



SOF News Letter Series two, 17thSept. 2015

The Sidi Osho Foundation

News Letter Series Two

The SOF Enterprise, Skills and Leadership Project

**Held at the NOUN McCarthy Centre,
Obalende, Lagos State**

17th September 2015

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Message from the President of Sidi Osho Foundation (SOF)

As universally recognized, beyond income measurements, lack of access to education, nutritious food, health care, employment, water and housing are all indicators of crushing poverty. Though Africa's impressive economic performance over the past decade has rekindled hopes for the continent's future, in Nigeria however, despite the relative impressive economic growth over the last 10 years, unemployment and the incidence of poverty has worsened since 2004. The figures recently released by the National Bureau of Statistics suggest that the incidence of poverty in Nigeria worsened between 2004 and 2010.

SOF News Letter Series two, 17thSept. 2015

The report indicates that the number of Nigerians living below poverty line of \$1 a day, rose from 68.7m to 112.5m (63.7% rise in poverty incidence) during the period while the population rose from 139.2m to 158.6m (13.9% rise in population) over the same period. However, during the same period, Nigeria's economy grew strongly at an average annual growth rate in excess of 6.6%, making the country the 5th fastest growing economy in the World in 2010 at 7.87% real growth rate. The above represents the paradox of growth in the face of poverty and inequality.

The challenge for Nigeria and by extension, Africa, is to ensure that this paper growth translates into effective poverty reduction, job creation wealth making and narrowing inequalities. Today for instance, African youths represent a disproportionate 60 percent of the continent's unemployed, and of these 40 million youths, 22 million, many of them women, have given up on finding a job. In countries such as Cameroon, Cape Verde, Ghana, Rwanda and Zambia, poverty is at least three times higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

There is no doubt that the perennial chaos and human rights abuses of the gravest kinds which plagued the world in the last five decades have left indelible marks on humanity. In the African region, in addition to the debilitating effect of internecine wars and human rights abuses, the people of Africa continue to suffer incalculable harm from the prolonged effects of hunger, poverty and disease. The AIDS/HIV pandemic and other communicable diseases have ravaged the continent while the nurturing of ethnicism has snowballed into genocide and large scale atrocities.

African governments, leaders and concerned stakeholders continue their search for an environment conducive for freedom, equality, justice and dignity of the people of Africa.

Inspired by the great achievements and legacy of the iconic Mandela on the African continent, SOF was established to impact the lives of the underprivileged and underserved, as well contribute immensely to the efforts made by concerned stakeholders over the years.

As we stand at the threshold of a new century, it is not only timely but also expedient to conscientiously begin to find lasting solutions and establish inclusive development initiatives that will advance humanity. SOF, in collaboration with other stakeholders will provide a world of equal opportunities for families, women, and youth through our development programs on education, food security, health, poverty reduction, women and youth empowerment.

It is my fervent hope that with your cooperation and support, SOF will attain its set objectives to improve and impact the lives of Africans and Africa at large.

Sidi Osho Foundation

Vision, Mission and Projects

Introduction

Poverty has been shown to be on the increase in Nigeria and other African Countries where the population has been estimated to be living below poverty level is over 70%. All the Sectors of the Economy are affected by this poverty level.

Sidi Osho Foundation (SOF) is a private, voluntary, non-profit, non-faith based, non-governmental Organization based in Lagos, Nigeria.

SOF was conceived in 2012 by **Prof Sidi Osho** who is President.

Description of SOF Logo

Interlocking Human Beings which means unity, performance, cross organizational relationships, clear focus and the show of power. Apart from promotion of friendship, connecting and together building communities, nations and ensuring sustainability. The Color **Red** is the color of action, inner power and strength, optimism, connectivity and social activity. While the **Yellow** color is the brightness of the Sun and creativity, it stimulates the mind and encourages good business acumen

The Logo denotes good health and growth and vitality, a healing color with sense of generosity and compassion and the cultivation of trust, respect and integrity.

Vision: To provide a world of equal opportunities for families, women, communities and youth through empowerment for the realization and maximization of their potentials towards a better future.

Mission: To promote and contribute to the growth of human development and alleviate poverty in Africa through these development initiatives.

SOF Projects

1. EDUCATION

- “ To provide leadership, skills and enterprise training to Nigerian youths in all higher institution.
- “ To provide access to basic and higher education for women, children and youths.
- “ To provide access to higher education through free-tuition initiatives and scholarships.
- “ To promote education and educational initiatives at primary, secondary and tertiary levels.
- “ To promote and provide Universal Basic Education through initiatives and policies.
- “

2. ENTREPRENEURIAL

- “ To provide entrepreneurial and vocational skills to women, young graduates and youths
- “ To provide financial and technical support for small and medium-scale projects for graduates and youths
- “ To assist families and communities in identifying economically viable enterprises for income generation, in order to provide technical and financial support for their implementation.

3. FOOD SECURITY

- “ To provide sustainable agricultural production systems, food security and qualitative nutrition initiatives
- “ To promote good nutrition, agricultural practices and nutritional status.

4. HEALTH

- “ To provide and promote quality and safe health care delivery
- “ To reduce maternal and infant mortality and morbidity

5. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

To provide leadership skills for youths, as well as mentor youths as responsible and future leaders for the African continent

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- “ To develop a global partnerships for sustainable development

7. GENDER AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

- “ To empower children, women, youths, families & communities in developing countries for a better future
- “ To empower families and communities towards sustainable development
- “ To eradicate negative social and cultural factors affecting women and children
- “ To stabilize and enhance family structures and relationships, in order to promote discipline, leadership, and support projects such as, “Girl-Child Scheme”, “the Boy Drop out” and “The Children in Distress.”

SOF Core Values

Sidi Osho Foundation (SOF), is a non-profit, non-faith-based and non-governmental organization, that is geared towards encouraging public mindedness, accountability, truthfulness and transparency in the society. SOF aims to empower and transform lives in different sectors and to ensure that respect for human rights is adequately attained. We aim to promote and contribute to the growth of human development; alleviate poverty in Africa and impact lives.

REPORT OF THE SOF ENTERPRISE, SKILLS AND LEADERSHIP PROJECT HELD AT THE NOUN MCCARTHY CENTRE 17TH SEPTEMBER 2015

The **Sidi Osho Foundation (SOF)** organized an Enterprise, skills and Leadership Project on Thursday 17th September 2015 at The NOUN McCarthy Centre Obalende, Lagos.

The **SOF Enterprise, Skills and Leadership Project** was created to promote capacity building, employment opportunities and job creation for Nigerian youths and the National Open University students.

The principal objective of this Project is to promote **Entrepreneurship, Employability, Leadership, Job creation and Skills Development** in accordance with both parties collaboration principles, with due regard to the continued pursuit of SOF's mission and strategic goals.

The criteria to be eligible for this loan is firstly, becoming a **member of an SOF club** and secondly **opening an account with the NOUN Micro-finance bank**.

This project has as its defining ambition:

1. Employability and Job Creation;
2. Entrepreneurship training and entrepreneurial skills development;

3. Skills acquisition and Knowledge transfer;
4. Quality Assurance Unit periodic evaluation through research;
5. Research collaboration and publication and
6. Generation of IGR through the NOUN Micro-finance

These free, optional and certified training will avail participants opportunity to apply for a credit facility from the NOUN Micro-Finance bank limited.

17th & 19th September 2015-SOF Enterprise, Skills and Leadership Workshop held at the NOUN Macarthy Centre Obalende.

Prof. Sidi Osho **the first speaker** after her brief introduction stated areas, which the project will focus on:

In the course of her presentation she stated that this initiative was as a result of two (2) major factors.

- (i) A research study on education program was carried out across the nation and the result of the research revealed that Nigeria has over six hundred and ninety-nine higher institutions including: Universities, Polytechnics, Mono-technics, Colleges of education and many others
- (ii) All these listed higher institutions release about 7.5 million students into labor market but the available jobs for all these graduates is merely 4 million. This tells us that over 3.5 million graduates will not be employed every year. Furthermore, with the economic status in Nigeria presently, it is clear and certain that there will be huge unemployment levels ahead.

Prof. Sidi Osho in her presentation also opened the mind of the students to qualities that one needs to possess in order to be a successful entrepreneur, which include:

Now that we have this special project, SOF, NOUN and the NOUN microfinance has come together to form an alliance, the NOUN students will not face unemployment. Surveys have revealed that many people have undergone different types of skills acquisition training but the challenge they always have is finance.

SOF News Letter Series two, 17thSept. 2015

Subsequently, SOF and NOUN came up with the initiatives of training students and helping them finance their businesses through the NOUN Micro-Finance bank.



Finally, Prof. Sidi Osho gave several analyses to making money without looking or waiting for a white-collar job and concluded by advising the participants to key in to these initiatives and to take their future into their own hands.

Mr. **Sheu Abba** the **second speaker** was represented by Mr. Ajayi Ajibola . He is the Managing Director of the NOUN Microfinance bank.

In his presentation, he appreciated Prof. Sidi Osho for a job well done. He then affirmed the partnership between **NOUN MFB** and **SOF** to actualize the objective of the foundation. He also confirmed that the rate of unemployment in Nigeria identified by Prof. Sidi Osho had become an issue. This issue gave Prof. Sidi Osho cause to come up with this project that will tackle unemployment in Nigeria. The idea behind this program is to see that the bank can assist students financially on whichever businesses they come up with.

NOUN MFB has an agreement with other banks such as Zenith bank and several other banks all over the country to guarantee any interested persons with an account in NOUN MFB, with a loan, as long as they are eligible for the loan. He further explained that the first stage is to partner with SOF by becoming a member of an SOF Club after which an account has to be opened with the NOUN MFB.

Furthermore, the operational strategy of NOUN MFB is to see to setting students up with loans after they have undergone training with the Sidi Osho foundation for twelve weeks. The bank will then set up a team that will investigate the business ideas of any student, to ensure that they're eligible to receive a NOUN MFB loan.

He then concluded by appreciating everyone present and the entire organizers of the program, he also encouraged the students to start thinking of our how they will become an employer of labor and not become victims of unemployment because NOUN MFB and SOF are ready with lots of projects that can help achieve any heart desire.

Mr. Ajibola Suleiman **the third speaker** who is also a NOUN Alumni, in his presentation explained how he came out of unemployment and become an employer of labor.

SOF News Letter Series two, 17thSept. 2015

He explained that after he graduated from university, he considered all the things he could do to start earning money on his own without looking for any white-collar job. He then attended skills acquisition trainings and after the trainings, there was no financial

back up. This made him go through difficulties but he did not give up on his dream. He then congratulated the participants seated for attending the workshop because this opportunity will ensure that they never face the issues he did when trying to access funds. He then gave a word of encouragement to students, to put in their best and start thinking of keying into this wonderful opportunity to earn money right from school because life after school is full of challenges and it is only these initiatives that help.

Mr. Robert Ekat **the Fourth speaker** who is also NOUN alumni, a writer and a business man, explained that he started earning money from 200 level because of his written skills. He became successful as a businessman because he was able to identify the kind of business that would work for him.

He further encouraged the participants to chase after their dreams and explained that the reason why he became successful in his business line is because he was able to get the right people to work with.

He ended by telling the participants that to be successful in any line of business you need the right set of people to work with.

C. Conclusion / Question and Answer

The summit concluded with an interactive session. Participants asked questions and answers were provided accordingly.





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SOF News Letter Series two, 17thSept. 2015







QUOTES

Bob Ekat " *Ordinary man walks on the ground and sees nothing while an extraordinary man walks on the same ground and sees opportunities*".

Ajibola Obafemi " *if you don't build your dreams someone will hire you to build theirs*
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