



**OMLA**  
One Million  
Leaders Africa

# IMPACT REPORT

**REPORTING PERIOD**

January 2022 to August 2024

**DATE OF REPORT**

04/09/2024

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The One Million Leaders Africa (OMLA) Fellowship Program, an initiative by NELIS (Next Leaders' Initiative for Sustainability), has achieved significant milestones in empowering young leaders. This report provides an in-depth analysis of the program's impact, including leadership development, sustainability projects, and community engagement.

# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The OMLA Fellowship Program aims to cultivate the next generation of leaders in Africa, focusing on social entrepreneurship, sustainable leadership, rural development and social innovation.

## GLOBAL CONTEXT

The OMLA Fellowship is part of a global initiative by NELIS, aiming to empower one million leaders by 2030. The program also has regional chapters in Asia, Latin America, and MENA, each with its unique focus and approach but sharing the overarching goal of sustainable leadership, social innovation and social entrepreneurship.

## COUNTRIES COVERED

- **2022:** Cameroon, Chad, DR Congo, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.
- **2023:** Nigeria, Tanzania, Gambia, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Zambia, DR Congo, Liberia, Uganda, Kenya, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Chad and the Republic of Benin.
- **2024:** Burkina Faso, Burundi, Botswana, Cameroon, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria, Republic of Benin, Rwanda, South Africa, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

**So far, we have covered a total of 40 countries in Africa.**

# IMPACT AREAS



## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

### Fellowship Structure



#### 01 — Leadership Development

A comprehensive two-month training focusing on transformative leadership, sustainability, social innovation, and entrepreneurship.

Applications received: 100+

Selected Fellows: 23

Acceptance Rate: 23%

Graduated Fellows: 18

Graduation Rate: 83%

Gender: Male: 14, Female: 5

Age Range: 23-49



#### 02 — Stars and Starlets Training

This training program is an extension of the OML Fellowship, where Fellows mentor a new generation of leaders, known as Stars and Starlets.

Stars: 494

Starlets: 1500



#### 03 — Community Project Implementation

Community Projects: 19

**Impact Areas:** Agriculture, Climate Action, Information Technology, Community Development and Engagement, Female Health, Gender Equity, Child Education, Food Security, Sustainable Cities and Sustainability.

# IMPACT AREAS

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

### Fellowship Structure



#### 01 — Leadership Development

A comprehensive two-month training focusing on transformative leadership, sustainability, social innovation, and entrepreneurship.

Applications received: 2000+

Selected Fellows: 52

Acceptance Rate: 3%

Graduated Fellows: 13

Graduation Rate: 25%

Gender: Male: 7, Female: 6

Age Range: 23-35



#### 02 — Stars and Starlets Training

This training program is an extension of the OMLA Fellowship, where Fellows mentor a new generation of leaders, known as Stars and Starlets.

Stars: 256

Gender: Male: 106, Female: 150



#### 03 — Community Project Implementation

Community Projects: 13

**Impact Areas:** Agriculture, Child Education, Climate Action, Community Development and Engagement, Female Health, Food Security, Gender Equity, Information Technology, Sustainable Cities, and Sustainability.

# IMPACT AREAS

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

### Leadership Boot Camp Structure



#### 01 — Leadership Development

The training sessions ranged from understanding climate change and its mitigation to leadership skills, career orientation, embracing technology, and entrepreneurship.

Applications received: 296

Selected Students: 116

Acceptance Rate: 39%

Graduated Students: 72

Graduation Rate: 62%

Gender: Male: 28, Female: 44

Age Range: 13-18



#### 02 — Skills Empowerment

To spark their creativity they were exposed to different entrepreneurship skills.



#### 03 — Community Project Implementation

Community Projects: 7

**Impact Areas:** Agriculture, Climate Action, Food Security, Sustainable Cities, and Sustainability.

# IMPACT AREAS

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

### Fellowship Structure



#### 01 — Leadership Development

A comprehensive three-month training focusing on transformative leadership, sustainability, social innovation, and entrepreneurship.

Applications received: 15000+

Selected Fellows: 200

Acceptance Rate: 2%

Graduated Fellows: 88

Graduation Rate: 44%

Gender: Male: 54, Female: 33

Age Range: 23-35



#### 02 — Champions Training

This training program is an extension of the OMLA Fellowship, where Fellows mentor a new generation of leaders, Champions.

Champions: 1131

Gender: Male: 674, Female: 457.



#### 03 — Community Project Implementation

Community Projects: 22

**Impact Areas:** Agriculture, Child Education, Climate Action, Community Development and Engagement, Female Health, Food Security, Gender Equity, Information Technology, Sustainable Cities, and Sustainability.



# IMPACT AREAS

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

### Leadership Boot Camp Structure



#### 01 — Leadership Development

The training sessions ranged from understanding climate change and its mitigation to leadership skills, career orientation, embracing technology, and entrepreneurship.

Applications received: 400

Selected Students: 200

Acceptance Rate: 50%

Graduated Students: 118

Graduation Rate: 59%

Gender: Male: 48, Female: 70

Age Range: 13-18



#### 02 — Skills Empowerment

To spark their creativity they were exposed to different entrepreneurship skills.

Also, the OMLA Club have been established in 11 secondary schools to equip teenagers with leadership, sustainability and entrepreneurship skills and serve as a follow-up initiative for sustainability/continuity of skills and knowledge acquired during the boot camp.



#### 03 — Community Project Implementation

Projects: 4

**Impact Areas:** Climate Action, Food Security, Sustainable Cities, renewable energy, and Sustainability.

# IMPACT AREAS

## SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

### Sustainable Projects

Fellows have initiated several community projects addressing local challenges such as Food and Agriculture, water scarcity, renewable energy, and waste reduction. These projects are in line with the global sustainability goals of NELIS.

### Comprehensive Understanding

The program aims to create leaders who can drive holistic change within their communities, thereby contributing to regional development. Additionally, it ensures that fellows understand the economic, environmental, and social aspects of sustainable development. This multi-dimensional approach is crucial for long-term impact.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND NETWORKING

### Collaborative Initiatives

The program encourages cross-border collaborations, resulting in joint projects that tackle regional issues. We encourage our leaders to activate their networks and forge partnerships with local NGOs, universities, governmental bodies, and private sector partners.

### Professional Networks

Fellows have the opportunity to expand their professional networks, facilitating knowledge sharing and resource mobilisation. This has been instrumental in the program's success and aligns with NELIS's global objectives.

# ACHIEVEMENTS AND MILESTONES

## Quantitative Achievements

Engaged  
**4000+**  
Sustainability  
Leaders

Initiated  
**60+**  
Community  
Projects

Conducted  
**120+**  
Training  
Sessions

## Qualitative Achievements

### 1. Leadership Development:

- Enhanced leadership capacities among participants, reflecting in their ability to navigate unexpected challenges with creativity and critical thinking.
- Personal growth and development in leadership skills, reflecting on challenges overcome and lessons learned during the fellowship program.

### 2. Sustainable Practices and Project Implementation:

- Increased awareness of sustainable practices among participants and communities.
- Successfully led the implementation of sustainability projects addressing specific environmental or social challenges, with an emphasis on improving resilience against environmental and economic challenges.

### 3. Community Engagement and Development:

- Strengthened cross-regional ties facilitating collaborative efforts towards sustainability.
- Improved experience in community building and engagement for the participants, leading to increased self-sufficiency and improved resilience for local communities through community-led projects.

### 4. Networking and Collaboration:

- Established a robust network of leaders, creating opportunities for future collaboration and a wider network of young people engaged in the program.

### 5. Knowledge Sharing:

- Shared knowledge and insights, contributing to the wider discourse on leadership and sustainability.

# CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

## Challenges

### 1. Financial Constraints:

- Limited funding.

### 2. Technology and Infrastructure Issues:

- Unstable internet connectivity especially for Fellows from rural communities.
- Inadequate tracking system.

### 3. Participant Engagement and Communication:

- Lack of full commitment from participants.
- Inadequate communication, especially with rural-areas based participants.

### Community Engagement:

- Community Development and Engagement, focusing on bridging the communication and commitment gaps, could alleviate some of the aforementioned challenges.

## Valuable Lessons

### 1. Program Design and Development:

- Adaptive program design to cater to evolving needs and circumstances.
- Importance of a diversity-based mode of training to cater to a wide array of participants.
- Inclusion of cultural diversity in fellowship programs enriches the learning experience.

### 2. Mentorship:

- Close mentorship during and after the fellowship program is crucial for sustained engagement and impact.

### 3. Network and Community Building:

- Strengthening alliance skills is vital for sustainably expanding networks at a strategic level.

### 4. Educational Impact:

- The fellowship program serves as an enhancement for youth education, providing additional learning opportunities outside traditional settings.

# TESTIMONIALS



Through the OMLA Fellowship, I have gained invaluable skills to address social issues effectively. The sessions on social innovation, leadership, and impact measurement, along with hands-on project activities, pushed me out of my comfort zone. For the first time, I connected with like-minded individuals to tackle a social issue we all found important. This experience transformed my perspective on collaboration and partnership. I am especially grateful for the access to experts and the strong network of fellow participants and alumni. The impact I achieved through this fellowship was remarkable. I led initiatives that helped others discover their potential, such as inspiring orphaned children in Cameroon to practice urban farming to enhance their nutrition and income. I am forever grateful for this experience and confident that the changes we create in our communities can transform not only our local environments but also Africa as a whole.

Annette Tchouawou  
OMLA Fellow, Cameroon



My fellowship with OMLA has been one of the impactful experiences of my career. Being a part of the #DigitHer project, which aims to equip young girls with essential digital skills, was particularly rewarding. I was involved in leading the project to make learning accessible to beginners, ensuring that young girls, many of whom had little digital experience, could gain confidence and enter the digital economy with practical skills. Seeing their excitement and growth firsthand was extremely rewarding, and it reaffirmed my commitment to making technology more inclusive in Africa. Beyond #DigitHer, my experience with OMLA has increased my capacity for social innovation and entrepreneurship, with a particular emphasis on sustainability. Every step, whether in planning, training, or working with other young leaders, has deepened my commitment to empowering Africa's youth, and the fellowship instilled in me a trait of leadership based on ethics and transformation.

Sadiq Ba'aba  
OMLA Fellow, Nigeria



# TESTIMONIALS



I would like to thank OMLA and NELIS Global for the OMLA Fellowship 2023 program which transformed my leadership style in my community towards building an empowered community and solving social problems through the OMLA Fellowship grant that was awarded to me and my Stars. The project entitled Strengthening food security and fighting climate change in Harare South District in Zimbabwe made an impact in my community by solving problems of hunger and creating youth employment as well as fighting climate change. I have learnt a lot from this program as a Fellow and I have managed to acquire project management skills and fundraising skills from the program.

Tafadzwa Muzira  
OMLA Fellow, Zimbabwe



The "Cashew Farming for small scale farmers" project I led my stars to execute stands as a testament to OMLA's commitment to nurturing effective problem solvers. With their unwavering support, we launched an initiative that aimed to combat local tree depletion and educate our community about sustainable agriculture. OMLA's training instilled in me the ability to think creatively and critically, enabling me to navigate unexpected challenges. Moreover, the resources provided by OMLA, including the distribution of 50 cashew seeds to each household, were instrumental in making our project a reality. Today, our community is witnessing the tangible results of our efforts – increased self-sufficiency, improved resilience against environmental and economic challenges, and enhanced soil quality. This initiative represents a significant stride towards a greener, more sustainable future for our region, all thanks to OMLA's dedication to nurturing environmentally-conscious leaders.

Akor Ekesi Sunday  
OMLA Fellow, Nigeria



# CONCLUSION

The OMLA Fellowship Program has successfully empowered a new generation of leaders in Africa who are driving positive change in their communities. The program's multi-dimensional approach and its focus on sustainable development make it a transformative force.

