



EBAFOSA INNOVATIVE VOLUNTEERISM

VIRTUAL INCUBATION THROUGH INNOVATIVE VOLUNTEERISM



EBAFOSA
Ecosystem Based Adaptation for
Food Security Assembly



www.ebafosa.org



Innovative volunteers in Ghana, Ebapreneur Solutions making solar dryers to be used in drying of various food stuffs.



The Why of Innovative Volunteerism

To bring impact to scale under the changing climate, we need innovative approaches that leverage the most significant asset of societies, human capital. Africa's biggest asset is its youthful population, over 60% of the entire population. This biggest asset needs to be leveraged to drive climate action solutions that create wealth opportunities for the youth and the entirety of society. These youth are the most significant non-state actor constituency that Africa needs to lead in investing in operational-level actions that operationalize the many policy provisions Africa has to unlock tangible solutions from them. Tapping into their energy, tech savviness, and creativity to be the primary implementers of Climate action across the continent is an innovative approach to bring impact to scale. But to do this, we need to think about how they can be inspired to usher themselves to action and groom themselves to be selfless in driving solutions looking at the lives touched by their solutions, not only at self-enrichment.

It is against this backdrop that **Innovative Volunteerism** was conceptualized to be the modus operandi of the EBAFOSA¹ policy framework as a mentorship tool where structured guidance is given to willing youth of diverse disciplinary backgrounds to structurally guide, motivate and inspire them to improve, refine and adapt their skills and work collaboratively towards driving climate action solutions through an enterprise lens to climate-proof Africa's agro-value chains. The end is creating multiple climate action enterprise opportunities in sectors the continent holds a comparative advantage that can catalyze the growth of globally competitive enterprises that drive the realization of multiple SDGs.

Innovative Volunteerism is not the traditional kind of volunteering. Innovative Volunteerism is about doing something aligned with the clean energy-powered agro-value chain that solves critical community challenges, touches many lives, and lays a foundation for revenue generation and profitability when the dimension of the solution becomes popular enough in the community. So it focuses in a structured way on perfecting solutions that the community takes up, resulting in income generation becoming a natural consequence. The structured guidance ensures traceability of climate action solutions and accountability, which is critical for transformational development both for individual youth and continent.

¹ www.ebafosa.org

Innovative Volunteerism- Bringing Environmental and Climate Action Impact to Scale

Through Innovative Volunteerism and in line with the statutory decisions adopted in the continent, youth are already leveraging this lens of climate action as a business/enterprise opportunity to deliver affordable and relevant value addition solutions using locally available material. From fabricating solar dryers, made up to 200% cheaper using locally available material and decentralizing the same to farmers to dehydrate and preserve their harvest, to converting waste to domestic energy options – in the form of fuel briquettes, youth are being guided to deliver practical solutions to enable agro-value addition and create multiple income opportunities without compromising the environment. Capitalizing on this is how we can bring environment and climate action impact to scale while helping to inform policy from a practically implementable paradigm as we address the seemingly insurmountable challenges of youth unemployment.

Innovative Volunteerism- an Environment and Climate Action Solutions Incubator

Through Innovative Volunteerism, lessons accruing from willing Innovative Volunteerism actors in one corner of the continent are cross-hybridized, with willing actors in another corner of the continent without physical engagement. This is accomplished through leveraging the passion and willingness of the Innovative Volunteerism actors themselves, as well as digital technology.

Through this approach, Innovative Volunteerism actors are recording audiovisuals as they undertake and explain practical actions in fabricating and testing the innovative climate action solutions – mechanical solar dryers, waste recovery to energy & biofertilizer, plastic waste recovery to fashion items, bricks etc. They are writing these actions into manuals. These materials – the recordings and manuals are then shared with peers in different countries to inform their uptake. In cases where additional explanation is needed, the actors engage via email and online video conferencing tools like zoom to clarify concepts.

The UNEP EBAFOSA Innovative Volunteerism coordinator then moderates these engagements to ensure technical soundness in aligning with Innovative Environmental Solutions and hence form a virtual Climate Action Solutions incubation.

Through this approach, Nigeria Innovative Volunteerism willing actors have guided their peers in Ghana in taking up lessons of converting waste to fuel briquettes.

Kenya Innovative Volunteerism willing actors have guided their peers in Ghana in taking up lessons in refining solar dryer fabrication.

In waste to fashion, a leading Innovative Volunteerism willing actor in Nigeria has developed virtual lessons and is set to be linked with willing youthful Innovative Volunteerism actors across the continent interested in fashion to train them virtually on plastic waste conversion to different accessible items of apparel.

This virtual engagement for lessons cross-hybridization demonstrates how the EBAFOSA Innovative Volunteerism is the biggest ever climate action solutions virtual incubation space for youth in Africa and the globe.



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