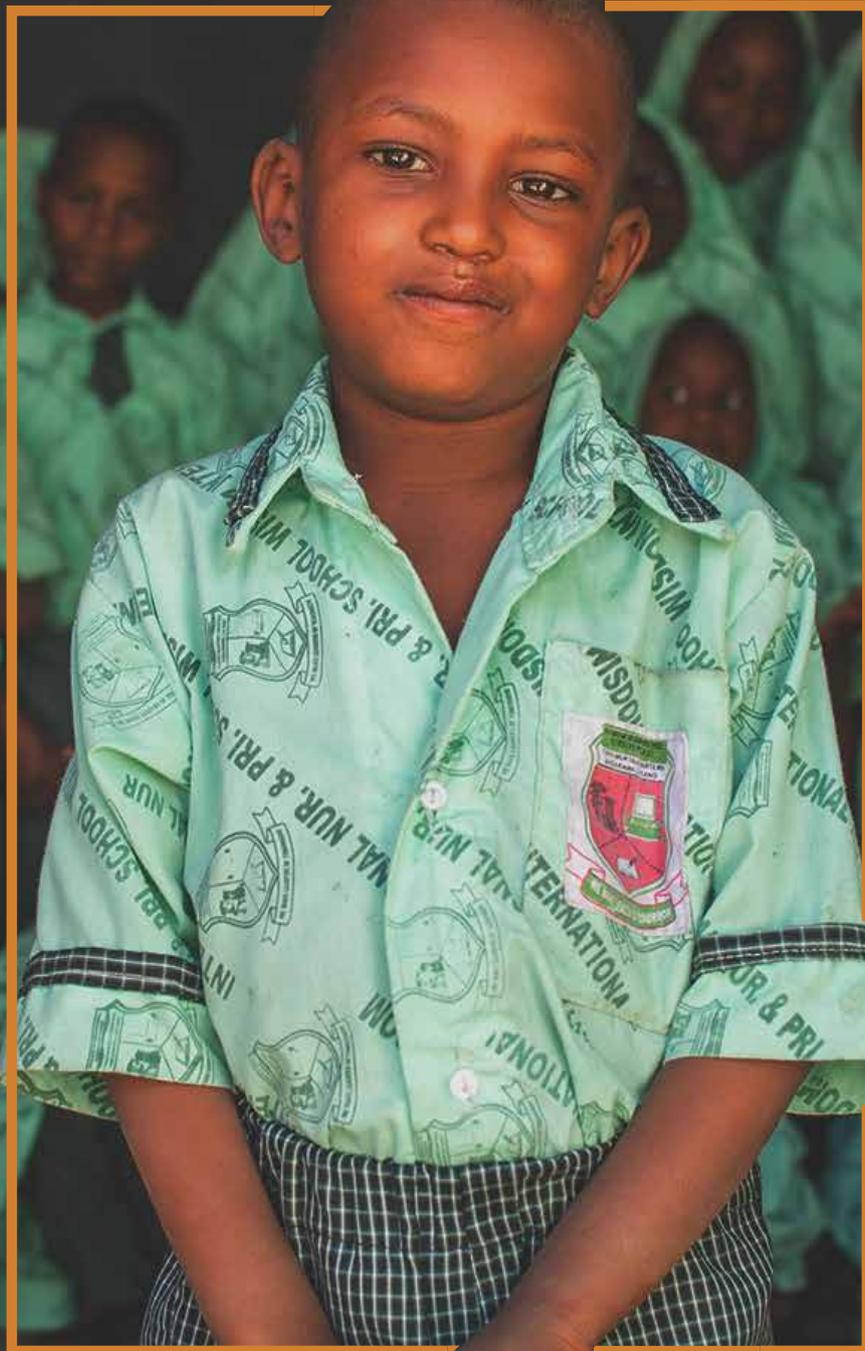


NEWS

LETTER

JAN
2020



back to school, back to life

C O N T E N T

01

Preface

02

WISE Qatar 2019

05

Hamzat Lawal
interview

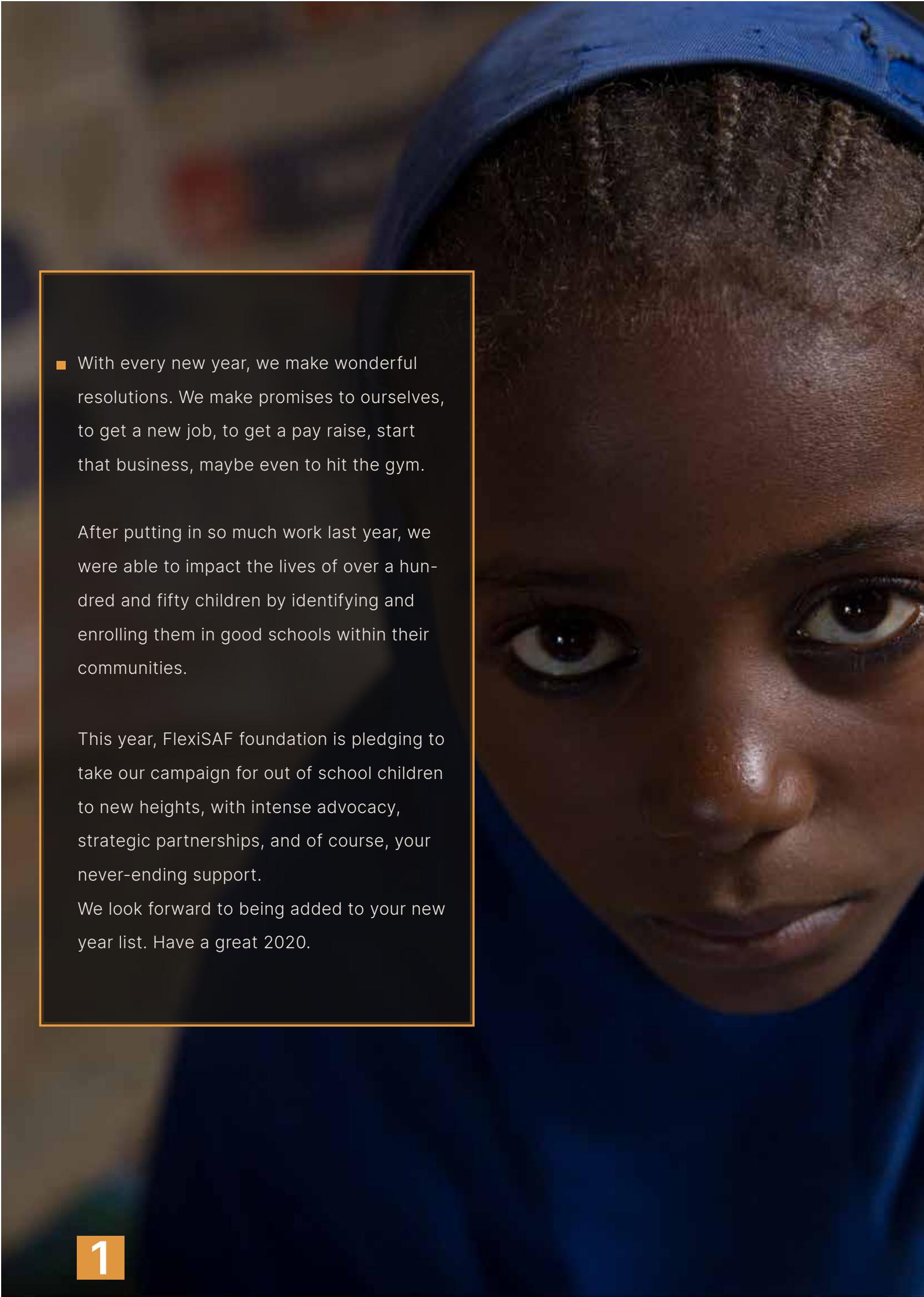
11

Accelerated
Learning Program
2019 Report

14

Success story



- 
- A close-up portrait of a young girl with dark skin and hair, wearing a blue headscarf. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is blurred.
- With every new year, we make wonderful resolutions. We make promises to ourselves, to get a new job, to get a pay raise, start that business, maybe even to hit the gym.

After putting in so much work last year, we were able to impact the lives of over a hundred and fifty children by identifying and enrolling them in good schools within their communities.

This year, FlexiSAF foundation is pledging to take our campaign for out of school children to new heights, with intense advocacy, strategic partnerships, and of course, your never-ending support.

We look forward to being added to your new year list. Have a great 2020.



About WISE

- WISE is an international, multi-sectoral platform for creative thinking, debate and purposeful action. WISE has established itself as a global reference in new approaches to education.

Through both the biennial Summit and a range of ongoing programs WISE is promoting innovation and building the future of education through collaboration.



Faiz Bashir(R), Asma'u Bello(M) and Amina Abubakar(L) at the conference

Theme

- UnLearn
- Re-learn

what it means to
be human!

In our constantly changing world, it's more important than ever that we unlearn and relearn the skills and knowledge that will allow us to thrive as individuals and societies. This extends to the way we teach, the way we learn, and how knowledge is shared.

Our Objective

- To get a global feel of how others are tackling the issue of out of school children
- To network, meet like minds and explore areas of collaboration
- To get inspired by the efforts put in by other courageous individuals



Panel on Education Funding

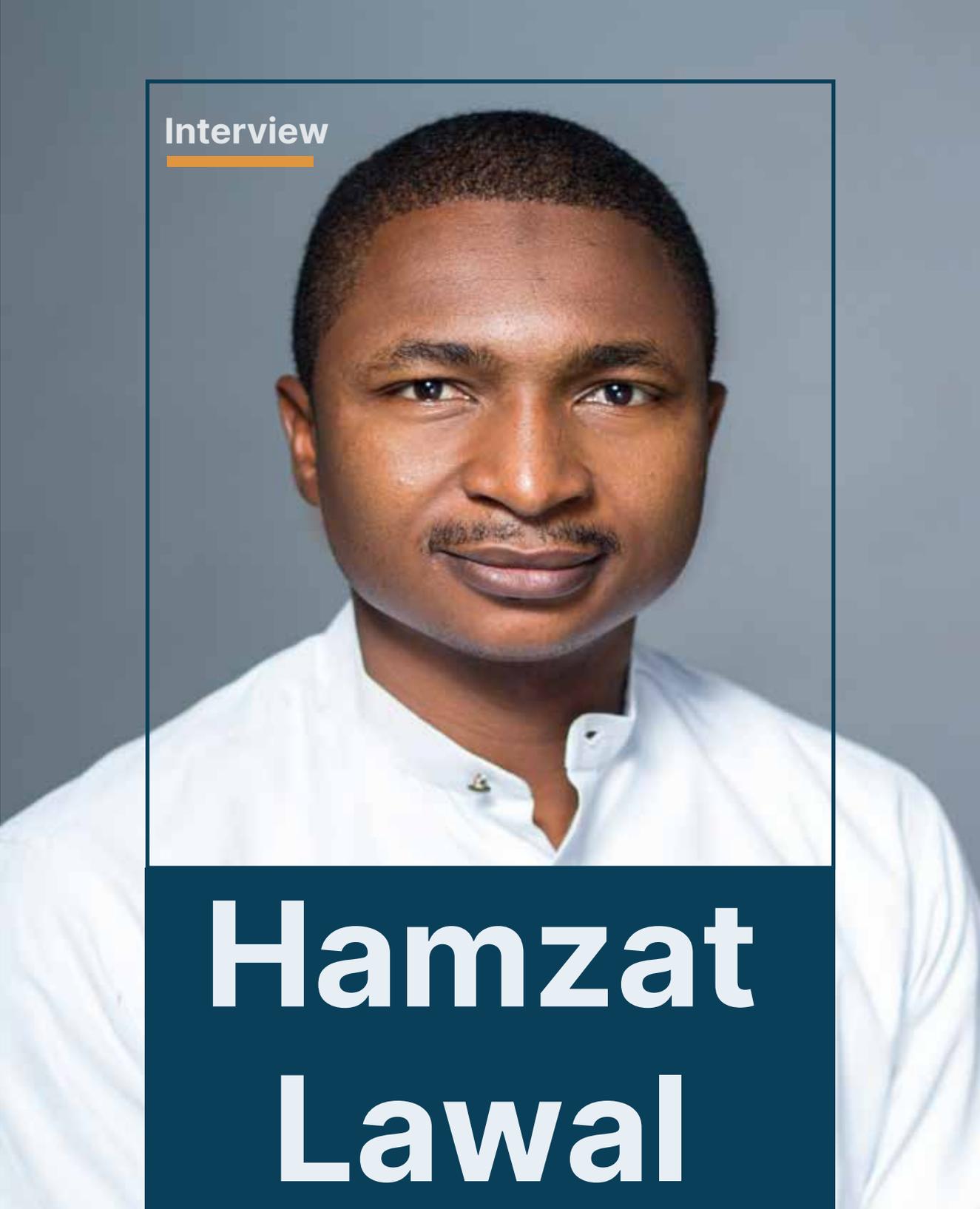


Mr. Larry Rosenstock, founder of High Tech High, USA (WISE 2019 Laureate)



Max Tegmark (Mark has been making an impact on AI over the past decade and his talk focused on harnessing the power of AI to improve wellbeing.)

Interview

A portrait of Hamzat Lawal, a man with short dark hair and a mustache, wearing a white button-down shirt. The portrait is framed by a dark blue border. Below the portrait is a dark blue rectangular area containing the name 'Hamzat Lawal' in large white text.

Hamzat Lawal

Hamzat Lawal is an anti-corruption activist. He is the initiator of Follow The Money, and the founder of Connected Development, a non-profit organization that comprises data analysts, journalists, activists, and students.

How did you become an advocate for the SDGs?

Education. I can honestly say that without the right education, I wouldn't have been able to achieve all that I have thus far. I was lucky enough to be enrolled in good schools that pushed me to learn and explore my talents.

From an early stage, I became a boy scout. During my years as a boy scout in primary school, I used to go from door to door, sensitizing families on the need for cleanliness and environmental sanitation. This made me confident at an early stage, improving my public speaking skills and honing my ability to interact with people from all walks of life.

I graduated from secondary school as a scout leader. At that point, I had met with so many dignitaries and heads of state, appeared on national television many times, delivered speeches in front of crowds. Going into advocacy I would say, is a natural progression.



After secondary school, I didn't get into university for four years. At that point, it was a matter of paying money under the table to be admitted, and I simply refused to do so. I worked as an internet café attendant and computer troubleshooter for a while before I got an offer to work in the IT department of an NGO called the International Centre for Energy Environment and Development (ICEED) and that is what changed my life. I worked there for 5 years, first as a tech guy fixing their computers, then my boss introduced me to concepts like the Kyoto protocol, and other things being done around climate change in the world. I slowly moved from IT, to research, to highly policy advocacy.

Two years after I started working at ICEED, I started studying political science at the University of Abuja. My work experience gave me a clear understanding of what would have been an otherwise theoretical study.

In 2016, I was selected as part of a group to meet with the then UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon. He Chaired the meeting on the post-2015 agenda, 10 youth leaders who were shaping the narratives and had played a part in achieving the MDGs. Based on my work not just in CODE which we started in 2012 but also on my work as a climate activist.

After the meeting, I was part of what they called post-2015 working groups, within the children and youth working group in the UN and also the climate working group shaping conversation for what later became the SDGs.

But by and large, I think why I became an advocate was because I was educated. That is the honest truth. I got solid, foundational education. I always tell people; the foundation of any education is the primary school. I got a good primary education.

My parents ensured that I went to a good school, but my teachers ensured that I got good knowledge transferred to me. They really built my confidence, gave me the poise to go into public speaking right from childhood. Due to that, I am where I am today.

I have met all 52 African Heads of state, I have traveled as far as Cambodia to train youth in South East Asia, I have been to Canada to help shape global policy, you name it. All this started from primary school, right here in Abuja, we used to meet with the then Head of State, have programs with the First Lady, participate in debates, drama, baseball, and so many other extracurricular activities, which exposed me to a world of possibilities and shaped the person I am today.

Tell us about the most challenging thing you have done?

My biggest challenge would be the fear of the unknown. Frankly, I am always on edge, you know, success comes with a lot of challenges. You are constantly surrounded by a lot of people but it can be lonely at the same time.

You sometimes have to wonder who is real, and who has an ulterior motive. It can be quite exhausting.

Another big challenge for me is managing people and talents.

Today we have Follow The Money in 7 African countries, so it's crazy, managing people, in different time zones, different backgrounds, and languages.

What makes it easy, is that for me, these challenges are an opportunity to explore, learn, grow and just have fun.

And your biggest achievement so far?

My biggest achievement is impacting lives. The work we do is about saving lives. I have worked in communities where, if not for our campaigns and interventions, children would have died. Our first campaign was called saveBagega, which saved over 1500 children in Zamfara state.

We work to make sure children go to school. We make sure they get the needed infrastructure; classrooms, books, teaching aids. We also work to make sure communities have clean drinking water. Some communities' only source of water is a stream, where they all bathe, wash their clothes, cook, and drink.

That is why my biggest success is impacting lives and entrenching democratic principles.

I am helping to bridge the gap between governments and the ordinary people who elected them into office.

I am advising high-level policymakers, bringing them closer to the realities that are on ground, using facts and data. That to me is true success. Not all the awards which sometimes serve as a distraction from the harsh realities.

What do you hope to achieve in your partnership with FlexiSAF Foundation?

I knew the then chairman of FlexiSAF Foundation, Ahmad Salihijo, when he was an adviser to the then minister of environment, beyond that, he's a great guy, he's cool-headed, he is one of those people that welcome feedback. During that time, I was one of the strongest critics of Amina Mouhammed's tenure as a minister.

I remember he was leading an innovative way of getting resources around the environment called the green bond which was quite historic.

So, when he reached out, about his work in trying to reduce the number of out of school children and creating learning spaces for IDPs and rural communities that can't afford formal school,

I was very impressed. And for me, it ties to my work and my vision for my country. It was very easy to connect. I have been working with his team and one thing I will say is key is the fact that we are young people.

We see things differently and want to effect change in society. That's why we forged a bilateral partnership and launched a campaign around out of school children which has been a massive success.

We had a press conference addressing the government about the conflicting figures of out of school children and the lack of information around it.

In less than a week, the ministry of education gave out a definite figure, beyond that, the government has set aside 10 billion Naira to reduce 5.5 million out of school children.

This is in part due to the collective effort of FlexiSAF Foundation and Connected Development. This milestone is so amazing.



CODE's partnership with FlexiSAF Foundation is also a learning curve for us because when my colleagues visited the FlexiSAF Foundation's AccLearn center they were amazed at the innovative way of impacting lives in marginalized communities.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest factors hindering the achievement of the SDGs?

I believe, country-level wise, the biggest challenge is prioritizing which goals are development agenda. How do we streamline the SDGs with proper budgeting and planning and taking some of the goals as a priority? Like ending poverty. Nigeria is currently being dubbed as the poverty capital of the world.



Our unemployment rate is 23% and on the rise. We need to prioritize job creation and economic growth and reduce out of school children, and ensuring all communities have access to water, sanitation, and hygiene. We need to integrate this agenda into our national planning and tie it into regional hubs like ECOWAS, the AU and consolidate at the UN.

We need to also partner more, rather than build walls, build bridges and learn from each other. Ultimately, it is about peace, justice, and stronger institutions, and that is the goal I am most passionate about, because once we build stronger institutions, we can tackle corruption and insecurities, and we can be on track to achieving the SDGs.

And, are they reachable by 2030?

I am optimistic that we can achieve the 2030 agenda. If you look at it, you will notice that countries took ownership, the youth have contributed their voices to it.

The next decade will be important because we will start counting down to the decade of action, and most of the changemakers are young. Come to think of it, how old would we be in 10 years? It is achievable, but it requires a lot of effort, and all hands must be on deck. We also need to collaborate more.

What do you like to do in your free time?

I like to watch movies, hiking, volleyball and speed racing in go-carts.



*Written by Nelson egbunu,
(Program Officer, Flexisaf foundation)*

Accelerated Learning (ACCLEARN) Program Report 2019

Introduction:

The Accelerated Learning (AccLearn) program in Rugga community in Wuye has been running for 9 months now; 50 children were enrolled into the program to be taught by 4 instructors who went through training in delivering the montessori curriculum.

The children enrolled were verified to be out of school children who have never been to school and those who dropped out at an early stage from formal school with little knowledge of basic literacy and numeracy.

They were grouped into 3 classes referred to as Safe spaces.

The program is geared towards providing a flexible curriculum for 4 hours every week.

We have recorded tremendous impact on the children, both academically and behaviourally.



Curriculum coverage:

Numeracy:

The safe spaces have covered identification and formation of numbers and can perform basic mathematical operations (addition and subtraction).

Computational Thinking:

Computational Thinking was introduced and the kids were taught about computer science, logic, algorithm, evaluation, and coding.

Literacy:

The safe spaces are covering the Jolly Phonics letter sounds focusing on phonetic awareness (identification) and synthetic phonics (formation) of these letter sounds; They also blend two to four letter sounds.

Life Skills:

The curriculum for life skills for the safe spaces covers topics around personal hygiene, safety and trusting each other.

Assessment Report:

The assessment was on 19th December 2019 with the primary objective to measure the progress of the kids. And also to measure their understanding of the curriculum. The following results are based on the number of children who took the assessment:



Sapphire safe space:

Lowest average performance: 63.7%

Highest average performance: 89.1%

Class average performance: 75.0%

Ruby safe space:

Lowest average performance: 35.0%

Highest average performance: 93.5%

Class average performance: 59.1%



Emerald safe space:

Lowest average performance: 46.1%

Highest average performance: 98.5%

Class average performance: 77.8%

Attendance Report:

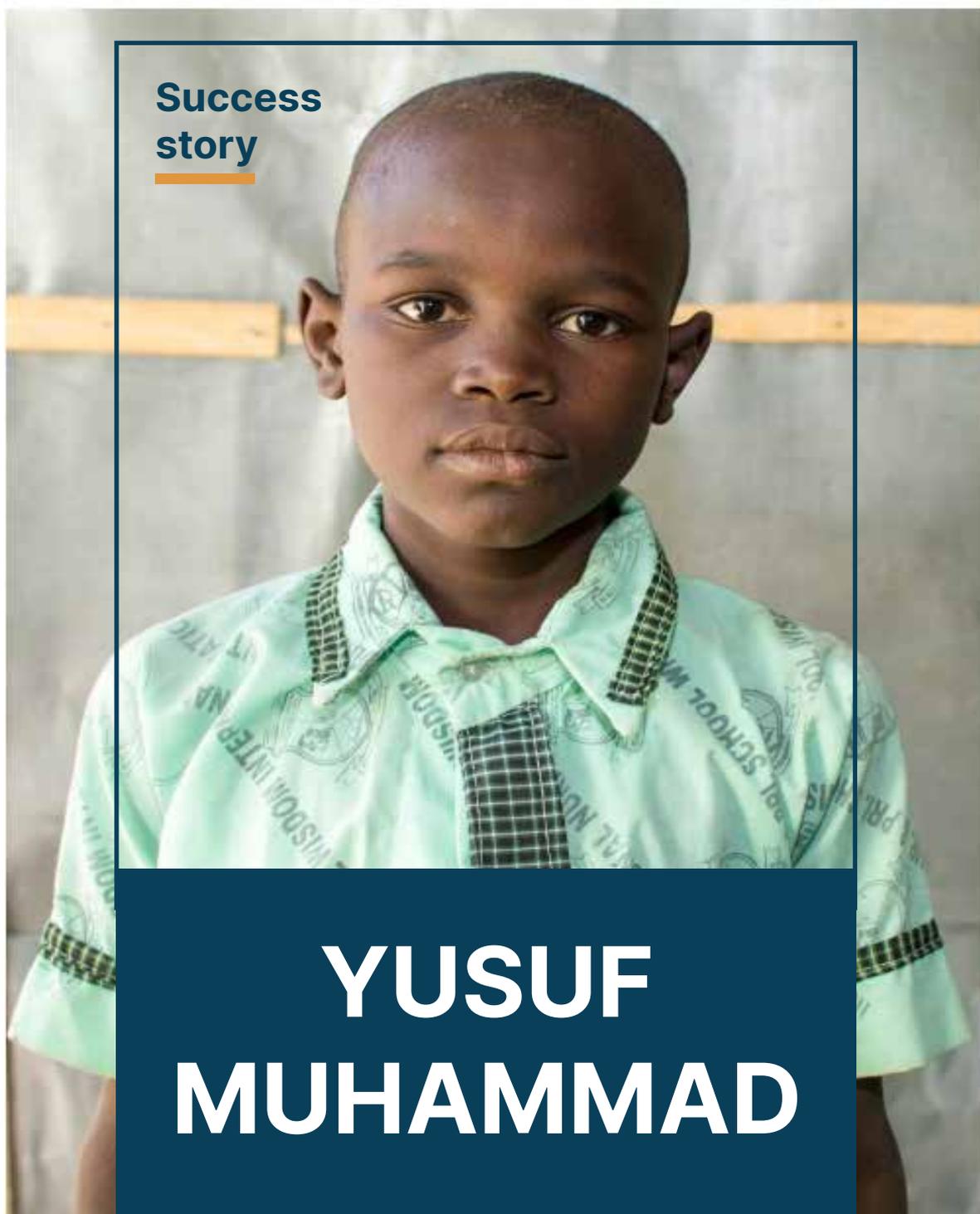
Attendance for all three safe spaces were above average.

Emerald safe space recorded an average attendance of 71.5%,

Sapphire safe space recorded 70.3 and Ruby safe space 89.2%.



Some of the reasons for absenteeism that affected the attendance of the children recorded were: sickness, travel and the kids running errands for their parents/guardians.



**Success
story**

YUSUF MUHAMMAD

*Written by Abban Bello,
(Project Assistant, Kano)
(abbanbello@flexisaf.org)*

Young Muhammad Yusuf is an 11-year old Almajiri boy that is a beneficiary of the Flexisaf Foundation Scholarship Scheme. He is from Jakusko LGA in Yobe State but upon his father's demise,

he was sent to Kano to start traditional Qur'anic school popularly known as 'almajiranci' at Tudun Murtala a large and densely populated ward in Nassarawa LGA, Kano State.

Initially, Muhammad was not part of the list of out of school children identified for enrollment into school. But as luck would have it, he has become a shining star through our intervention.

On Sunday 14th October 2018, I was on my way to verify a list of 24 children given to me by a community leader we had tasked with identifying out of school children in the Tudun Murtala area. I happened to visit the house of a father whose child was on my list.

Upon seeing the house, my instincts kept telling me how unlikely it was that a child from this house was not in school.

Nevertheless, I decided to investigate.

After exchanging pleasantries with Mallam Abubakar, the head of the family, I introduced myself and my Organization, what we do, and my purpose of visit.

From my discussions with him, I realized his ward was already in school and as such, had no need for our program. I turned to leave, my mind already on the next house on the list.

It was in that instant I saw little Yusuf coming out from the house with a bucket of water on his head. I called him and enquired about his name. "My name is Yusuf," he replied, looking small and vulnerable but so determined at the same time.



Little Muhammad Yusuf

Immediately, my mind started contemplating the implications of enrolling him in school, I knew there would be many hurdles to cross, considering his "almajiri status". A lot of young and promising "Almajiri" children have lost an opportunity of having western education due to lack of permission from their traditional Qur'anic Teachers, popularly known as

"Alarammas". With that knowledge in mind, I set out to meet Yusuf's Quranic Teacher. After careful analysis and a little background follow up, I met with the Alaramma at Yusuf's school a week after I had met him. I found him busy, teaching a lot of children at the same time. He motioned for me to join him under a nearby tree where I introduced myself and my organization.

After exchanging pleasantries, I asked him about Yusuf's background and my desire to see him enrolled in school. To my utmost surprise, I found him to be well-read and very knowledgeable. "Yusuf's sole custodianship is with me, and I will gladly enroll him to any school of choice". He told me earnestly. "Lack of sponsorship is actually what is hindering most children here in Tudun Murtala from studying. I have close to 80 students, and among them are NCE graduates, secondary graduates etc...", he explained. "I have never deterred any of my students from seeking western education. Everyone knows how the times have changed". He told me that the problem of out of school children is a source of worry to everyone in a densely populated area like Tudun Murtala which is at the heart of Kano metropolis.

"A lot of Alarammas are skeptical about partnering with NGOs and civil societies due to lack of clarity of purpose" he said. Fast forward a few weeks, and little Yusuf was enrolled in Primary one at Wisdom International, Tudun Murtala at the end of 2018. He was one of 20 beneficiaries, enrolled on a full scholarship at the school. Since then, little Yusuf has never disappointed, with the help of his Quranic Teacher, he is always punctual to school. His academic prowess was easily detected in his class by his teachers, owing to his inquisitive and photographic memory. To him, everything must be memorized, just like he is used to memorizing his Quranic verses. For a child that has never been to school, to come in 18th position in a class of 45 students, during his First term examination was simply awesome, but with Yusuf, the "fireworks" were just getting started. He seemed determined to conquer this new field he had been introduced to.

It was after his second term exams that he truly showed everyone the stuff he was made of, he came an astonishing 4th position. At this juncture, all the teachers and his classmates knew of course, that it was only a matter of time before Yusuf topped the class, or as the

School Principal aptly put, "His performance has put to rest his "almajiri background."

It was not surprising that by the end of the third term everyone was looking forward to Yusuf's result. And yet again, he delivered; coming in 2nd position in a class of 35 children.

During the annual school speech and prize-giving day, the crowd went agog when Yusuf was called to collect his prize, the story of an Almajiri boy with no previous formal education in his background was known by all in the school.

All of us were happy for him, from his teachers, Alaramma Malam Sani, and his employer, in whose house I had met Yusuf in the first place.

Little Yusuf is indeed living his dream of going to school, when I asked him what he wanted to become later in life, "Doctor" he answered without any hesitation.

Malam Saleh Mai Fata is the Ward head of Unguwar Gabas in Tudun Murtala.

During an interview session, to brief him of our latest development in his community, I told him about little Yusuf's progress.

"The problem of out-of-school children in our community is truly alarming," he said. "We are a densely populated area that is educationally under-served, though the government is trying, it is important that all stakeholders contribute their quotas"

He continued. He explained to me that previously other organizations were at his community to partner with him on the reductions of the high numbers of out of school children but nothing was achieved. And they are ever grateful for the scholarship initiative, championed by FlexiSAF Foundation and Wisdom International School.

Today little Yusuf is part Flexisaf Foundation's 32 children that are fully sponsored and mentored to reduce the menace of out-of-school children in Unguwar Gabas, Tudun Murtala Kano. It is obvious that education is indeed expensive, but nonetheless, it is imperative for each and every one of us to contribute his quota.



FlexiSAF
FOUNDATION

Sponsor A Child
With Just

₦4,170
Monthly Donation

Or

₦50,000
Yearly Donation

Account Details:
FlexiSAF Foundation
GTBank 0422637061



**For More Enquiries
Please Contact:**

 +234 808 407 7424

 Info@flexisaf.org

 www.flexisaf.org

 [flexisaf_foundation](https://www.instagram.com/flexisaf_foundation)

 [FlexiSAF Foundation](https://www.facebook.com/FlexiSAF_Foundation)

 [@flexisaf_fdn](https://twitter.com/flexisaf_fdn)

Head Office

No. 25 Ibadan Street,
Area 3, Garki, Abuja.

