigeria and Africa, 2023 presented an opportunity for our volunteers, staff members and partners to move the needle on the achievement of the Goals in Nigeria and Africa with focus on their goals of choice and set the tone for the next 7 years. This report is a vivid portrayal of the positive transformations and building blocks we have been steadfastly working towards in healthcare, education, capacity building, sustainability, and more.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic set us back by a few years, we also witnessed numerous grassroots initiatives emerge, driven by compassion and a shared commitment to aid others. These organic

networks, born out of adversity, reflect the resilience and caring ethos within our society. It is imperative that we nurture and sustain these networks, ensuring they flourish beyond the pandemic, fostering resilience and a culture of care in our communities.

Our strategy is clear: driving growth leveraging sustainable collaborations to scale impact across our chosen thematic focus areas with a view to reducing poverty in all its forms. We aim to transform lives, understanding the intricate relationship between social transformation and economic impact.

In 2023, our focus remained resolutely on sectors that significantly impact our way of life, emphasizing investment in ecosystem building to amplify real, tangible impact and opportunities for scaling what works. Our commitment to transforming lives and galvanizing partnerships fuels our continuous progress. We have concentrated efforts on capacity building which is one of our core contributions to supporting the development ecosystem enabling nonprofit organizations and their leaders to develop competencies and skills that can make them more effective and sustainable, thus increasing the potential for social enterprises and nonprofits to enrich lives and solve society's most intractable problems. We were glad to scale this programme to 41 African countries in 2023 in view of the dire need for increased capacity for sustainability in our climate.

The Africa Social Impact Summit in its second year witnessed over 300% increase in partnerships secured with a global alliance of the private sector,

international development partners, the public sector, passionate volunteers, students, and finance professionals, signaling a growing movement that transcends borders reaching over 60 countries.

As we look ahead, our vision expands beyond Nigeria. We aspire to take our advocacy programs against poverty, exclusivity in quality education access, healthcare disparities, gender inequality, and more to various local and global stages. Our commitment to being a convener and catalyst while supporting healthcare, nurturing youth development and promoting gender equality remains unflinching.

Collaboration is key. I am immensely grateful to all our partners for the amazing

work done in 2023 which would not have been possible without your immense contributions. We look ahead with hope, confidence and commitment as I also respectfully ask for your extraordinary support in what promises to be an extraordinary year ahead. I urge both the private and public sectors to forge intentional partnerships with development organizations in our pursuit of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Together, we can drive meaningful change, transforming communities and fostering a brighter, more equitable future for all.

**Chairman,
Sterling One Foundation.**



From the CEO'S Desk

As we reflect on the year 2023, it brings me immense pride to share the remarkable milestones we have achieved in our unwavering commitment to address the core challenges in our society, aiming to propel Nigeria and Africa towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Throughout our journey, we have witnessed significant progress and impactful interventions across various thematic areas, each playing a pivotal role in reshaping lives and communities.

The impact from our health-centric programs has been resounding. Our Sterling One Foundation Medical Support, Health Workers Training, Menstrual Hygiene campaign, and Mama Base Intervention Health Program to promote maternal health have collectively touched over 2,000 lives, offering critical medical aid, training, and support to vulnerable individuals and communities affected by health issues. Our partnerships with state governments further fortified our commitment to enhancing healthcare systems, advocating for better health access, and providing holistic support.

Education remains at the forefront of our initiatives. Through our Teachers Development Training, commemorating World International Day of Education, enabling access to quality basic education for low-income communities, youth development programs like the Film Lab Africa, and the School Renovation Program, we have continued to empower young minds and uplift educational infrastructure in underserved areas. Donating books to primary school libraries has also contributed significantly to fostering a culture of learning and knowledge acquisition.

Our endeavors in ensuring food security and gender equality through Project Ladder, the SAF Ramadan Food Project, and supporting the launch of the Private Sector Gender-Based Violence Fund reflect our dedication to eradicating hunger and fostering gender equality. The Gender Lens Investment Training and various advocacy campaigns for gender equality across the country have been instrumental in raising awareness and driving conversations surrounding gender-based issues. The launch of Information, Education, and Communication materials served as a vital tool in sensitizing survivors of gender-based violence and advocating against such incidents. These resources, crafted to educate, inform, and inspire change, play a pivotal role in igniting discussions and offering hope for a better, more equitable future beyond awareness creation.

The commitment to climate action has been exemplified through initiatives like the SOF Agro-Forestry Project, our Tree Planting and Land Restoration initiative, and the Green Advocate Project. These

projects aimed at educating and engaging communities, particularly the youth, in sustainable environmental practices for a greener future.

Nationally, we've expanded our reach to cater to the heightened needs, particularly in regional, rural, and remote communities. Undoubtedly, the year was not without challenges. However, it is your unwavering support, dedication, and generosity that have fortified our resolve to overcome these hurdles and touch the lives of many. We extend our deepest gratitude to our esteemed Board for their strategic guidance and unwavering commitment.

As we step into the new year, we are filled with hope and determination to continue our journey of positive impact. Your continued support remains the cornerstone of our success. Together, we aim to touch more lives, bring smiles, and effect meaningful change.

Thank you for being an integral part of Sterling One Foundation's transformative journey.

**Chief Executive Officer,
Sterling One Foundation.**



Our Story

Sterling One Foundation (SOF) was registered as a non-profit by Sterling Bank Plc. In 2018 to serve as a vehicle for positive social impact across five critical sectors of the Nigerian economy. Driven by the unique challenges facing Africa and the need for progressive change, the NGO is committed to being the benchmark of positive social impact in Nigeria by creating sustainable solutions for youth empowerment and job creation, through each of its focus sectors. Although established by Sterling Bank, Sterling One Foundation has a separate board of trustees and prioritizes social impact investments across critical sectors for maximum impact.

Here's how our strategic approach aligns with the Global Goals:

Vision

To be the benchmark of positive social impact in Nigeria by creating sustainable solutions via impactful sectors.

Mission

To reduce poverty and create a society where all children have access to basic education, youths, women & men are empowered with a livelihood, food to eat, access to clean water and sanitation, decent healthcare, safe living environments and secure lasting improvements in quality of life

Our Thematic Areas

- Health
- Education and Youth Development
- Food Security
- Gender Equality
- Climate Action

Our Core Values

- Partnership
- Integrity
- Sustainability
- Excellence
- Transparency

Our Approach

Visionary

We are both practical and visionary. We enable transformational change, as convener and catalyst, accelerating social impact by maximizing scale.

Crowdfunding Support

Through our crowdfunding platform, Giving.NG, we give grants to support changemakers and become a trusted partner for the donating public, while providing execution support leveraging our resources.

Impact Driven

We are focused on carrying out humanitarian work that integrates life-saving response with building resilience.

Our Impact Journey

- 2018 - Take-off: Establishment of the Sterling One Foundation as an NGO
- 2019 - Product Launch: Establishment of crowdfunding platform, Giving.ng. Funds raised positively impact over 2,000 lives.
- 2020 Q1 & 2 – Impact: Establishment of the Health Workers Fund and other projects. Funds raised positively impacted over 1,000 lives including 154 families. Over 15 million people reached online and offline.
- 2020 Q3 & 4 - More Impact Establishment of IDP Support Initiative, providing food supplies to 800 internally displaced persons (IDP) at the Nasarawa State IDP camp. Supported successful treatment of 2 cancer patients.

- 2021 - 77million raised, 3366 new donors onboarded, capacity building program launched for 3000+ NGOs, 8 grants awarded, 4 beaches adopted for clean-up, 2 impact awards received, 1 free school building supported, 1000 families caters for through food and health relief. Establishment of FREE banking solution for NGOs in collaboration with Sterling Bank and the Nigeria Network of NGOs (NNNGO)
- 2022 - 2 New Beaches Adopted for Plastic Waste Collection, alongside New Community Health Interventions. 60,000 Youths Empowered, STEM, Vocational, Employability and Entrepreneurial Training Scholarships Awarded. Africa Social Impact Summit Launched to Drive Impact Investment for over 1000 Social Enterprises and NGO Capacity Building Sessions Gender-based Violence Advocacy Project Launched. Over 1000 Youth & women-led businesses were funded.



KEY IMPACT NUMBERS

IN 2023

10,059+
DIRECT
BENEFICIARIES

500+
GIRL CHILD
IMPACTED

12,000+
STUDENTS
IMPACTED

80
MEDIA
PROFESSIONALS
TRAINED

25
NEW CORPORATE
PARTNERSHIPS

“
UNLESS WE ACT NOW,
THE 2030 AGENDA WILL
BECOME AN EPITAPH
FOR A WORLD THAT
MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

-ANTÓNIO GUTERRES
SECRETARY-GENERAL, UNITED
NATIONS

10,000

NUTRITIONAL
TREES PLANTED

114

CHEWS
TRAINED

4

DEVELOPMENTAL
SERIES

24

SCHOOLS
IMPACTED

15,000

GBV BENEFICIARIES

1500

WOMEN ON
MATERIAL HEALTH

30

COMMUNITY
HEALTH WORKERS
TRAINED

22

STATES
REACHED

20

VULNERABLE
KIDS ADOPTED

400

SMALLHOLDER
FARMER
EMPOWERED

1200

NGOS
EMPOWERED

800

TEACHERS
IMPACTED

2
AWARDS

50
GENDER LENS
INVESTMENT
EXPERTS TRAINED

16
DAYS OF
ADVOCACY



Introduction

Sterling One Foundation proudly presents its 2023 impact report, spanning from January 1 to December 31, offering a panoramic view of our concerted efforts and active engagement in shaping an inclusive, thriving, and sustainable future for Nigeria. This report serves as a testament to our steadfast commitment across our diverse thematic areas, comprising Climate Action, Education and Youth Development, Food Security, Health, Gender Equality and Women's Development.

Focused on delineating the impact of our initiatives throughout the 2023 fiscal year, this report unveils the tangible outcomes, inspiring stories, and quantifiable figures that underscore our enduring dedication to effecting positive change. It also meticulously delineates our geographical footprint, illustrating our reach and engagement across various regions.

Central to our approach is a methodology steeped in rigor and innovation, underpinned by principles that embrace inclusivity, collaboration, and sustainability. Throughout this report, we delve into the voices of our beneficiaries, their experiences, and testimonials, providing firsthand insights into the transformative impact of Sterling One Foundation's interventions.

Furthermore, this report encapsulates the invaluable learnings gleaned from our endeavors, driving continual improvement, and refining our strategies for maximum efficacy. Embracing sustainability as a guiding principle, our methodology aligns harmoniously with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), serving as the lodestar for our pursuit of positive transformations in critical areas such as poverty alleviation, enhanced health, well-being, and equitable societal development.

As we chart our course into the future, this report also offers a glimpse into our forthcoming initiatives and aspirations for the 2024 fiscal year, reflecting our unwavering commitment to catalyzing meaningful change and fostering a more equitable and sustainable world.

2023 Health Programs and Interventions

This section showcases our various projects targeted at improving the healthcare system in Nigeria, with a specific focus on primary healthcare as well as other interventions with the aim of supporting the healthy living of people in underserved areas of the country.

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM FOR HEALTH WORKERS SUPPORTING ADOLESCENT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS

In pursuit of the United Nations SDG 3's vision for universal health coverage and improved well-being for Nigerians of all ages, the goal to improve adolescent sexual and reproductive health services in Nigeria and the need to strengthen the capacity of primary health workers in providing adolescents with non-judgmental counselling on pregnancy and resources available to them, we partnered with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) to spearhead the pilot of a novel impactful capacity building for Community Health Influencers, Promoters, and Services (CHIPS) state coordinators, medical nurses and midwives, and NPHCDA staff from Nasarawa State and the FCT on the 20th and 21st of March 2023, in Abuja.



Training participants at the 2-Day Capacity Building Program

The training which focused on establishing and strengthening the information and service system for adolescents concerning sexual and reproductive health in target communities had as its objectives

- To ensure health workers are better equipped to communicate and assist adolescents seeking advice or help on sexual and reproductive care including abstinence.
- To achieve an improved behavioral change amongst health workers regarding teenage sexual and reproductive health.

- To support the effort by State Ministry of Health, NPHCDA in creating access to comprehensive sexual education; services to prevent, diagnose and treat sexually transmitted infections (STIs); and counselling on family planning for adolescents.
- To develop and design strategies and programs providing “adolescent friendly” sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents on sexual and reproductive health and
- Strengthen advocacy as a strategy towards individual and community behavioral change while improving community health.



Lead Trainers for the 2-Day Capacity Building Program Providing Experiential Learning

The 2-day training session comprehensively covered critical topics encompassing Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) in Nigeria, Pregnancy Prevention, Contraceptive Options, STD Prevention, HPV, Adolescent-Friendly Health Services, Personal Hygiene, Counseling, and Communication Skills.

This partnership is a crucial part of healthcare reform in Nigeria, as it focuses on improving the efficiency of health workers, which in turn, impacts the quality of life of the people they serve. With its focus on areas that are often shied away from, it hopes to open doors for other key issues to be discussed and innovated around, especially from an angle of improving the NPHCDA's program training curriculum.

It is on record that childbearing at a very young age is associated with an increased risk of complications during pregnancy and childbirth and higher rate of neonatal mortality. In Nigeria, the age specific fertility rate in the 15-19 age group is 106 per 1000 women and it is higher in rural areas compared to urban areas. The multiple

Indicator Cluster Survey ('16-'17) found that 19.2% of young women aged 15 to 19 had started having children, with 3.1% having given birth before they were 15. The 2018 demographic health survey found that 19% of adolescent women had begun having children. The emergence of this problem has been attributed to various factors including early exposure to causal sexual activity, early marriage, rural community living, low socioeconomic status, peer pressure, lack of sex education, and others.

While the National Primary Health Development Agency (NPHCDA) developed a Community Health Influencers, Promoter and Services (CHIPS) program to bridge the gaps in access to health care by stimulating and supporting households in communities to seek PHC services through various delivery platforms, it is imperative to support this effort and strengthen the access which is one of the training objectives.

The training's success has inspired plans for wider implementation, aiming to expand its reach across additional states in 2024. Empowered with knowledge and skills, the participants have stepped down the training in various communities and wards and are poised to cascade this vital information within more communities, reinforcing the program's impact and fostering better health practices. This initiative aligns seamlessly with SDG 3's aspirations and exemplifies our commitment to capacitating healthcare professionals and enhancing health outcomes for all.

The rising prevalence of teenage pregnancies, unplanned births and sexually transmitted infections in Nigeria poses an immediate concern which they hope the workshops under this partnership can begin to address, by equipping health workers with the right information and tips that can help cut down on the over 200,000 unplanned births attributed to teenage girls between 15 and 19 years, especially in Northern Nigeria.



25 CHIPS, 2 CHIPS state coordinators, 5 Nurses and Midwives from Nasarawa State and the FCT with 2 NPHCDA staff who were direct beneficiaries from this training

REDUCTION OF MATERNAL MORTALITY IN NIGERIA THROUGH SUPPORT OF THE MAMA BASE INTERVENTION HEALTH PROGRAM

Maternal mortality remains a significant concern, particularly in Africa, where it contributes to a considerable proportion of global maternal deaths. This sobering reality prompted the World Health Organization (WHO) and other stakeholders to target a reduction in maternal mortality rates (MMR) to 70 deaths per 100,000 live births by 2030.

In July 2023, we partnered with MRHR Collective to launch the Mama Base Health Program, which is focused to address this critical issue in Nigeria commencing from Lagos state. Mama Base was designed to establish a registry of low-income pregnant women in Lagos State, ensuring their access to high-quality care throughout pregnancy and post-delivery, while also strengthening data availability on maternal health.

Within a few months of the launch, the program has been able to:

- Collected data from 3,600 pregnant women and women of child-bearing age in 10 research communities across Lagos State.
- Policymakers Engagement Meeting
- Conduct a train-the-trainer event, upskilling 17 Medical Doctors in Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC) skills, preparing them to train primary healthcare (PHC) providers.
- Delivered EmOC training to 284 doctors, midwives, and nurses in 45 PHCs, guided by 9 Obstetricians and gynecologists, supported by junior doctors.
- Conducted skills gap surveys and facility audits among senior management in 10 research facilities. Gathered data from approximately 600 women attending Antenatal Care, Delivery, Postnatal Care, and Immunization clinics across 10 research PHCs.
- Held Community outreaches in three Local Government Areas (LGAs): Apapa, Epe and Badagry
- Carried out an extensive Health Facility Audits to provide valuable insights into the resources and conditions in all PHCs in Lagos State, offering a comprehensive view of the healthcare infrastructure
- Successfully executed a one-month advocacy, sensitization, activation, and awareness month tagged #WeMenForHer with a Run for Her Campaign which SOF played a major role in its accomplishment

The #RUNForHer campaign was launched to raise N100,000,000 to support the Mama Base Intervention which aims to facilitate safe delivery for 5,000 pregnant women in Lagos State, in the first phase, at N20,000 per woman. The plan is to engage community health workers to follow up with indigent pregnant women in the community throughout their pregnancy, ensuring they have antenatal care and deliver under skilled healthcare guidance. They will also follow them up for 6 weeks post-delivery, to encourage them to immunize their babies and avail themselves of family planning.

For the first leg of the campaign, we co-organized 30 days of advocacy to create awareness about the alarmingly high maternal mortality ratio in Nigeria and foster buy-in from all stakeholders in our society. Particularly, the campaign engaged the men in our society because they play a significant role in ensuring maternal health from the nuclear family level to the broader societal level. The campaign utilized various advocacy and fundraising activities to create public awareness including celebrity engagement, stunts and activations, a memorial march to honor women who died due to poor maternal care #IRememberHer and ended with the #RunForHer which was a charity run that allowed the public to contribute to saving more pregnant women. The 5km run commenced from the I-Fitness Gym on Admiralty Way in Lekki Phase and terminated at the Muri Okunola Park in Victoria Island on October 28th, 2023



Participants at the #RunForHer Campaign Warming Up before 10km Run



Current Impact:

Presently, SOF supports 1,500 pregnant women and continues to drive fundraising efforts to further expand the program in Lagos State. 816 pregnant women have been registered with 23 safe deliveries recorded thus far.

Impact and Way Forward

The Mama Base Intervention has made significant strides in capacity building, data collection, and community engagement. These efforts lay a solid foundation for evidence-based decision-making in maternal healthcare. Going forward, the program remains committed to leveraging partnerships, strengthening health infrastructure, and advocating for policy changes to reduce maternal mortality rates in Lagos State. This aligns with international goals and emphasizes the Foundation's dedication to fostering healthier, safer, and more equitable maternal healthcare systems. Continuous registration of vulnerable women across all local government areas and Community outreaches in Ikorodu and Alimosho are on-going and more Strategic Partnerships is being sought to enhance project reach and impact in 2024 and beyond.



Cross section of Participants at the "Run for Her Campaign"

DRIVING ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE FOR THE UNDERSERVED IN RURAL COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN LAGOS STATES



Lagos, renowned as Africa's bustling metropolis, stands as a vibrant economic and cultural nucleus, pulsating with the energy of over 20 million inhabitants. Despite its dynamism, accessibility to essential healthcare services remains a challenge for many Lagosian, restricting their path to sustainable livelihoods.

Recognizing this gap, Sterling One Foundation (SOF), in a strategic collaboration with Eko Social Health Alliance (EKOSHA), embarked on a groundbreaking partnership bolstered by the innovative crowdfunding platform, Giving.ng. This visionary alliance aims to revolutionize health financing for the vulnerable communities in Lagos, reshaping the narrative of healthcare accessibility in the state.

Giving.ng, a pioneering crowdfunding mechanism, stands at the forefront of this transformative initiative. Leveraging its dynamic platform, it mobilizes funds and channels resources efficiently to support EKOSHA's mission of expanding healthcare access to underserved residents. By tapping into the power of collective contributions and community-driven support, Giving.ng amplifies the impact of every donation, magnifying its reach and fostering a tangible difference in the lives of Lagosians.

CEO, Sterling One Foundation, Mrs. Olapeju Ibekwe alongside Other Dignitaries and Reps of the Lagos State Government at the Media Launch of EKOSHA



Through this partnership, SOF and Giving.ng have become instrumental in diversifying funding options, ensuring that health care is not a luxury but a fundamental right accessible to all. The collaborative efforts have empowered EKOSHA to provide critical medical support, bridge financial gaps, and create sustainable avenues for health insurance and state health schemes for the marginalized populations within Lagos.

The impact is palpable as the partnership continues to catalyze positive change, enhancing health outcomes, and paving the way for a healthier, more resilient Lagos. Through the convergence of innovative financial models and unwavering commitment, this collaboration echoes a profound dedication to transforming the healthcare landscape, aligning with the vision of a healthier, more equitable society for all Lagosian.



The Sterling One Foundation Team at the Official Media Launch of the EKOSHA Project

This partnership exemplifies the potent synergy between public and private entities, highlighting the potential for collective action to drive meaningful and lasting change in communities. It stands as a testament to the power of collaboration in shaping a brighter, healthier future for Lagos and its residents.



PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIP FOR FUNDING AND SCALING HEALTH PROGRAMS IN AFRICA

According to the National Library of Medicine, Africa makes up 16% of the world population and carries 23% of the global disease burden, yet it accounted for only 1% of total global health expenditures in 2015. In per capita terms, the rest of the world spends ten times more on health care than Africa. Countries that are reforming their health systems to progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC) need to consider total resource requirements over the long term to plan for the implementation and sustainable financing of UHC. However, there is a lack of detailed conceptualization as to how the current health financing mechanisms interplay across health system elements.

The attainment of the SDGs requires substantial investments. Moreover, the move towards Universal Health Coverage implies a growing need for innovative health financing models. This encompasses mobilization, accumulation, efficient and effective allocation of funds to cover the health needs of the people, individually and collectively. It ensures funding is available and sets the right financial incentives to providers, to ensure all individuals can access effective, essential, quality health services.

During the second edition of the Africa Social Impact Summit held at the Eko Conventional Centre in Lagos, we had health experts, policy makers and private sector leaders discuss on Funding and Scaling Health Programs in Africa.

During the discussion, the speakers highlighted funding challenges affecting health infrastructure and human capital, the need to improve collaboration and decision-making with better data, the impact of failures in other sectors on healthcare and the necessity for prioritizing the health sector, innovative thinking, and robust public-private partnerships and the need for increased attention to medical practitioners, shifting from curative to preventive care, and fostering collaboration.

The session also addressed issues of patient tracking, healthcare funding, and data sharing with the government. The call for reaching low-income communities resonated as a crucial step.

Key Recommendations include the urgent need to.

- Prioritize funding for health infrastructure and human capital development to address the challenges faced by the healthcare sector.
- Strengthened collaboration between government, private sector, and NGOs to pool resources and expertise for effective and sustainable healthcare initiatives.
- Ensure accurate and comprehensive data in healthcare decision-making, planning, and resource allocation.
- Implement robust data collection and analysis systems to identify trends, gaps, and areas for improvement in the health sector
- Foster innovative approaches to healthcare by encouraging cross-sector collaboration and leveraging public-private partnerships.
- Promote the integration of innovative technologies, practices, and solutions to address healthcare challenges effectively.
- Strengthened community engagement and awareness programs to empower individuals to take charge of their health and well-being.

Accelerating progress on SDG 3 and the commitment to leave no one behind requires unified efforts to address the determinants of health, the health inequities, or disparities such determinants perpetuate. There is need to be an increased commitment to improving health and health equity through multi-sectoral approaches that address social, economic, and environmental, and political factors. By understanding the financing of health systems and services, programs and resources can complement the health financing mechanisms already in place, advocate for more funding of priority areas, and increase population access to available.

Overall, the event underscored the urgency of addressing funding, continuity, data, and collaboration in the health sector for improved quality of care and sustainability and when collectively implemented, have the potential to enhance the quality of healthcare, promote sustainability, and address the challenges faced by low-income communities. The engagement underscored the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach to create lasting impact in the healthcare sector.

Universal health coverage (UHC) is a global health priority anchored within SDG3, as target 3.8. It is at the center of current efforts to strengthen health systems and improve the level and distribution of health and health services. It ensures financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services, and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all



R-L: Moderator, Toyin Adegbite-Moore, Executive Vice President for Africa, and Europe for REACH HQ. Panelists: Odunayo Sanya - Executive Secretary, MTN Foundation; Naomi Aduku - Managing Director, Bastion Health, and Dr. Mories Atoki - CEO, African Business Coalition for Health (ABC Health), on the Healthcare Panel at ASIS 2023

MENSTRUAL HYGIENE PROGRAM

Sterling One Foundation recognizes the pivotal role of menstrual health and hygiene in empowering women and girls, impacting diverse aspects spanning health, education, gender equality, and water and sanitation across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In August 2023, in collaboration with Giving and Adebisi Odeleye of Moore Organics, we addressed the critical issue of menstrual hygiene in underserved communities across Kwara, Lagos, Ogun, and Kenya. This initiative provided 400 girls with reusable sanitary towels, mitigating challenges faced due to insufficient access to clean, effective absorbents, inadequate facilities for proper management, lack of soap and water, and privacy concerns.

The project's impact extended beyond mere distribution, enabling the delivery of over 2000 units of reusable towels and pads. By doing so, we aimed to combat the practice of resorting to unhygienic materials, such as newspapers, old rags, or leaves, for menstrual care, safeguarding the health and dignity of women and girls.

Aligned with the UN's emphasis on menstrual hygiene management, this endeavor underscored the importance of accurate knowledge and access to hygienic menstrual products. Enhancing awareness and accessibility not only upholds the dignity of women but also contributes significantly to their overall health, education, and societal equality, echoing the goals outlined within the SDGs. This project stands as a testament to our commitment to effecting positive change, particularly in improving the lives and well-being of women and girls in marginalized communities.



Young students with their Hygiene pack during the menstrual hygiene training and sensitization

GIFT A PAD CAMPAIGN WALK

In Nigeria, millions of women and girls face challenges accessing menstrual hygiene products, an issue that significantly impacts their health and well-being. To address this, Sterling One Foundation collaborated with Giving.ng and the Caring for Girls with Period organization to mark World Menstrual Hygiene Day in a meaningful way.

On World Menstrual Hygiene Day, we orchestrated the impactful "Gift a Pad Campaign Walk," a significant event designed to raise awareness about the criticality of proper menstrual health practices. This campaign served as a beacon of education, enlightening communities about the risks associated with inadequate menstrual hygiene practices.

As part of the initiative, we distributed sanitary towels to women and girls in need. Over 100 individuals were directly impacted by this effort, ensuring they had access to essential menstrual hygiene products that are often inaccessible due to financial constraints.

Direct Impact Numbers:

The "Gift a Pad Campaign Walk" positively impacted over, providing them with vital menstrual hygiene products. This direct assistance is a step towards mitigating the challenges faced by many women and girls in accessing these necessities.



Giving.ng Volunteers at the Gift a Pad Campaign Walk 3.0 held in partnership with Girls with Period Initiative

400
Female
Beneficiaries

**Across 3
Nigeria States**
Kwara, Lagos,
Ogun and Kenya

2000
Units of reusable
towels were
distributed

SOF MEDICAL SUPPORT AND SPECIAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS



Mr. Ige undergoing treatment following his diagnosis

As a health-conscious organization, we remain committed to aiding individuals facing health challenges, exemplifying our dedication to supporting critical medical interventions that significantly impact lives. Our collaboration with various platforms, including Giving.ng, underscores our commitment to leveraging partnerships for tangible change and life-saving interventions.

Supporting Life-altering Diagnosis Of Kidney Failure

In January 2022, Ige Hakeem Kolawole received a life-altering diagnosis of kidney failure, necessitating immediate medical intervention, and a kidney transplant surgery. This critical procedure came with a substantial financial burden, estimated at N17,000,000, leaving Kolawole and his family in dire need of financial assistance.

Recognizing the urgency of the situation, Kolawole's brother, Lekan Ige, initiated a fundraising campaign on Giving.ng to secure the required funds. Despite the challenging circumstances and the prolonged duration of dialysis, the family persevered in their efforts to raise the necessary amount for the transplant surgery.



Our Intervention and Impact:

In support of this life-saving initiative, we partnered with Giving.ng, a crowdfunding platform dedicated to aiding individuals in need. Through this collaboration, we contributed a substantial grant of N1,000,000 towards Kolawole's kidney transplant surgery.

This funding played a crucial role in facilitating the successful execution of the kidney transplant procedure, a pivotal moment that significantly transformed Kolawole's life and granted him a second chance at health and well-being.

Sustainability in Action:

This impactful medical intervention exemplifies our commitment to sustainability in healthcare, emphasizing the foundational principle of securing a healthier and more equitable future for individuals facing health adversities.

Our partnership with Giving.ng signifies our dedication to leveraging innovative platforms and strategic collaborations to create tangible and lasting change in the lives of those in need.

Through our support for Kolawole's kidney transplant surgery, we affirm our commitment to advancing sustainable healthcare solutions, fostering partnerships, and addressing critical health challenges faced by individuals in our communities. This intervention stands as a testament to our ethos of impactful philanthropy and our unwavering dedication to promoting a healthier society for all.

Alongside Giving.ng and the Health Emergency Initiative, we responded swiftly to aid the Effanga family, victims of a catastrophic gas explosion in the Ajah area of Lagos. This tragic incident resulted in severe burns to four family members, including the father, mother, and two daughters.

HELP FOR THE FAMILY OF A CATASTROPHIC GAS EXPLOSION ACCIDENT

Alongside Giving.ng and the Health Emergency Initiative, we responded swiftly to aid the Effanga family, victims of a catastrophic gas explosion in the Ajah area of Lagos. This tragic incident resulted in severe burns to four family members, including the father, mother, and two daughters.



**Mr. Effanga receiving support for his family from Sterling
One Foundation through Giving.ng**



The gas explosion believed to be caused by a faulty gas cylinder and burner purchased recently by the father, inflicted critical injuries on the Effanga family. Urgent medical attention, including the provision of antibiotics and blood transfusions, was imperative to prevent life-threatening infections like sepsis.

Our Response and Impact

We mobilized support through Giving.ng, raising and donating a total of 830,000 to assist the Effanga family during their recovery. This contribution served as a vital lifeline to cover immediate medical expenses and alleviate the financial burden faced by the family in this dire situation.

Partnerships and Collaboration

This initiative epitomizes our collaborative efforts between Giving.ng, and the Health Emergency Initiative, highlighting the power of partnerships in swiftly responding to urgent medical needs within communities.

Medical Bill Assistance Program For 30 Nigerians

Navigating healthcare challenges in Nigeria, especially post-hospitalization, can often leave individuals burdened with escalating medical bills. At Sterling One Foundation, our Medical Bill Assistance Program aims to offer a lifeline to those stranded in hospitals due to unpaid medical expenses, ensuring they receive necessary care and support.



Unveiling our Medical Bill Assistance Program alongside our partners

Impactful Assistance:

In partnership with Gbagada General Hospital in Lagos and Giving.ng, we extended a helping hand to alleviate the financial strains faced by patients. The program successfully settled medical bills for 30 individuals, providing immediate relief and enabling some beneficiaries to be discharged promptly.

Peace Bassey, a 20-year-old student and beneficiary of the program, encountered an accident while commuting to Epe. Her medical bills compounded her challenges, but through our assistance in partnership with Giving.ng, she received the necessary support for her recovery. Currently, she is discharged and has been able to resume her life, despite being confined to a wheelchair. For Peace Bassey and others, our intervention meant more than just financial relief; it was a pathway back to normalcy and an opportunity to focus on healing and rehabilitation.

Creating a Path to Recovery:

For those like Peace and others grappling with healthcare expenses, our initiative is not just about financial aid. It is about reinstating hope, dignity, and the chance to restart life after a health crisis. By facilitating the discharge of patients and addressing their financial burdens, we are enabling them to focus on their recovery journey.

The Medical Bill Assistance Program is an embodiment of our commitment to ensuring access to quality healthcare for all. We strive to expand this support network, reaching more individuals and extending a helping hand to those facing daunting healthcare costs.

2023 EDUCATION AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Our work in education work cuts across different aspects of the sector because we understand that education serves as the cornerstone of societal progress, wielding the transformative power to shape the youth into adept, contributing members of society, both socially and economically.

Teachers Capacity Development Workshop

Recognizing the pivotal role of education in fostering youth development, Sterling One Foundation in 2023, prioritized initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of education and empowering educators.

Central to this commitment is the steadfast belief that the development of youths through education not only enriches individual lives but also fuels broader societal advancement. As articulated in the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4), ensuring inclusive, equitable, and quality education is imperative to promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.





Participating Teachers at the Training Program

In alignment with SDG 4, we partnered with ReadManna Empowerment Initiative, a Certiport Solution Provider, and Microsoft Authorized Education Partner (AEP), along with the Association of Private Educators in Nigeria, to spearhead a comprehensive training program. This initiative focused on capacity building for 30 school administrators and representatives in Lagos, employing a Train-The-Trainer/Leader model to facilitate knowledge dissemination among other educators within their respective schools.

The two-day training, conducted using the certified Microsoft Educators Curriculum, unfolded at the esteemed Children's International School Lekki on February 3rd and 4th, 2023. The sessions were meticulously designed to empower educators with innovative teaching methodologies, technological tools, and leadership skills essential for delivering quality education in the digital age.

The ripple effect of this training program was profound, extending its reach to over 280 teachers and impacting the lives of 1400 students. By equipping educators with updated pedagogical approaches and technological acumen, this initiative aimed to catalyze a substantial improvement in the overall quality of education imparted within schools.



Teachers During the Developmental Training Session



This investment in teachers' professional development underscores our unwavering dedication to fostering a culture of lifelong learning and ensuring that every learner receives an education that nurtures their potential. The collective efforts of all partners involved exemplify the synergy required to advance educational standards and contribute to the holistic development of society.

Sterling One Foundation remains resolute in its commitment to continually elevate educational standards and empower educators, knowing that a well-equipped teaching force is instrumental in sculpting a brighter, more prosperous future for generations to come.



Ruth Ozigbo Product Manager, Giving.Ng, Sterling One Foundation's Representative, and a teacher at the training.

COMMEMORATING THE WORLD INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION

Education stands as a fundamental human right and a catalyst for societal progress. In homage to the pivotal role of education, we embarked on a momentous partnership with Womenovate, marking the International Day of Education through a transformative endeavor, the World Education Day Summit.

Under the resounding theme of "The Role of Technology in Improving Educational Service Delivery and Outcomes," this virtual summit served as a global platform for dialogue and action. At the helm of this esteemed gathering, our CEO, Olapaeju Ibekwe, served as a keynote speaker, lending expertise and vision to the discourse.

The summit aimed to establish innovative partnerships and drive technology-driven education. By uniting diverse voices, it spurred impactful strategies and commitments, shaping a future of tech-enabled education. This initiative reflects our commitment to transformative education, paving the way for inclusive, technology-driven progress worldwide.



Mrs. Olapaeju Ibekwe, CEO, Sterling One Foundation as a keynote speaker at the Womenovate Virtual Summit for World Education Day

ENABLING ACCESS TO QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION FOR LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES

We remain steadfast in our commitment to advancing access to quality basic education, aligning our efforts with the United Nations Development Program's imperative of ensuring free primary and secondary schooling for all by 2030. We aim to eliminate disparities, create equal opportunities for basic education, and foster universal access to quality basic education, addressing gender and wealth disparities.

In our commitment to inclusive education, we kicked off the SOF Scholarship initiative by adopting 20 indigent kids the Special Foundation Education program, offering vital education to underprivileged kids in vulnerable communities in Lagos State. Awarding scholarships to 20 indigent students aligns with our mission to uplift lives and fight poverty through education. These scholarships provide academic support and holistic care, aiming to break barriers and nurture resilient, knowledgeable individuals. This initiative reflects our core values of equitable education, essential for sustainable development and empowering future generations. By investing in these students' education, we sow seeds of societal transformation, fostering a brighter future for both individuals and the nation.



SOF Scholarship Award Beneficiaries with Giving.ng Volunteers and Project Partners

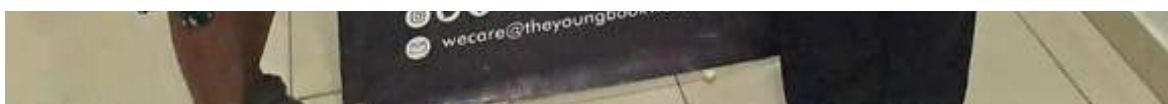
PROVIDING ACCESS TO LEARNING RESOURCES AND MATERIAL FOR KIDS IN LOW INCOME COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Literacy remains a significant challenge across many regions, with statistics from the African Library Project indicating that more than one in three adults faces difficulties in reading. To address this pressing issue, we collaborated with Young Book Worms and Teach for Nigeria to facilitate the provision of essential reading materials to primary school students in Ifo, Abeokuta. The objective was to enhance their learning experiences, foster growth, and support their overall development.

Through our joint efforts, we successfully delivered over 200 books to these primary school students. These materials were carefully selected to align with their academic curriculum and promote a love for reading and learning.



Ruth Ozigbo, Giving.ng Product Manager at the book pickup for the beneficiary students



The impact of this initiative was profound, directly influencing 235 primary school students. Moreover, the indirect impact was felt across a wider scope, reaching approximately 650 individuals, including teachers, families, and the broader community. The total value of the donated books amounted to #738,000, emphasizing the substantial contribution made to enhance literacy in the region.

Reading is an integral part of primary education as it allows children to develop vital skills they can use throughout their lives. It increases knowledge and imagination; exploring new ideas which can help young minds grow in new ways.

SCHOOL RENOVATION PROGRAM

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Reading is an integral part of primary education as it allows children to develop vital skills they can use throughout their lives. It increases knowledge and imagination; exploring new ideas which can help young minds grow in new ways.

We recognize the profound impact of extracurricular activities on the holistic development of school students. Beyond academic pursuits, these activities play a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals with improved academic performance, enhanced mental and physical health, and increased overall satisfaction in their educational journey.

Understanding the significant benefits extracurricular activities bring to students' lives, we spearheaded a transformative initiative in collaboration with Giving.ng, Sazak Acres Biloque Company (SABC), and Run Club Abuja. Together, we raised N5,000,000 to renovate the LEA Primary school in Jabi, Abuja, commemorating their third-year anniversary.



Members of Run Club Abuja pose with a cheque for the LEA Primary School Renovation Fund raised on Giving.ng

We constructed a football field and an athletic running track, with essential amenities that not only enhance the school's infrastructure but also provide a conducive environment for students to engage in sports and extracurricular activities. Research indicates that such activities contribute significantly to students' mental and physical well-being, reducing stress, improving mood, and boosting energy levels.

The GITNEX Benefits of Extracurricular Activities report highlights that students involved in extracurricular activities experience an 8% reduction in feelings of anxiety and depression. By investing in facilities that facilitate such activities, Sterling One Foundation, alongside its partners, endeavors to promote sustainable student development, fostering an environment where students can thrive academically and personally.

This collaborative effort represents our commitment to supporting comprehensive educational experiences that extend beyond textbooks and classrooms. By renovating the school's infrastructure and providing opportunities for extracurricular engagement, Sterling One Foundation seeks to empower students to explore their talents, enhance their well-being, and succeed in their educational journey.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Fostering Creative Talent Through Film Lab Africa

The United Nations highlights the pivotal role of youth in sustainable development, underscoring the urgency of engaging young people to avert pressing global challenges. With Africa hosting the world's youngest population, particularly in Nigeria, youth development takes center stage.

Recognizing the power of creativity as a catalyst for change, we partnered with the British Council for Film Lab Africa 2023. This groundbreaking accelerator program aims to empower African filmmakers and TV producers, spanning diverse genres—from fiction and non-fiction to music, comedy, and documentaries.

Film Lab Africa stands as a transformative initiative, offering capacity-building, mentorship, and invaluable showcasing opportunities. Through this partnership, Sterling One Foundation plays a crucial role in nurturing the next generation of storytellers, fueling innovation, and reshaping the African film landscape.

The Foundation's commitment to youth empowerment is evident in its support for this initiative, positioning Nigerian youths as agents of change. By fostering creative talent and providing platforms for expression, we are championing the cause of the Nigerian youth, enabling them to advocate for their futures and contribute meaningfully to societal development.

This partnership underscores the Foundation's dedication to leveraging strategic collaborations for impactful youth development, transforming aspirations into tangible opportunities for a brighter tomorrow.

Launch Of The Adolescent Safety In All Spaces (Asis) Project

In October 2023, we partnered with UNFPA and the Ilmi Children Fund to pilot the launch of the "Adolescent Safety in All Spaces (ASIS)" Project in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja. The project was launched to combat online and offline violence affecting adolescents in and out of school. In Northern Nigeria, a high percentage of children experience various forms of violence. With increasing internet access, gender-based violence has extended into virtual spaces. ASIS integrates School-Related & Technology-Facilitated GBV interventions. For the

pilot, 50 secondary school regulators, management committees, PTAs, and counselors were trained in safeguarding policies.

The first set of trained participants is currently being supported for 6 months to observe closely the progress of the integrated TFGBV/SRGBV curriculum before scale-up in 2024. In addition to the scale-up, the ASIS Project will commence an adapted out-of-school version of the project targeting Out-of-School adolescents' girls as an integrated activity at the Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS) in the participating states with a good number of WGSS or other vocational centers.

This initiative reflects our commitment to adolescent well-being and comprehensive efforts against gender-based violence, creating safer environments for the youth.

WEST AFRICA SME EXHIBITION 2023

In partnership with the UNIDO Investment Technology and Promotion Office (UNIDO ITPO), the National Association of SMEs (NASME) and the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Investment, we reiterated our commitment to driving impact investment into innovations in the small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) space in the country and continent by supporting the West Africa SME Exhibition.

Held under the theme, "MSME 4.0: Enhancing Productivity, Competitiveness, Resilience, and Sustainability in an Era of Digital Transformation," the event aimed to connect SMEs with investors, business development organizations, and international industry specialists to promote sustainable technologies relevant to improving local investment opportunities. The event also witnessed, the launch of a N2 billion empowerment fund dedicated to transforming the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector.



Chairman
**HIS EXCELLENCY,
DR. OMAR TOURAY**
The President,
ECOWAS Commission



SPECIAL GUEST OF HONOUR
**HIS EXCELLENCY,
ALHAJI KASHIM SHETTIMA**
Vice-President,
Federal Republic of Nigeria



**DR. DORIS
UZOKA-ANITE**
Honourable Minister FMITI
Federal Republic of Nigeria



**DR. ABDULRASHID
YARIMA**
President, NASME



**MS. ABIMBOLA
OLUFORE**
Head, UNIDO ITPO Nigeria

WEST AFRICA SMEs EXHIBITION

2023



26th - 28th October, 2023



Abuja Continental Hotel Ladi Kwali Way, Zone 4, Abuja, Nigeria



L-R: Ms. Massandje Toure-Litse, ECOWAS Commissioner, Economic Affairs and Agriculture, Dr. Abdulrashid Yerima mcpn Imncs - President, National Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASME), Ms. Abimbola Olufore Wycliffe's, Head- UNIDO-Investment and Technology Promotion (ITPO) in Nigeria, Hon. James Barka, the Vice Chairman, House Committee on Commerce (Representing the Deputy Speaker, House of Reps, Hon. Benjamin Kalu) and Ms. Olapeju Ibekwe, CEO Sterling One Foundation.

The objective of the event was to.

- **Promote SME Growth:** Create a platform for SMEs to showcase their products and services, fostering growth and sustainability.
- **Facilitate Networking:** Provide an opportunity for SMEs to network with potential partners, investors, and customers.
- **Access to Finance:** Facilitate connections between SMEs and financial institutions to improve access to financing.
- **Market Expansion:** Enable SMEs to explore new markets within West Africa and beyond.

The three-day event featured.

- **Exhibition:** SMEs from across West Africa had the opportunity to showcase their products and services to a diverse audience.
- **Business Matchmaking:** Facilitated networking sessions to connect SMEs with potential investors, partners, and customers.
- **Workshops and Seminars:** Expert-led sessions on topics relevant to SME growth, innovation, and international trade.
- **Financing Opportunities:** Sessions dedicated to presenting various financing options available to SMEs.
- **Policy Dialogues and Plenary Sessions:** Engaging discussions between SME representatives and policymakers to address challenges and propose solutions.
- **Awards Ceremony:** Recognizing outstanding SMEs and their contributions to economic development.

YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY, THE FUTURE OF WORK AND AFRICA AS THE NEXT GLOBAL TALENT SOURCING FRONTIER

As part of the Africa Social Impact Summit 2023, and with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), we hosted a panel discussion on the future of work and how best to harness the talents that abound in Africa.

This discussion which took a deep dive into talent management as a vehicle for addressing youth unemployment in Nigeria and Africa had Taiwo Olupitan, Manager, People & Organization Advisory at PwC, Temi Dalley – Group Chief Human Resources Officer at Sterling Bank, Omokaro Ovakporayen Unuakpor – Head of Product Development at Lagos State Employment Trust Fund, Yemisi Otasanya – University Spaces Initiative Lead, UNDP as panellists, with Sheila Ojei – Director, Lagos State Employment Trust Fund as moderator.

Amidst the fourth industrial revolution, defined by data connectivity and analytics progress and further spurred by global occurrences like the COVID-19 pandemic, Africa stands at the point of determining its position in the global talent landscape. Nigeria, a central player, grapples with the "Japa" movement:

a significant migration trend where young talents relocate to countries within and outside the African continent. This phenomenon, paired with an unsettling, albeit unverified, unemployment rate surpassing 40%, presents a pressing concern.

Adding to the difficulty is the discernible disparity between graduates' academic preparedness and the industry's actual demands, with a notable absence of critical soft skills. These challenges, however intricate, highlight the necessity for more than just talent acquisition; they emphasize the importance of identifying and nurturing individuals who can drive growth, contribute value, and elevate personal and national prospects. The discussion, therefore, sought to delve into these intricate issues, aiming to find innovative solutions that bridge the divides and harness the potential within Africa's talent ecosystem.



L-R: Yemisi Otasanya – University Spaces Initiative Lead, UNDP, Taiwo Olupitan, Manager, People & Organization Advisory at PwC, Temi Dalley – Group Chief Human Resources Officer at Sterling Bank, Omokaro Ovakporayen Unuakpor – Head of Product Development at Lagos State Employment Trust Fund, and Sheila Ojei on the Talent Management Panel at ASIS 2023.

Some of the key recommendations made by the panel include:

- **Alignment of Education with Industry Needs:** Which involves re-aligning academic programs to match industry needs thus fostering a workforce that meets industry demands with their practical skills.
- **Soft Skill Development:** Entailing the integration of soft skill training into academic programs, including emotional intelligence and critical thinking, to help prepare youths for the complexities of modern work environments.
- **Effective Data Management Strategies:** Robust data management to drive data-informed conversations and interventions, thus enhancing decision-making processes.
- **Reconsideration of Retirement Policies:** Governments rethinking mandatory retirement ages and work years to reflect people's willingness and ability to work longer, potentially retaining valuable experience within the workforce.
- **Focused Retooling and Reskilling:** The need for efforts to enhance skills should be aligned with factors that make working in Nigeria attractive, including quality of life, remote working possibilities, labor laws accommodating freelancing and the gig economy, and embracing diversity and inclusion.



ASIS 2023 Talent Management Panelists with CEO Sterling One Foundation, Mrs. Olapeju Ibekwe, and UN Nigeria Resident Rep, Mr. Matthias Schmale

2023 GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAMS, ADVOCACY, AND INTERVENTIONS

One of the reasons we mainstream Gender Equality across our operations at the Sterling One Foundation is our understanding of the various ways that gender biases pose a threat to development across various communities. Our goal has remained to create an enabling environment for men and more women to thrive.

International Women Day 2023

We partnered with UNIDO ITPO Nigeria to commemorate the 2023 International Women's Day. Our joint event spotlighted female artists and their artwork within the creative sector. This initiative aimed to digitally amplify cultural diversity while aligning with the 2023 IWD (International Women's Day) theme: 'DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality.'

The event, held at Alliance Française de Lagos Ikoyi, brought together influential women technologists, innovators, entrepreneurs, gender equality activists, men, and youth. Through keynote addresses and panel discussions, it celebrated the achievements of women in creative arts, fostering innovation and inclusivity in the digital landscape.



UNIDO-ITPO Nigeria's Ms. Abimbola Olufore, Sterling One Foundation's Mrs. Olapeju Ibekwe and other participants at the IWD Event

International Day For Female Genital Mutilation

We actively participated in the Joint Ministerial Press Briefing commemorating the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation. The event, organized by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Justice and supported by UNICEF, USAID, and UNFPA, convened on February 6, 2023. The theme centered on 'Partnership with Men and Boys to transform Social and gender Norms to End FGM.'

This pivotal event highlighted the importance of sustainable partnerships with men and boys in eradicating the harmful practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). With eight years remaining in this decade of action, Sterling One Foundation reaffirms its commitment to leveraging these partnerships to effect transformative change. By engaging men and boys, we aim to reshape entrenched social and gender norms, empowering girls, and women to realize their rights and full potential across health, education, income, and equality domains.

Launch of the Gender Lens Investing Training in Nigeria

We once again partnered with UNIDO ITPO Nigeria and spearheaded the inaugural Gender Lens Investing Training in Nigeria on April 5th and 6th, 2023. This pioneering two-day event, hosted at the Microsoft Nigeria Training Centre, Lagos, aimed to empower finance professionals from leading Nigerian financial institutions to bolster women's access to crucial investments, grants, and financial resources for business scaling.



Top financial experts at the Gender-Lens Investing Training

As the first-of-its-kind initiative in Africa and globally, the training equipped 50 selected finance professionals with essential insights into gender issues, underlining the crucial link between gender equality and economic progress. Through case studies, it showcased the implementation of diversity-promoting strategies, fostering a deeper understanding among participants.

Moreover, attendees gained access to invaluable digital tools and resources provided by Microsoft, strengthening their ability to support women-led businesses and promote sustainable economic growth. Our CEO, Olapeju Ibekwe emphasized the urgency of closing the \$42 billion funding gap between men and women-owned businesses in Africa, as estimated by the African Development Bank.



Under the guidance of Ms. Carmen Schuber, a Gender Expert from UNIDO, all 50 participants earned certification as Gender Lens Investment experts, marking a significant step toward addressing the financial disparity hindering economic growth in Africa

Ms. Carmen Schuber, - Gender Expert from UNIDO



Participants at the Gender Lens Investing Training

LAUNCH OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR GENDER BASED VIOLENCE FUND

We were honored with a nomination to the High-Level Steering Committee (HLSC) for the groundbreaking Private Sector Led Gender Based Violence Fund, a pioneering initiative in Nigeria and the broader West and Central African region. This recognition applauds the Foundation's extensive efforts in combating Gender Based Violence (GBV) across Africa.

GBV, now exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis, stands as a global and national pandemic, impacting productivity and silently affecting the economy.

As an HLSC member, Sterling One Foundation plays a pivotal role in guiding the Fund's strategic decisions, leveraging Nigeria's influential private sector to comprehensively tackle GBV.

The event hosted esteemed guests, including figures like UN Women Representative to Nigeria & ECOWAS, Mrs. Beatrice Eyong, and Ms. Agnieszka Torres De Oliveira from the Delegation of the European Union. Key governmental figures and stakeholders from Lagos State, UN Systems, Civil Society, and heads of Sustainability from the Private Sector also graced the occasion.



Cross section of participants at the Launch of the Private Sector Gender-Based Violence Fund.

ADDRESSING GENDER EQUALITY AND SUSTAINING GENDER CONVERSATIONS VIA A MULTI-SECTORAL APPROACH

The global workforce is marked by pronounced gender disparities, especially in Africa. Despite constituting 60% of employment opportunities, women face challenges like limited property rights and wage inequities. Alarmingly, in some African regions, women represent only 1% of the workforce and possess a mere 1% of property ownership.

Furthermore, around 70% of women globally are restricted from active participation in financial institutions, depriving them of crucial socio-economic resources. This gender imbalance contradicts the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, which promotes equity and prosperity. Education, a pivotal tool for transformation, remains inaccessible for many women, despite its potential to drive socio-economic change and amplify women's contributions across sectors. Hence, the session focused on gender inequalities in Africa's workforce, property rights, and access to education within the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals framework.

We discussed these issues at the Africa Social Impact Summit in order to examine strategies that work towards solving them, and policy recommendations that can make those strategies and solutions more effective and sustainable.

This panel was made up of Mrs. Monilola Udoh, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, Mrs. Fabia Ogumekan (representing Mrs. Amina Oyagbowa); Gender Development Consulting and Advisory Board Member at WISCAR, Igazeuma Okoroba; Head of Sustainability, Dangote Cement, Victoria Egbetayo; Lead, Global Public Policy, Advocacy and Partnerships, Global Partnership for Education, Ada Ubechukwu; Senior Gender Advisor, International Finance Corporation and Anne Nwaghodoh, Reporter, Channels TV.



A key challenge that was identified was the absence of a gender inclusion roadmap in many corporations, thus leading to an imbalance in the boardroom. Another challenge was the regression in the education of the girl child.

Recommendations for tackling these problems include:

- **Empowerment of Female-led SMEs:** Implementation of capacity-building programs to empower female-led Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), enabling them to participate in more significant contracts.
- **Upholding of Women's Property Rights:** Advocacy for policies that strengthen and protect women's rights to property and inheritance.
- **Introduction of Quotas:** Adoption of quotas, especially for female board representation. This will mandate companies, regardless of size, to cultivate female talent and prepare them for leadership roles. It's a measure that can prove effective for stakeholders, investors, small businesses, and the public sector.

OTHER 2023 ADVOCACY PROGRAMS

In 2023, our focus on addressing Gender Based Violence expanded. Using infotainment as a tool, we conducted screenings of our impactful CHATROOM movie, a poignant portrayal of society's biases that continue to allow abuse to thrive, to showcase different ways in which stakeholders can help curb the menace of GBV. At each screening, discussions centered on eradicating entrenched cultural biases that perpetuate inequality in our communities. This effort is integral to our ongoing advocacy campaign, mobilizing resources to safeguard women and girls by amplifying stakeholder engagement, scaling interventions, and reshaping detrimental social norms through innovative multi-stakeholder collaborations.

The alarming rise in gender-based violence (GBV) in Nigeria, particularly in regions affected by insurgency, necessitates urgent action. Shockingly, statistics reveal that 1 in 3 Nigerian women experiences physical violence by age 15 (NDHS 2013), highlighting the urgent need to address this pervasive issue.



Participants at a GBV Advocacy Event with Dr. Esther Shomefun, Gender & Reproductive Health Analyst, UNFPA Nigeria

CAMPAIGN APPROACH AND IMPACT

The Chat-Room movie is instrumental in our ongoing advocacy, amplifying women and girls' voices. Mobilizing stakeholders across states, including Akwa-Ibom, Abuja, Kano, Kaduna, Gombe, and Ogun, we impacted 1000+ beneficiaries. This initiative not only distributed state VAPP laws but also prioritized Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in addressing GBV.

Collaborating with the Office of the First Lady of Ogun State, UNFPA, and state ministries, we extended the campaign to Ogun State, aiming to reduce GBV and school-related violence. Engaging 500+ students, 100 teachers, and providing complainant boxes to schools enhances a safer, more inclusive educational environment.

School-related Gender-based Violence (Srgbv) Advocacy For Students In Lagos State



Lagos State Secondary School Students at a GBV Advocacy Event

School-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) affects millions of children, particularly girls, disrupting access, attendance, and learning outcomes. It's crucial to combat SRGBV to advance gender equality in education and establish safe, inclusive, and gender-sensitive learning environments as per Sustainable Development Goal 4.

Our initiative focused on addressing this School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV), which is a significant issue affecting children, especially girls, impacting their safety and education.

We Collaborated with the Private Sector Health Alliance of Nigeria and the Ovie Brume Foundation, we engaged 80 students from 10 public schools in Lagos State. Through a cinematic experience, screening the "CHAT ROOM" movie at Ebony Life Cinemas in Lagos on April 1st, 2023, we raised awareness among students about SRGBV, emphasizing the importance of speaking up against gender-based violence without fear of stigma.

This initiative aligns with advancing gender equality in education and supports the goal of creating safe, inclusive, and gender-sensitive learning environments.

Embrace Equity In Corporate Sphere with Unilever Nigeria Plc

In alignment with Unilever Nig Plc's 100-year Centenary Celebration, we joined forces to commemorate International Women's Day under the theme "**Embrace Equity**." This event echoed the call for collective action towards gender parity, diversity, and an inclusive world, promoting a space free of bias and discrimination. The partnership culminated in a screening of the Chat Room for over 300 attendees, engaging in discussions highlighting gender-based violence and the importance of embracing equity.



Sterling One Foundation CEO, Mrs. Olapeju Ibekwe speaking on the Embrace Equity panel to mark International Women's Day and Unilever's 100-year Anniversary

This mirrors the IWD 2023 #EmbraceEquity campaign's goal to spark conversations on the insufficiency of equal opportunities, emphasizing equity as the path to achieving equality. The event, hosted physically in Unilever's Ikeja office and streamed live to their Agbara office, welcomed esteemed guests, including representatives from Lagos State's sexual and domestic violence office, the Women at Risk International Foundation (WARIF), and various partners.

Over 300 staff of Unilever across their Ikeja and Agbara office were engaged, and the outcome proves the commitment to embrace equity and stamp out any form of harassment in workplace.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (SGBV) AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN SIX STATES, KANO, KADUNA, GOMBE, UYO, ABUJA, OGUN, AND LAGOS

The Centre for Awareness on Justice and Accountability (CAJA) partnered with the Sterling One Foundation, for the screening of the CHATROOM movie across six states namely: Lagos, Akwa-Ibom, Abuja (Federal Capital Territory) , Kano, Kaduna and Gombe, in other to further engage relevant stakeholders and structure toward a speedy and effective implementation of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Law in Nigerian Tertiary institutions, sensitize and raise awareness campaigns in schools in the fight against GBV, increase safety and security of women and girls across the country and stop the culture of silence that surrounds the reporting of sexual crimes and violence, while advocating for the implementation and impact of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act upon domestication in the project states.



Movie Screening Attendees in Akwa Ibom

The project which is under the USAID Strengthening Civic Advocacy and Local Engagement (SCALE) project in Nigeria, has as one of its components to reduce the prevalence of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and Child, Early and Forced Marriage (CEFM), improve collaboration among stakeholders, improve citizens' awareness of SGBV, and improve support mechanisms for survivors by CSOs, government, and other stakeholders in Nigeria.

The advocacy journey commenced at the magnificent Ebony Life Place in Victoria Island, Lagos on 26th August 2023 moving across Akwa-Ibom on August 28th, Abuja on August 29th, Kano September 2nd, Kaduna, and September 3rd, and culminated in Gombe on the 5th of September, 2023.



Participants at the CHATROOM Screening in Kaduna

Key success during the campaign include the distribution of the state VAPP act, commitment from school authorities to champion advocacy activities in the school and provide a listening ear to survivors through creation of safety spaces and centers, commitment from the media houses present to join the grassroots advocacy and reportage of activities, commitment from duty bearers and government representatives to deliver the decisions and suggestions to the governor and support the advocacy for the VAPP act domestication, commitment to further create mini chatrooms in schools (secondary and tertiary institutions) via clubs and to actively participate to sustain the advocacy, various solutions proffered that can support survivors were made available and more commitments were made to support the counselling and psychosocial support need of the survivors.



Engagement in Gombe State with participants at the CHATROOM Screening

Part of our learnings include the urgent need to scale the advocacy to other states, establishment of a survivors' funds to support survivors, creation of a technology enabled tracking system, institutional capacity strengthening, and contextualized information, education, and communication (IEC) materials are needed to support local and grassroots mobilization

The campaign had a diverse participation that includes Government Representatives, Developmental Partners, Students, CSOs, Private Sector participants, Youth Associations, and Certified Counsellors. we engaged over 1000 beneficiaries, distributing state VAPP laws and integrating persons with disabilities into the advocacy.

This extensive outreach was aimed at disseminating knowledge, instigating dialogues, and fostering actionable change in diverse regions and was supported by the USAID – SCALE Project implemented by Palladium



Lagos Participants at the CHATROOM Screening



Abuja Participants at the CHATROOM Screening

ADVOCACY TO RIGHT AND DUTY BEARERS IN OGUN STATE

Furthering our cause in Ogun state, partnering with the Office of the First Lady, UNFPA, and relevant ministries, our program focused on reducing GBV prevalence in schools. The event encompassed speeches from survivors, experts, students, and government officials, distributing complaint boxes across schools, involving over 500 students, 100 teachers, counselors, and top government representatives.



**Dr. Esther Shomefun, Gender & Reproductive Health Analyst, UNFPA
Nigeria with one of the physically challenged participants.**

The Gender Equality Campaign, through its extensive outreach and concerted efforts, continues to carve a path towards a society free from the shackles of gender-based disparities and violence.

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is a globally recognized campaign, emphasizing the eradication of violence against women and girls. We spearheaded this drive-in partnership with Sterling Bank, Lagos State Government, Live Abundantly, Mirabel Centre, and the British Deputy High Commission, leveraging this platform to advocate for survivors and elevate public consciousness regarding the dire need to curb GBV in the nation.

Key Campaign Focus:

Addressing violence against women and girls (VAWG) and sexual assault, recognized as deeply ingrained human rights violations, amplified by the compounding crises of human trafficking, irregular migration, climate change, global conflict, and economic instability. These grave issues affect more than 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 boys globally, a concerning statistic that has remained largely unchanged over the last decade.

Government Support and Involvement:

The Government of Lagos State exhibited crucial support throughout the campaign, with high-level representatives from multiple ministries actively engaging in the screening of the advocacy movie, Chatroom. Notably, Commissioners for Youth and Social Development, Health, and Education played pivotal roles in discussions and screenings, reaffirming the state's commitment to combatting Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).



Dr. Ama of Live Abundantly engaging students from various Lagos State Secondary Schools at one of the 16 Days of Activism events

Impact Spotlights:

The screening of the advocacy movie, Chatroom, reached over 800 individuals across diverse locations in Lagos and Abuja. Notably, over 539 students from various public and private secondary schools in Lagos, including the British International School, actively engaged with the movie. Survivor stories unveiled poignant narratives, shedding light on the traumatic experiences faced by survivors and the critical need for support and awareness.

Survivor Engagement and Insights:

Some Survivors bravely shared their harrowing experiences during and after the screenings, highlighting the need for safe spaces and support systems. The powerful testimony of a survivor at Ebony Life Place and the revelations by students at Alausa shed light on the pervasive nature of GBV, fostering a better understanding among peers and the need for societal support.



Cross-Section of Students and Facilitators at the 16 Days of Activism Program in partnership with the Lagos State Ministry of Education

Next Steps:

- **Adolescent Safety Initiative:** Focuses on capacity building for key stakeholders, enhancing survivor confidence, and increasing awareness through Chatroom screenings across various institutions.
- **Support for Survivors Program:** Aims to bolster partnerships for an inclusive GBV ecosystem in Lagos State, delivering essential health interventions for survivors while galvanizing collective action against GBV.

The advocacy was supported by our partners Live Abundantly, the Deputy British High Commission, the Brazil Embassy, Aquafina, Ebony Life Place, Bloom network, Sterling Bank and Giving.ng



R-L: Dr. Ama Onyerinma - Founder of Live Abundantly, Jonny Baxter - British Deputy High Commissioner, Lagos, Nigeria, Mrs Olapeju Ibekwe - CEO of Sterling One Foundation, Mojisola Bakare - General Manager, Corporate Banking, Sterling Bank and the Honourable Commissioner for the Ministry of Youth and Social Development, Lagos State, Mr. Mobolaji Ogunlende during the 16 Days of Activism Campaign



Sterling One Foundation staff at one of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign events.

2023 CLIMATE ACTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

The effects of climate change have continued to evolve around the world. In different countries of the world, new challenges not limited to flooding, food insecurity, changes in weather patterns are being experienced, and are altering the way of life in each of those countries.

Our focus at the Sterling One Foundation is two-pronged featuring climate positive projects to aid with environmental sustainability, alongside behavioural change projects that encourage practices such as recycling and proper waste management.

Flag-off Of the SOF Agro-forestry Project and Tree Planting Exercise

Amidst escalating concerns about climate change's dire consequences, we initiated a pivotal step towards environmental conservation and climate action through the official flag-off and launch of the Agro-Forestry Project, termed "SACAP (SOF Agroforestry for Climate Action Project)" (Sterling One Foundation Agroforestry for Climate Action Project). The grand event unfolded in the picturesque town of BWARI, Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

Environmental Vulnerability:

Nigeria grapples with considerable vulnerability to climate change, ranking among the ten most susceptible nations as per the 2014 World Climate Change Vulnerability Index. The country faces increased frequency and intensity of severe weather events, rising sea levels, and regional temperature escalation, notably impacting the North-East and North-West regions.

Our Climate Mitigation Efforts:

We responded to this pressing issue by orchestrating the SACAP initiative, targeting environmental conservation, with a particular focus on schools and adjacent communities. The launch, hosted at the Federal Government Girls College, Bwari (FGGC Bwari Abuja), drew over 500 attendees, including dignitaries, partners, community leaders, educators, and enthusiastic students.

SACAP's Objectives and Significance:

The SACAP initiative serves as a multi-dimensional environmental sustainability and climate advocacy program, aiming to create a lasting impact by nurturing the environment and raising awareness within educational institutions and their surrounding communities.

SACAP is dedicated to inspiring comprehensive strategies and solutions to tackle the climate challenge, with a clear focus on both greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation and climate change adaptation. Central to SACAP's sustainable response model is the adoption of agroforestry— a water-wise agricultural production management system. Agroforestry not only mitigates the impacts of climate change but also facilitates adaptation, making it a robust solution to climate challenges. Furthermore, it stimulates broad agro- industrial growth and enhances socio-economic vibrancy within the communities it serves.

Students of FGGC Bwari during the Inauguration of the Young Foresters' Club at their school



By creating and launching the Young Foresters' Club as a flagship initiative, SACAP aims to engage young climate champions actively. This unique platform empowers children and youth to be catalysts for climate-resilience and sustainable development. Through community-based education, participation, and empowerment, the club imparts knowledge about local climate issues and potential solutions, enabling its members to become change agents within their communities and beyond. The love and affection for nature cultivated within the Young Foresters' Club is instrumental in helping children and youth understand and combat misinformation about climate, the environment, and sustainability. By integrating the ideals of sustainability and balance into their way of life, the initiative ensures a sustainable and resilient future.



Dignitaries, partners, community leaders, educators, and enthusiastic students at the SACAP Flag-Off

For 2023, 9600 economic trees were planted across 24 Unity schools in 18 states and the FCT with over 10,000 students impacted, nurseries developed, and Young foresters club established

AFR10 NATIONAL EVENT ON 100 MILLION TREE PLANTING AND LAND RESTORATION

The African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) convened the Africa restoring 100 million hectares of deforested and degraded land by 2030 summit on March 2, 2023. We actively participated in this crucial initiative aiming to restore productivity to degraded landscapes, enhance livelihoods, and contribute to global sustainability goals.

The summit addressed pressing environmental challenges, including climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation. Globally, at least 100 million hectares of productive land faced degradation annually between 2015 and 2019, affecting 1.3 billion people. Agricultural expansion remains a key driver, responsible for 90% of deforestation, particularly impacting food systems and contributing to global deforestation rates.

Key Objectives of AFR100:

AFR100 aligns with international frameworks such as the Bonn Challenge, African Resilient Landscapes Initiative (ARLI), African Union Agenda 2063, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Its domestic alignment supports Nigeria's targets, including diversification of the economy, achieving land degradation neutrality by 2030 (SDG 15.3), and meeting the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) under the Paris Agreement.

Impact and Goals:

- **Summit Objectives:** The summit aimed to restore 100 million hectares of deforested and degraded land across Africa by 2030.
- **Contribution to SDGs:** AFR100 directly contributes to SDG 15 by conserving life on land, combating desertification, and restoring terrestrial ecosystems.
- **National Alignment:** Supporting Nigeria's commitment to diversify the economy, achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030, and meet its climate targets under the Paris Agreement.
- **Community Engagement:** AFR100 involves national governments, public-

private partnerships, international programs, and local communities, fostering inclusive participation in landscape restoration initiatives.

Our Commitment:

- **Enlightenment Programs:** Our commitment extends to fostering public awareness and engagement in environmental conservation. Initiatives aim to combat public apathy and promote sustainable development principles among grassroots communities.

Participation in the Summit: Our active involvement in the AFR100 summit signifies our dedication to addressing environmental challenges and promoting sustainable land restoration efforts.

Our participation in the AFR100 summit represents our commitment to environmental conservation and sustainable development in Nigeria. By aligning with global and domestic targets, we are actively contributing to addressing land degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate change, fostering a more resilient and sustainable future.

THE GREEN ADVOCATE PROJECT: A CLIMATE EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL IN LAGOS STATE

- In August 2023, we initiated the Green Advocate Project, a comprehensive Climate Education Book project aimed at cultivating climate-conscious behaviors among secondary school students and teachers in Lagos. The primary objective is to promote environmentally healthy habits, including waste disposal and recycling, among students across 40 schools.

Objectives and Impact:

The project's core goal is to impact over 2,000 students and 500 teachers through the implementation of climate change education initiatives. Recognizing the importance of such education, the project aims to nurture a generation that is well-versed in climate-related issues and equipped to adopt sustainable practices.

Educational Significance:

As highlighted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2021, climate change education plays a pivotal role in developing effective responses to climate challenges. It aids students in understanding the causes, effects, and coping mechanisms associated with climate change, promoting a shift toward more sustainable lifestyles.

Partnerships and Progress:

The Green Advocate Project operates in partnership with the Africa Clean-up Initiative and Giving, fostering collaboration for a broader reach and more significant impact. Currently, the project has made significant strides, impacting 27 schools, reaching 1,899 students, and involving 200 teachers in educational sessions.

The Green Advocate Project signifies our commitment to climate education and environmental sustainability. Through strategic partnerships and targeted initiatives, the project aims to instill climate-conscious behaviors in young minds, empowering them to become proactive advocates for a sustainable future.



Sterling One Foundation's Project Lead, Godfrey Orji engaging students on the lessons from the Green Advocate Book



Cross Section of Students Receiving the Green Advocate Book



The students being taught by our trainers to be environmentally conscious children



Students taking the pledge to be environmentally conscious citizens.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY 2023

We Commemorated World Environment Day 2023 in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Green Space Depot. With dedicated initiatives aimed at combating plastic pollution and promoting community clean-up efforts.

Community Clean-Up Impact:

During the Community Clean-Up event held in Lagos Island, an impressive milestone was achieved with the successful removal of 5,000 pieces of plastic waste from the streets. These efforts signify a significant step toward fostering a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable environment in the region.

Collective Action for Lasting Change:

We firmly believe in the power of collective action in driving substantial and enduring change. Through collaborative efforts with partners and local



Community Clean-Up in Lagos Island by Community Volunteers

communities, we endeavor to make a meaningful impact in combating plastic pollution, fostering a sense of shared responsibility for environmental preservation.

Our Dedication to Environmental Causes:

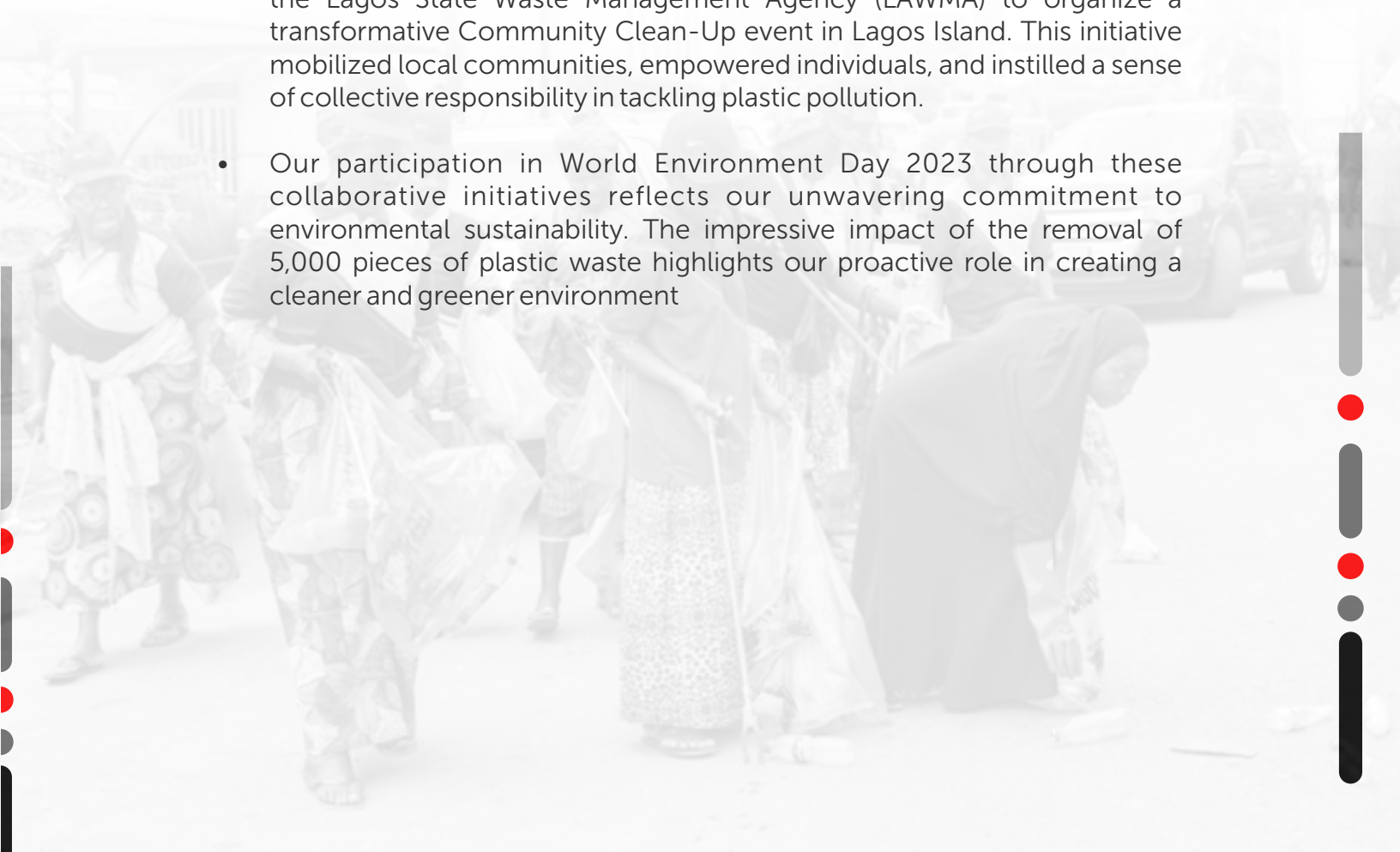
We remain wholly committed to addressing environmental challenges by leveraging various initiatives and promoting the principles of a circular economy. By championing the theme "Solution to Plastic Pollution" and echoing the clarion call to "Beat Plastic Pollution," we showcase our unwavering dedication to safeguarding the environment for future generations.

Theme and Objectives:

The chosen theme, Solution to Plastic Pollution, aligns with our commitment to address environmental challenges. The slogan, "Beat Plastic Pollution," echoes our dedication to safeguarding the environment for future generations.

The Project Highlights:

- In the Federal Capital Territory, a Nature Sensitization and Walk event in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Environment took place on June 3rd, 2023, preceding the main commemoration on June 5th, 2023.
- In Lagos, we partnered with Green Space Depot and received support from the Lagos State Waste Management Agency (LAWMA) to organize a transformative Community Clean-Up event in Lagos Island. This initiative mobilized local communities, empowered individuals, and instilled a sense of collective responsibility in tackling plastic pollution.
- Our participation in World Environment Day 2023 through these collaborative initiatives reflects our unwavering commitment to environmental sustainability. The impressive impact of the removal of 5,000 pieces of plastic waste highlights our proactive role in creating a cleaner and greener environment.





The CEO of Sterling One Foundation Olapeju Ibekwe joining staff of the Lagos State Waste Management Agency (LAWMA) to mark the World Environment Day with a clean up exercise at Lagos Island



Volunteers receiving gifts for their participation in the World Environment Day cleanup on Lagos Island



In our relentless pursuit of combating land degradation, curbing pollution, and safeguarding our precious oceans, we embarked on a series of impactful beach cleanup programs throughout 2023. Partnering with esteemed organizations including the African Clean Up Initiative, Giving.ng, Sterling Bank, and Elegushi Foundation, we orchestrated a multifaceted approach to addressing environmental challenges head-on.

Key Activities include Community Engagement, Capacity Building, Waste Collection, Sorting, Volunteer Mobilization, and Beach Cleanup.

Community Engagement: Our efforts commenced with robust community engagement. Through interactive programs and informative sessions, we galvanized communities to become champions of environmental conservation. This engagement formed the bedrock of our initiative, fostering a shared sense of responsibility for our coastlines.

Capacity Building: Empowerment through knowledge and tools was central to our strategy. We conducted targeted capacity-building sessions, equipping volunteers with the skills necessary to tackle waste management effectively. These sessions transformed volunteers into proactive agents of change within their localities.

Waste Collection and Sorting: An integral facet of our campaign involved meticulous waste collection and sorting. Volunteers diligently combed the beaches, collecting and sorting litter to prevent further contamination. This action not only restored the pristine beauty of these beaches but also protected the fragile marine ecosystems.

Beach Cleanup: The pinnacle of our initiative was the hands-on beach cleanup. With passion and dedication, our volunteers, armed with resolve, scoured the shores of various beaches across Lagos. Notably, our teams

undertook cleanup activities at the renowned Elegushi Beach and Alpha Beach, revitalizing these coastal treasures.

Outcome and Vision:

Through our collective efforts and tireless dedication, the beaches once marred by pollution now stand as pristine havens of natural beauty. Our impact extends beyond cleaner shores; it echoes in the renewed hope for healthier oceans, vibrant ecosystems, and a heightened sense of environmental stewardship among communities.

The success of this initiative underscores the potential of collective action in preserving our planet. As we reflect on the impact achieved, we reaffirm our commitment to continue these crucial endeavors and inspire a future where our natural landscapes thrive, and our oceans remain teeming with life.

- Over 200 individuals directly involved in the cleanup efforts and we conducted comprehensive cleanup activities across various beaches in Lagos, notably the Elegushi Beach and Alpha Beach.

ALPHA BEACH CLEAN-UP



CEO Sterling One Foundation with Hon. Olakunle Rotimi-Akodu, Special Adviser on Environment to the Governor of Lagos State, Representative of the LAWMA MD and some management staff of Sterling Bank.



Volunteers gathering waste collected for sorting



Plastic waste collected being weighed

ELEGUSHI BEACH CLEAN-UP



Staff of Sterling Bank Plc and other volunteers participating in the Beach CleanUp



CEO of the Sterling One Foundation, Mrs. Olapjeu Ibekwe, alongside the Managing Director of Sterling Bank, Mr. Abubakar Suleiman, other management staff of Sterling Bank and members of the Elegushi Royal Family and Lagos State Government Reps



Courtesy visit to the Palace of the Oba Elegushi, Oba Saheed Ademola Elegushi

SUSTAINABILITY MEDIA TRAINING ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND THE SDGS

Amidst the pursuit of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Environmental Sustainability, media's pivotal role in advocacy, awareness, and reporting remains undeniable.

The Sustainability Media Training, an offshoot of the African Social Impact Summit (ASIS) 2023 and the commemoration of the International Day of Climate Action, unfolded a series of impactful events aimed at empowering media professionals. Significant facet of this endeavor engaged 50 journalists from Lagos (representing Southwest Nigeria) and 25 media professionals from Yobe/Maiduguri (representing Northeast Nigeria). The two-day hybrid training on November 8th and 9th, 2023, showcased a holistic approach to fortifying media expertise in reporting Climate Change and SDGs.

Training Highlights:

- Noteworthy participation of seasoned facilitators and journalists from diverse backgrounds enriched the training sessions.
- Insightful discussions encompassed international best practices in Climate Change reporting, emphasizing the media's role in raising Climate Change awareness.
- Renowned media figures such as Fidelis Mbah from Al Jazeera and



Akinwale Ojetimi shared their expertise, illuminating effective Climate Change reporting strategies.

- Sterling Bank's Dele Faseemo underscored the bank's impactful sustainability initiatives, aligning with Climate Change and social impact domains.

Learnings and Next Steps:

The resounding success of the pilot phase fuels the demand for expanded and comprehensive training sessions in 2024, spreading across Nigeria's diverse regions. Post-event evaluations will steer future training initiatives, ensuring continuous improvement.

Future Endeavors:

A dedicated community of practice has been established, fostering ongoing guidance and resource sharing among trained journalists. The training will be scaled to other regions starting from the first quarter of 2024

Outcomes and Achievements:

- Engaged 75 journalists from Lagos, Gombe, Yobe, and Maiduguri, facilitating a comprehensive learning experience across varying regional landscapes.
- Garnered substantial media traction, with 51 news reports highlighting the training, spotlighting Sterling Bank and Sterling One Foundation in 46 post-event press releases, four feature stories, and a TV broadcast on TVC.



2023

FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMS

Food Security ranks as one of the most critical sectors where we operate at the Sterling One Foundation, and in recent years, food insecurity has worsened in Nigeria. To help tackle this problem we launched Project Ladder.

SOF PROJECT LADDER



Flag off of Project Ladder in Delta State

In Nigeria, challenges along the food value chain pose significant barriers to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2) of zero hunger by 2030. These challenges, exacerbated by factors like climate change, conflict, and pandemics, disrupt food production and accessibility, hindering progress toward vital SDGs.

To address these issues and contribute to food security, we launched Project Ladder in flood-affected communities in Oko in Oshimili South LGA and Azagba in Ndokwa East LGA. The project empowered 400 smallholder farmers, with 80% being women, by providing 100,000 'high yield' cassava stems. This intervention aimed to revitalize livelihoods severely impacted by the floods, offering a beacon of hope to communities facing adversity.

The tangible impact of this initiative was remarkable, lifting these communities out of despair and restoring their confidence in a brighter future. The beneficiaries expressed heartfelt gratitude for the timely support, reflecting overwhelmingly positive testimonials.

Through the cultivation of 80 acres of farmland, the project anticipates a yield of 450-520 tons of cassava tubers upon harvest (with proper cultivation practices). Furthermore, the initiative aims to produce 800,000 to 1,200,000 high yield stems for farming in the upcoming planting season, contributing significantly to increased production and livelihood restoration.

AFRICA SOCIAL IMPACT SUMMIT 2023:

The Africa Social Impact Summit 2023 served as a pivotal platform, aligning with the universal call for collective action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), notably emphasizing SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals. This Summit recognized the essential role of partnerships among governments, private sectors, civil society, and development communities in achieving a sustainable future for all.



German Consul General, Weert Borner delivering a Goodwill Message at ASIS 2023

How we are Addressing the Global Challenges:

The post-pandemic landscape presents significant challenges for low and middle-income countries, notably escalating external debt, inflation, and fiscal constraints. To navigate these challenges, concerted efforts are required to mobilize resources, fulfill development assistance commitments, and leverage existing and additional resources for technology, finance, and capacity building.



Mr. Abubakar Suleiman, Board Member, Sterling One Foundation delivering opening remarks at ASIS 2023

The ASIS Objectives and Achievements:

The Summit focused on bolstering partnerships and fostering expertise-driven solutions to accelerate impact investments in key sectors such as Climate Solutions, Circular Economy, Agriculture, Renewable Energy, Education, Health, and WASH, aligning with the SDGs' objectives.

The summit emphasized the pivotal role of stakeholder collaborations in driving impactful change through the establishment of multi-stakeholder platforms for collaborative efforts, facilitating knowledge sharing and best practices exchange, and fostering regular dialogue among stakeholders. It highlighted the significance of targeted investments in critical sectors such as infrastructure, healthcare, and education, the importance of enhancing financial access for marginalized communities and establishing social safety nets to mitigate the impact of economic downturns.

It also highlighted the need to enhance data collection and reporting for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) progress, underscoring the critical role of data-driven decision-making in tracking progress and ensuring the successful attainment of SDG targets. It echoed a strong emphasis on knowledge sharing and innovation, with policy recommendations supporting research and development efforts to address specific challenges.

In addition to the policy recommendations, key insights emerged from the panel sessions, which included experts from various sectors. The panels highlighted the importance of collaborative action, inclusivity, technological proficiency, differentiated tutor payments, curriculum alignment with industry demands, depoliticization of education, private sector collaboration, and the urgent need to address the learning crisis and enhance youth employability. The summit concluded with a call to action, urging African countries to implement these policy recommendations and next steps. By collectively embracing these strategies, Africa can chart a course towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and realizing a prosperous and equitable continent by 2030.

Some of ASIS 2023 immediate Outcomes and Impact are.

- **Increased Impact Investment:** Notably, there was a significant surge in impact investment for critical social enterprises. Over 200 million was raised during the summit, indicating substantial financial support towards impactful initiatives.

- **ASIS Deal Room and Exhibitors:** The Summit featured 18 founders pitching at the ASIS Deal Room and over 30 exhibitors, including global entities like Microsoft, UNDP, and E-Cube, reflecting global recognition and involvement in fostering sustainability.
- **Global Participation:** ASIS 2023 witnessed significant global participation with over 4000 registrations from 45+ countries and 1500 attendees physically present. This diverse participation highlights the summit's global reach and collaborative efforts.
- **Partnership Expansion:** The Summit successfully added over 15 new partners, including 28 private sector organizations, fostering a robust network for sustained impact.

Africa Social Impact Summit 2023 was a testament to collaborative efforts and a shared commitment towards achieving the SDGs, particularly emphasizing SDG 17.

With substantial financial commitments, extensive global participation, and a diversified partnership base, the Summit sets a precedent for fostering inclusive partnerships and driving impactful change across critical sectors in Africa's sustainable development journey.

The spirit of collaboration, innovation, and transformative change ignited at ASIS 2023 and will undoubtedly continue to guide Africa's journey towards a brighter future.

PANEL SESSIONS/BREAKOUT SESS



DAY 2

PHOTO REELS

DEAL ROOM/ PANEL SESSIONS



IMPACT REPORT

T w e n t y T w e n t y T h r e e





HUMANITARIAN AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

The Ramadan Food Project

In the heart of Ramadan, amidst the spirit of giving and compassion, we embarked on a journey to spread joy and sustenance to communities across Nigeria. Partnering with the Giving.ng platform and the Widi-Jalo Foundation, we orchestrated a campaign that transcended boundaries, reaching Sokoto, Abuja, Lagos, Kano, Borno, and Kwara.

A Mission of Generosity

With a commitment to making a tangible impact, the Ramadan Food Project was initiated, as a noble endeavor to provide essential sustenance during this sacred time. The team assembled food packs, carefully curated to nourish, and support families during the holy month.

Touching Lives Across States

The reach of this initiative was vast, touching the lives of communities in six states. A total of 322 food packs were distributed among these regions, symbolizing not just nourishment but a gesture of solidarity and care.

Beyond Food: Embracing Generosity

The impact didn't stop at food packs. Generosity poured in the form of soft drink donations, a gesture that added a delightful touch to the distributions in Lagos. A total of 149 packs of soft drinks were received and shared, enhancing the joy of sharing and breakfast together.

Empowering Communities, Fostering Unity

Through these initiatives, we illustrated the power of community support and unity. Regardless of geographic distances, the essence of Giving and caring echoed across regions, fostering a sense of togetherness and mutual support during a time of spiritual significance.

The Ripple Effect of Kindness

The impact of the Ramadan Food Project extended far beyond the numbers. It brought smiles, eased burdens, and strengthened the bonds within communities. Each food pack and every donation symbolized a thread in the intricate fabric of generosity, weaving together stories of compassion and humanity.

With our partner, the Alternative Bank, over 322 indigent persons were reached across Six states (Lagos, Abuja, Borno, Lagos, Kwara, Kano and Sokoto).

40 DAYS OF GIVING

In collaboration with Giving.ng and Shoprite we embarked on an inspiring journey of the "40 Days of Giving" campaign. This unique initiative aimed not only to spread the spirit of generosity but also to redefine giving as an everyday act, transcending the boundaries of traditional seasonal charity.

Addressing Key Goals:

Aligned with the Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) 1,2,3 and 8, our campaign directly addressed critical global challenges. It focused on eradication poverty, ensuring zero hunger, promoting good health and well-being, and fostering decent work and economic growth

Context and Purpose:

Amid economic downturns, many households faced reduced disposable incomes, intensifying the struggle to secure basic food items for their families. The “40 Days of Giving” campaign emerged as a beacon of hope during these challenging times, underscoring the significance of collective generosity.

Beyond Seasonal Giving:

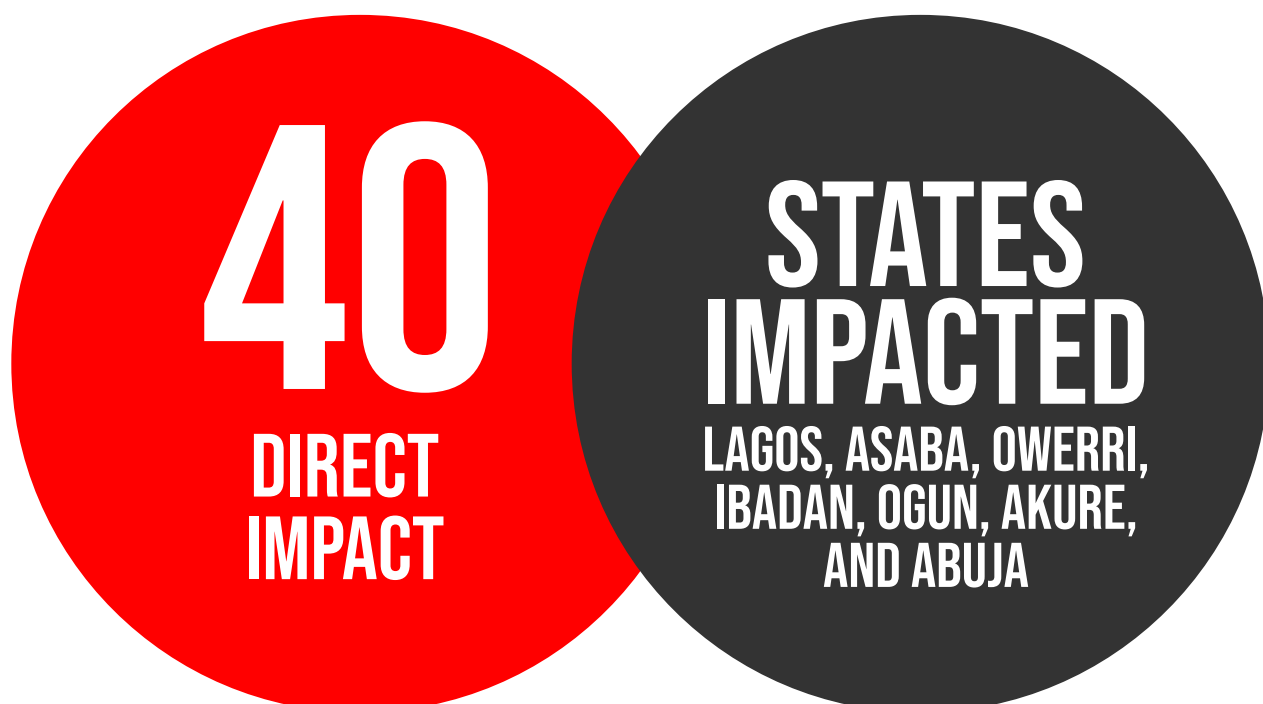
While the festive season often sparks acts of kindness, our campaign aimed to extend this culture of giving beyond traditional holidays. Recognizing the power of collective kindness and its contagious nature, our goal was to inspire a chain reaction of giving that transcends temporal boundaries.

Inspiring Generosity

The campaign aimed to encourage people and corporate entities to partake in giving, emphasizing that kindness knows no season. By promoting this belief, we intended to create a ripple effect that prompts more individuals and organizations to engage openly in acts of generosity.

Impact and Outcomes:

The campaign spanned across 6 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), engaging communities in Lagos, Asaba, Owerri, Ibadan, Ogun, Akure and Abuja. Throughout this extensive reach, the campaign successfully inspired individuals and corporations to partake in acts of kindness, spreading a message of ongoing generosity beyond the traditional giving seasons.





40 Days of Giving Beneficiaries receiving their Gifts



More Beneficiaries from the 40 days of giving at Shoprite

SOF CAPACITY BUILDING WEBINARS WITH NNNGO

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NGO Development Series

Positioning for Funding
in 2023 and beyond

Jan 13th '23
10am
zoom

OYEJISI B. OLUSEYI
Executive Director, Nigerian Network of NGOs

MR. JOSEPH IDAHOSA AMENAGHAWON
Strategy and Finance Advisor, SOFNET Foundation, Development Expert

MRS OLAPEJU IBEKWE
CEO, Leading One Foundation

MR. BUNU MUHAMMAD BUKAR
Development Expert and Consultant

DR. UMAR ABULLAHI MAINA
Executive Group Co., Sub-Saharan, Networks of Civil Society Organizations, Barista Trade

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Effective Program Planning & Management
as a Panacea for Delivering Sustainable Project Outcomes

1 DAY TO GO

Speakers

Chinedu Mbonu
Program Manager, Fundraising, Fundraising, Fundraising, Fundraising, Fundraising, Fundraising, Fundraising, Fundraising, Fundraising, Fundraising

Dr. Arowolo Ayoola
Co-Founder, Data Lead Africa

Olapeju Ibekwe
CEO, Leading One Foundation

Oyejisi B. Oluseyi
Executive Director, Nigerian Network of NGOs (NNGO)

June 27, 2023 10am
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NGO Development Series

Compliance Framework for NGOs:

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Speakers



**Olufemi M.
OLARINDE**

Technical Assistant on Tax Policy to
the Executive Chairman, FIRS



**Olapeju
IBEKWE**

CEO, Sterling One Foundation



**Dr. Adedeji
ADEMEFUN**

Development Expert,
PeterRocks



**Oyeibisi, B.
OLUSEYI**

Executive Director,
Nigeria Network of NGOs

Moderator



**Friday 17th
Nov., 2023**



**10am
Prompt**

Register here

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AWARDS & RECOGNITION



Our efforts in 2023 to make life better for more Nigerians, and Africans, as well as our bold leadership towards accelerating action on SDGs in Africa was rewarded with accolades from the African Quality Achievement Awards team, Women Impacting Nigeria, the Environmental Sustainability Conference, Expo and Awards (ECOSEA) and the African Leadership Review.

We were recognized as Africa's Most Outstanding Quality Social Development Foundation of the Year 2023, while our leadership received awards as Non-Profit Sustainability Champion of the Year, NGO Personality of the Year and Top 100 Women Impacting Africa.



Some awards won by the Sterling One Foundation Team.