A Real Man Is Hackathon

BY SHILLAH RAYMOND

YMCA Africa in partnership with Swahilipot Hub held a Hackathon for #ARealManIs Project from 18th April 2018. The Hackathon was a three-day event that challenged participant’s creativity and imagination towards creating a safe platform for addressing Violence Against Women. The participants developed a platform that will be used to educate, share insights and experiences and also report cases about violence against women. The best techie won a 3 month contract with Africa Alliance of YMCAs, to finalize and promote their proposed platform. The event was held at Swahilipot Hub offices in Mombasa.

Since January 2016, the Africa Alliance of YMCAs (AAYMCA) has been implementing the #ARealManIs: Engaging Men and Boys to End Violence Against Women in selected sites in Kenya and Zambia. The project seeks to engage young men to actively participate in ending violence against women specifically physical, sexual and cyber violence. The project is also aimed at creating safer communities and work places. In both Zambia and Kenya, masculinity is commonly associated with, and proved through dominance and control of women. Through dialogue, role modelling and campaigns targeting young men, this project seeks to transform this hegemonic conception of manliness. #ARealManIs aims to end Violence against Women whether physical or virtual (online) and promoting Gender Equality and safer platforms.

The winners created an sms platform that will be used to share information about GBV against women and also an interactive blog that will be a one stop shop for all information about GBV. The winners will officially start their contract at AAYMCA from June.
YMCA OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED THE YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP HUB

BY MUSTAPHA MOMOH

YMCA Sierra Leone with support from Comic Relief UK on Monday, 30th April 2018 officially launched the Youth Entrepreneurship Hub in Makeni, Northern Sierra Leone. Giving an overview of the project, the Program Manager for the Queen’s Young Leaders (QYL) project simply called “Fostering innovative resilience and socially responsible youth entrepreneurship program in Sierra Leone, Mr. Joseph Aiah Kange said that the project is aimed at benefitting 1,230 beneficiaries across Freetown, Pujehun and Makeni for a period of three years which started in January 2017 and will end in December 2020. This will provide training to young people in computer skills, entrepreneurship, Literacy and numeracy.

He went on to highlight that the program will provide psycho-social support to beneficiaries in order to build their confidence and to restructure their mindsets in ICT and Business for development. “Six (6) National and International partners will be implementing this initiative”, Joseph Kange concluded.

Explaining the purpose of the launch, the National Secretary/CEO of YMCA SL, Mr. Christian Martyn Kamara stated that the Youth Entrepreneurship Hub is a space created for young people to be empowered using the transformative concept of our Subject to Citizen Philosophy.

Mr. Kamara further went on to thank the donors and implementing partners for their support and also thanked the beneficiaries for chosen to be part of this program in the next three years. He said nothing good comes to a man easily and hence called on the beneficiaries to be focused, determined and resilient in the quest for them to become entrepreneurs in the years to come. “They will at the end of the day be able to support themselves, families, communities and Sierra Leone at large”, Mr. Kamara reiterated.

Whilst passionate about the initiative, Mr. Kamara however called on the beneficiaries to consider themselves for being part of the selected few noting that a lot of their colleagues who applied weren’t selected.

Vanessa Thomas, the Partnership manager at Comic Relief UK who is working with the QYL Program further noted the QYL program is a partnership between Comic Relief, the Queen Elizabeth Jubilee Trust, the World Commonwealth society and the Cambridge University. She stated that the program seeks to empower and support young people to transform their lives and communities through entrepreneurship and leadership support.

Ms Vanessa and her team were overwhelmed by what YMCA SL has been able to do through this program as beneficiaries recounted their testimonies.
Youth entrepreneur hub Launched at YMCA Sierra Leone

In her statement on behalf of the people of Makeni, the Mayor Elect of Makeni City Council who also doubles as the keynote speaker, Her Worship Madam Sunkarie Kabba –kamara thanked YMCA SL and her donors for such a worthy venture and reaffirmed her continued support in ensuring the program achieve its desired goal.

Though excited by this initiative, Madam Mayor called on the beneficiaries to take full ownership of the program so that it will both benefit them and the people of Makeni.

Mr. Christian Martyn Kamara launches Youth Entrepreneurship Hub

Representatives from the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Traditional authorities were all thrilled for the program as they lavished praises on the work of YMCA Sierra Leone. The program ended by the cutting of the tape for the official opening of the Youth Entrepreneurship Hub by her Worship, Madam Sunkarie Kabba –kamara, Mayor of Makeni City.
Y Opportunities : YMCA-Togo expose ses opportunités à la jeunesse togolaise

CHRISTELLE MENSAAH

L’Union Chrétienne des Jeunes Gens/ Young Men’s Christian Association (UCJG/ YMCA) a tenu samedi, 05 mai 2018 à Lomé, une rencontre de jeune dénommée « Y Opportunities » visant à présenter à la jeunesse togolaise, les opportunités qu’offre cette association.

Une centaine de jeunes lycéens, étudiants, entrepreneurs, stagiaires qui ne sont pas encore membres de cette association dont l’âge est compris entre 17 et 35 ans ont pu découvrir cette association sous tous ses aspects durant les échanges.

L’organisation de cette rencontre vise entre autres une meilleure visibilité de YMCA-Togo pour une meilleure compréhension et adhésion de la jeunesse togolaise à cette association apolitique.

« Le YMCA-Togo a organisé cette rencontre à l’endroit de tous les jeunes du Togo pour leur faire découvrir l’association : ce que nous sommes, ce que nous faisons et ce que nous offrons comme opportunités. Le YMCA étant une structure de jeunes qui offre des formations, il était important que les jeunes sachent ce que nous faisons. Il était donc question de lier les jeunes aux opportunités que nous offrons », a indiqué Gérard Attohoun (secrétaire général de YMCA Togo).

« Le YMCA n’a ni argent ni emploi à offrir à la jeunesse, mais ce que nous offrons c’est la formation des jeunes à connaître leur capacité intellectuelle et leurs talents pour qu’ils puissent se découvrir eux-mêmes, créer des emplois et développer le leadership pour être de bons citoyens. L’année passée, nous avons pu atteindre 120.000 jeunes et cette année nous prévoyons atteindre 150.000 jeunes à travers des activités d’éducation à la citoyenneté, de la santé des jeunes, d’emplois et entrepreneuriat des jeunes et la justice des jeunes. Au YMCA, nous cultivons des valeurs clés que sont l’honnêteté et l’engagement », a précisé le secrétaire général. Y Opportunities, c’est aussi un partage d’expérience des jeunes leaders du YMCA-Togo, la prestation des clubs culturels ainsi que des jeux tombola dotés de prix.

« Nous voulons nous engager beaucoup plus cette année dans entrepreneuriat des jeunes, parce qu’aujourd’hui, le chômage est le plus grand problème auquel les jeunes font face. On veut beaucoup travailler dans l’entrepreneuriat des jeunes en créant des incubateurs dans d’autres villes pour aider les jeunes à mieux nourrir leurs idées d’entreprise et à élaborer des plans d’affaires, les connecter aux opportunités et les accompagner dans le réseau d’affaires pour écouter leurs produits sur le marché », a expliqué M. Attohoun.
Certains jeunes, interrogés à la fin de cette rencontre, n’ont pas caché leur sentiment.

« Cette rencontre m’a apporté un plus en ce qui concerne le volet volontariat. Le volontariat est tout particulier, parce que c’est pour aider autrui à aller beaucoup plus loin, et il peut se faire tout en ayant un job », a confié Kouamba Sika (l’un des jeunes à cette rencontre).

« Ce que moi j’ai pu retenir, ce sont les opportunités qu’offre le YMCA. L’association permet de mieux se découvrir en tant que jeunes, que ce soit à travers des séminaires de formations, des séances de sensibilisation, des excursions dans plusieurs domaines », a confié pour sa part le jeune Romuald Kouton.

Rappelons que l’UCJG/YMCA est une association internationale et interconfessionnelle regroupant des volontaires chrétiens ou non. Elle regroupe sur les cinq continents plus de 120 mouvements nationaux dont celui du Togo.

Les YMCA Afrique rassemblent les jeunes dans 20 pays africains avec la vision partagée de « renforcer la capacité des jeunes pour la renaissance africaine » et pour mission de bâtir une jeunesse capable d’œuvrer pour la justice sociale et la paix par la promotion d’une culture de leadership basée sur des principes chrétiens et des valeurs partagées. Le but visé n’est autre que celui de l’agenda 2063 : faire en sorte que les jeunes héritent d’une Afrique puissante, juste et prospère.
YMCA GHANA CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT COMMITTEE MEETING WITH GREATER ACCRA REGIONAL YMCA

YMCA Ghana is in the process of aligning its constitution to the constitutions of other YMCAs and the one of the African Alliance of YMCA in terms of the leadership positions and on the new Membership Charter. In the past, every Region and at the National level, the Ghana YMCA had a President and a Chairman beside the Vice Chairman, Treasurer and the Youth President. With that process of alignment, the Ghana YMCA is to adjust its constitution to the YMCAs of the World Alliance. At the same time the constitution will adapt and update some of the core issues in the to address the needs of the members as well as current trends on youth issues.

To do so, there has been a Constitutional Review Committee set in place, that will meet the various Regions and all other stakeholders to discuss the details of the new agenda. The new constitution has to be developed by August for final validation at the National Youth Conference and adoption at the National Council Meeting in September 2018. Thus, every member can participate in the process and can bring his/her ideas, wishes and suggestions in the discussion.

The main focus in the alignment process will be to abolish the ceremonial function of the president, at the Branch, Regional and National levels. Thereby the Chairman will take over the duties of the President. However, the new functions of merging the role of the Chairman and the President will only be known as the President. This will be replicated at all the levels of YMCA Ghana.

On Saturday the 5th of May 2018 Greater Accra Regional members of the YMCA were invited to critically contribute in the process of reviewing the constitution. The Chairman of the Review Committee took the members through the various areas which will require inputs. He also solicited their inputs based on already prepared questionnaires by the Committee which all participants were required to fill with their inputs for changes and he wanted to find out, for what the YMCA has to look for in the future. All those amendments and concerns should be written down in the constitution. Around 30 members took part and were asked to fill in the questionnaire.

The questions to the audience were, if there are any areas the Committee hasn't considered so far and what? And at the same time the Committee wanted to receive a feedback on the areas that are already described.

In the subsequent weeks the Committee is moving to the other regions up to 2nd of June when the Regional interactions would come to an end. In that time all members are invited to send their questionnaire back to YMCA National Office. Next dates are in the Ashanti Region on the coming weekend, 12th May 2018, followed by the Eastern Region on 19th May 2018. The meeting in the Western Region will take place on the 26th May 2018 and last but not least there will be the meeting in the Volta Region on the 2nd June 2018.
The YMCA Ghana invited all its staff on the national, regional offices, some members and the German interns to take part in a workshop on programme and project planning for three days in the Eastern Region at the YMCA Centre in Koforidua.

After opening and introductions, the Executive Director of YMCA Mr. Kwabena Nketia Addae presented to the house, what the YMCA has gone through over the years with the African renaissance and how it influences our daily work. He also pointed out that coming from the staff retreat that we had recently, we will need some more projects and programmes in our various branches and regions.

On the next day, Sarah informed the house to continue working in groups and asked them to think of the future of the YMCA in 4 work stations with the questions like “Why do we need projects?” or “What is our mission?” and “What kind of program and projects could we have?” and “How do we implement projects?” to help creating more ideas and getting new inputs to develop innovative projects and programmes afterwards.

During the meeting, they learnt about the German YMCA, when Kira Otto, one of the German Interns presented the SWOT analysis of the German YMCA as put together by the interns to share their experience with the Ghanaian YMCA.
After the discussions, we started working on developing concrete projects with the help of the SMART Tool. Therefore, the group was divided into the various regions to use a prepared sheet to design a project at the regional level feasible enough that it can be done at the regions or branches as soon as possible.

In the end every group came up with some new projects that were presented to the entire audience.

Matthew presented the Volta region with the goal to empower young people in civic engagement by organizing a Youth conference in May, whereas the Ashanti/Brong Ahafo Region focused on youth in transition presented by Gabriel Ofori Appiah.

The Western Region report was done by Nana Peperah Antwi on economic development to empower the young people with entrepreneur skills. Greater Accra would like to have a project on Debate to Action and considered a Youth parliament, that was presented by Reginald Crabbe. Last but not least the Eastern Regional report presented by Daniel Ofosu was on movie nights as a low cost, no cost project. And furthermore, they also have designed a second project on teenage pregnancy prevention.
THANK YOU!

For Reading

FOR QUESTIONS, ARTICLES SUBMISSIONS OR ANY INQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT US ON:

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