

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AMBASSADOR'S PROGRAM

The strength of every vulnerable community lies in the willingness of her youth to use their innate energies for social good such as peace building. And it is in making this responsibility a prime focus of the youths – some who have records with their community schools – that a project which seeks to develop and rehabilitate their communities was conceived.

As a Sustainable Peace Education initiative, the Community Development Ambassadors Project (CODAP) leverages on the ideal that sustainable development is designed to thrive well in peaceful environments. So we empower community youths with the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes that can create as well as sustain a culture of peace in the fabric of society.

Coach Heal
Peace-making Expert and CODAP Initiator

The Community Development Ambassadors Project (CODAP) propels youths to initiate, plan and execute sustainable development projects capable of building resilience in vulnerable rural communities.

Ebere Ujam-Ojadua
Executive Director,
Egunec Education Support Foundation

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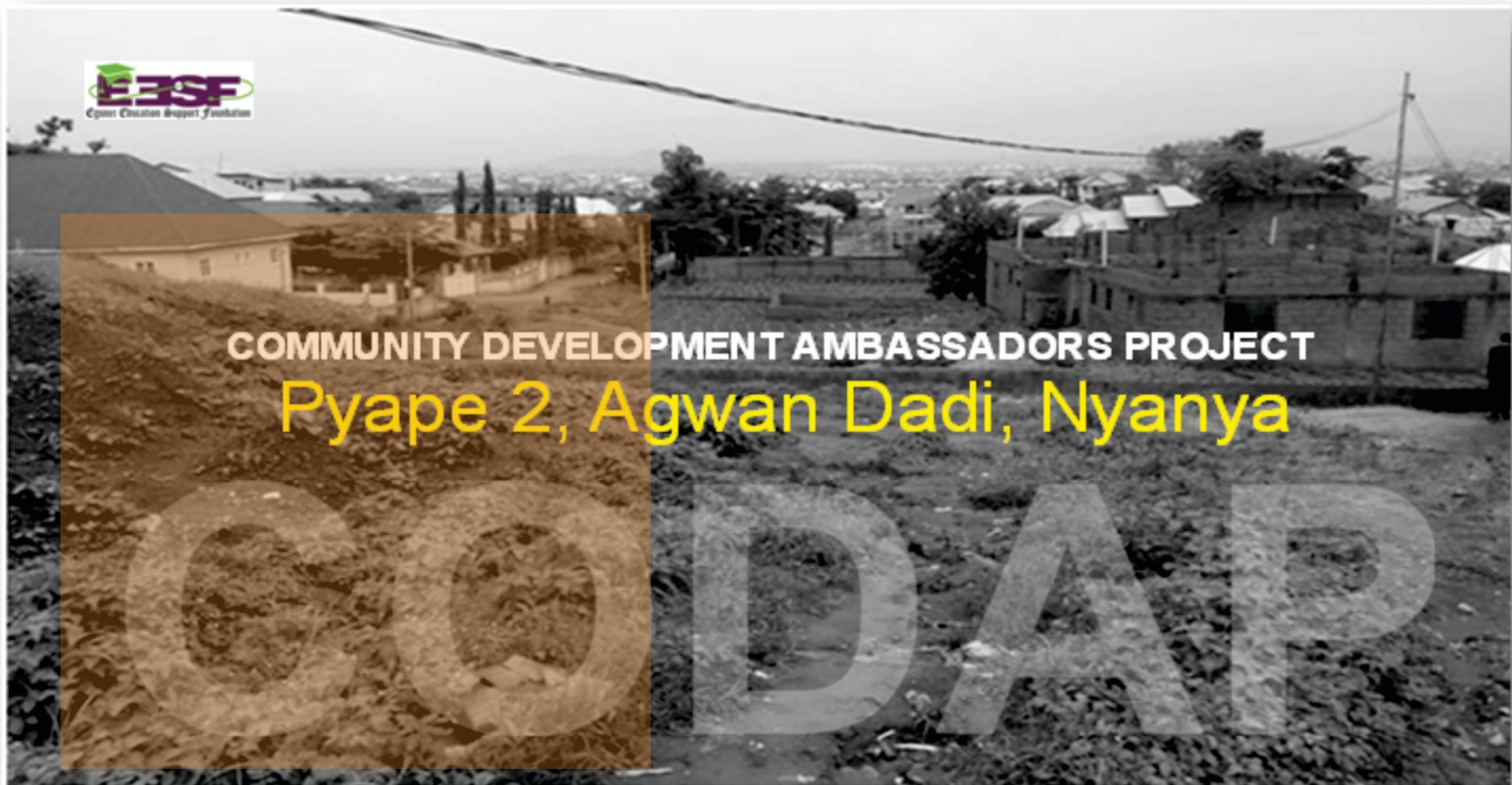
Valentine Onyeka Ogunaka (Brainbox)
Collaborating Spoken Word Artist for CODAP

OUR APPROACH

CODAP operates on the notion that youth (most especially those in vulnerable areas) represent the engine of sustainability. In so doing, EESF responds to the sustainable development needs of vulnerable communities while engaging youths as an active element of the sustainable development process.



So, we implement the Community Development Ambassadors Project (CODAP) like a workshop utilizing a specially designed toolkit called the Firewood Peace-building Model. The Firewood peace-building model was designed by Coach Heal as a customized tool for training young persons in vulnerable communities in Africa on peace-building. It comprises elements of design, participatory community research and knowledge



In June 2015, following EESF's sustained impact on education within the Nyanya communities as well as a careful assessment of new needs ideally weaved as CODAP, a team of EESF staff and volunteers led by development lawyer and the project's initiator Coach Heal, visited Pyape 2, Angwan Dadi to ascertain the deeply subconscious and psychological effects of the 2014 Nyanya bomb explosions that killed more than 150 persons and dismembered body parts of several others. As regards to sustainable development, we wanted to see how a vulnerable community was responding to insurgency among other development concerns with the aim of rehabilitating the minds of community members using the creative stamina of their youths.



EESF arriving Agwan Dadi, pilot community for CODAP

Angwan Dadi, which means “Home of peace” or “Home of Good things”, is just one among four (4) other communities within the Nyanya vulnerable zone. With CODAP designed to be replicated across them, Angwan Dadi was picked as the pilot community for the project due to its central proximity to the scene of the bomb blasts and also the receptive nature of its dwellers. It is peaceful and welcoming, however from an earlier assessment involving Samson Solomon, the youth leader of Agwan Dadi and CODAP resource person, the bomb incidents had caused a massive decline in economic activities within the area and was instigating violent behaviours and lack of innovation among his comrades as many became idle.

CALM AFTER THE STORM

For a recovering Angwan Dadi, the crises seemed over but sadly there was internal bleeding as we soon discovered the executive functioning skills of her youths and her resilience in development had been affected. There was stillness and fear among dwellers



GIVING A NEW RESPONSE

"It's not what happens to us,
but our response to what happens to us that hurts us."

- [Stephen R. Covey](#)

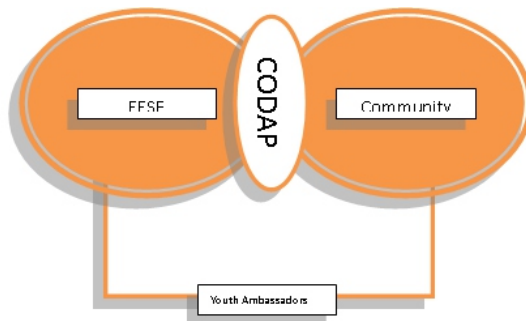


With the deeper consequences of unrest, EESF through CODAP needed to help create an internal response youth-driven sustainable development mechanism for Angwan Dadi which will also be applicable to other communities that suffer same fate.

PARTNERSHIP

MEETING COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

By July, being that there had not been any government presence with urgent, realistic and sustainable initiatives to respond to the psychological and developmental issues in communities like Angwan Dadi, we found sincere and profound partnership with the community stakeholders comprising of the Prince, the elders, youth leader, two serving politicians and the chairman of Gbayi Community in Angwan Dadi.



Our Partnership structure for CODAP is replicable in all our target communities in Nyanya. The rapport between EESF and Agwan Dadi established trust and laid the groundwork for selection of the youth ambassadors on whose shoulder CODAP and its sustainability development initiatives would thrive. It's a strong support system that creates the avenue for both parties to recommend and select prospective Community Development ambassadors.



THE ANGWAN DADI COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS RECEIVED US WITH OPEN ARMS AND WERE VERY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT OUR MISSION. THEY GAVE THEIR BLESSINGS CONCURRING WITH CODAP PROPOSED CONTENTS THAT THEIR YOUTHS WOULD NOT ONLY BECOME BENEFICIARIES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS BUT ALSO INITIATORS.



KEY BENEFICIARIES

CODAP AMBASSADORS



On 3rd August, 2015, 44 Angwan Dadi youths gathered in an interactive session with EESF staff and volunteer facilitators to discuss issues besieging their community. Through some candid thoughts responding to our prearranged questions, they provided useful insights which helped in determining the likely very active participants for CODAP.



25 youths were selected based on community recommendations and EESF's assessment. The Agwan Dadi community picked 15 prospective ambassadors while EESF selected just 10. **FINALLY, ONLY THREE MADE THE LIST.**

KEY BENEFICIARIES

CODAP AMBASSADORS



L-R: Ibrahim Dangana (24), Stephen Ochigbo (19) and Danlami Jacob (17) set for one of the most rewarding experiences of their lives. They are the 3 Angwan Dadi representative youths selected for CODAP pilot training and implementation.

Aside meeting the CODAP Ambassadors selection criteria bordering along commitment, availability, and passion for knowledge, Dangana, Ochigbo and Jacob were very socially conscious. First they showed extraordinary interest in community development and were also solution-minded with beautiful ideas and motives in line with the project's objectives. These were discerned during our interactive meeting with the 44 youths and we found a leadership potential in them forging path for a mentorship model that would help sustain the program like impacting the knowledge gained from the project on the other Angwan Dadi youths.

KEY BENEFICIARIES

SHAPING MINDSET, VISUALIZING IMPACT

“BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND” - STEPHEN COVEY

In September, we needed to get the minds of the selected ambassadors equipped for the journey of impact in Agwan Dadi so they can clearly understand the right steps in fulfilling CODAP'S mission and thus bettering their community.

WITH THE RIGHT TEAM, THE RIGHT MINDSET AND THE RIGHT STEPS, YOU GET BRIGHT RESULTS”.
- COACH HEAL

This CODAP mind exercise lasted for four weeks with Book Reading a central tool for self development. This would help them visualize the impact of the project in their minds and by essence develop a strong mindset towards the tasks and challenges that may arise – to perform effectively.

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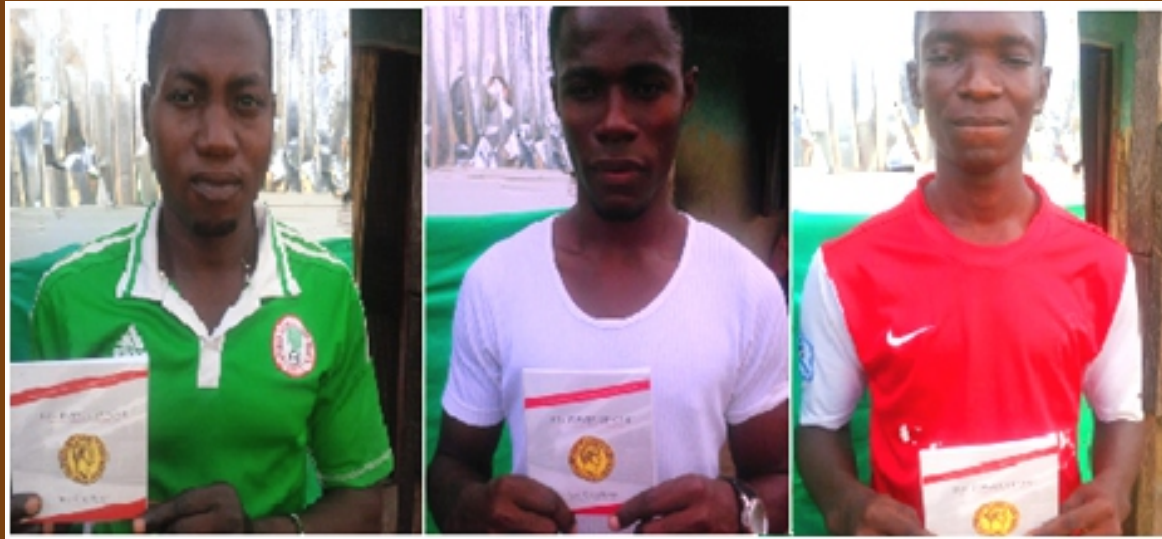
FROM AN AMBASSADOR

I am Danlami Jacob and I am 17 years old. I live in AngwanDadi, a vulnerable community in Nyanya, FCT Abuja. Here, we have experienced the harsh realities of insurgency in Nigeria and my burning desire is to bring the youth in my community under a common purpose. I am a change maker and with the CODAP training, my peers and I can design, plan and implement a sustainable development project in AgwanDadi and begin the process of rebuilding ahead of the Nyanya twin Bomb blast.

KEY BENEFICIARIES

SHAPING MINDSET, VISUALIZING IMPACT

BOOK OF THE MONTH:



CODAP ambassadors enriched their minds with “The Power of One” by Femi Olamilekan. It was a great source of inspiration as themes explored courage, personal power, love and enthusiasm and adversity quotient amongst others.

*A man who does not read
Is not just an empty head
When he's called upon to lead
He's just as good as dead*

*To the mind reading is, what watering is to plant
If a man must change his society, it is with what he has
learnt*

- BRAINBOX
Poet and Youth coach

KEY BENEFICIARIES

SHAPING MINDSET, VISUALIZING IMPACT

With more mind development books added to the reading list of the ambassadors, the process of complete “The Power of One” allowed the facilitators and ambassadors to have a common ground mentally. In its review, anchored by lead facilitator Coach Heal, a mentorship meeting was held culminating into certain mission statements and principles (personal integrity, empathy, Win-win mentality for the organization, community and mentorship) that would guide the ambassador's actions, performance and activities.



THE THINK WIN-WIN PRINCIPLE
ADOPTED BY THE CODAP
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



Visualizing impact through mind development was simply structured to enable the CODAP ambassadors imagine a new, better-off and sustainable Angwan Dadi right before its physical manifestation.

CODAP TRAINING

THE FIREWOOD APPROACH

On 3rd October, 2015, right before the CODAP training commenced, Nyanya experienced a third bomb blast in just a space of 17 months with over 40 persons injured. However this time, the community was aware of the effects and knew how to respond.

By 7th October, the three Agwan Dadi development ambassadors embarked on the exhaustive process of learning how to solve sustainable development problems using the FIREWOOD Approach.

FIREWOOD IS AN EFFICIENT DEVELOPMENT MODEL FOR VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES



Through the FIREWOOD approach, the youths were taught how to bring sustainable solutions to the development issues of their community, Angwan Dadi.

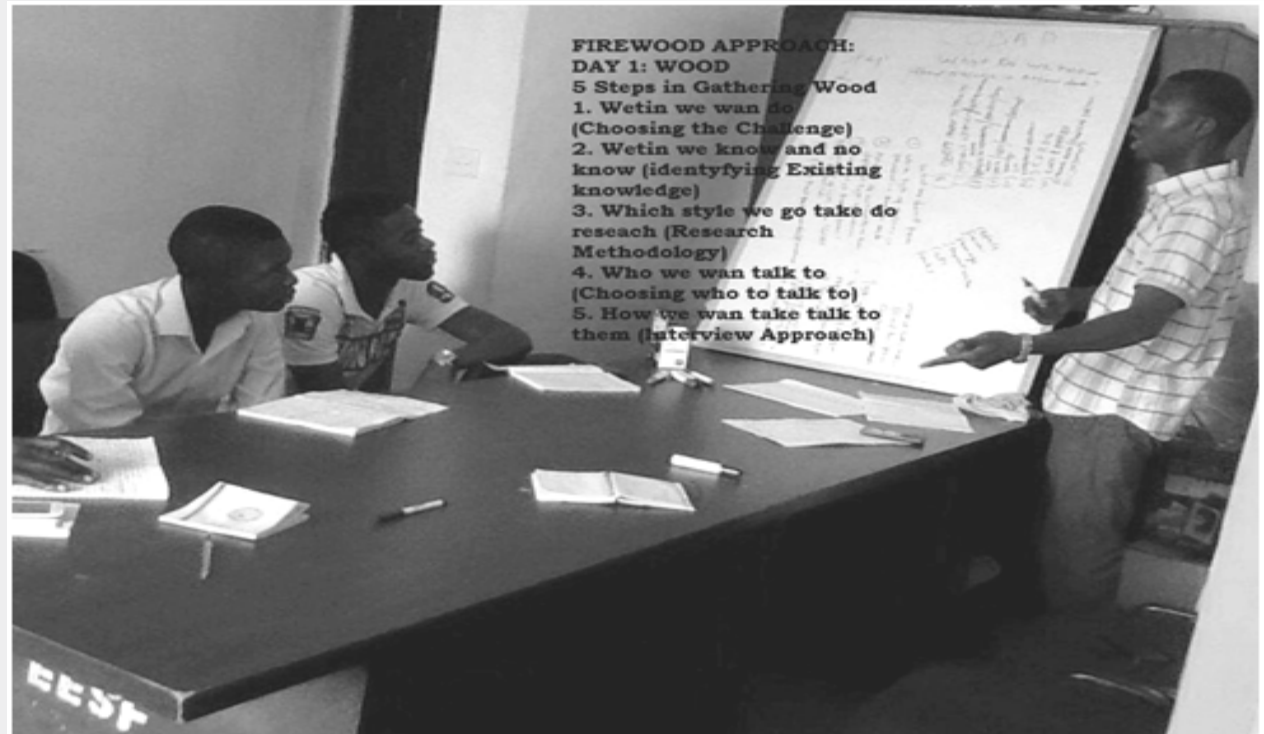
The FIREWOOD approach draws inspiration from the human centred design, a process used for decades to create new solutions for multi-national corporations and which had over time been specially adapted for organisations working in communities in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The FIREWOOD approach begins by examining the needs and behaviours of the persons affected by the problem we want to solve. It helps us truly listen and understand what is truly affecting the people and what they want. It also ensures that our solutions are feasible and sustainable in the long run.

- **Coach Heal (PEACE-MAKING COACH AND CODAP INITIATOR)**

CODAP TRAINING

THE FIREWOOD APPROACH

We introduced the FIREWOOD approach to the Agwan Dadi Community development ambassadors in the Nigerian Pidgin English, a language the youths are more comfortable with and for easy comprehension.



Coach Heal,
Facilitating CODAP



Stephen Ochigbo, a
CODAP iambassador
mastering and
illustrating the wood
phase

CODAP TRAINING

THE FIREWOOD APPROACH (RATIONALE)

CODAP training lasted until 14th November and for the twelve weeks, the ambassadors and EESF facilitators worked together to translate what they have gathered from the people in the field into opportunities and solutions.

The reason for utilizing this approach for training the youth in community development constitute the following:

- The method relied more on the ingenuity and ability of the ambassadors to come up with the inspirational ideas that will develop their community which is a major objective of CODAP.
- The approach increased the speed and effectiveness of creating new solutions
- The approach simply guided while giving a platform for the ideas and creativity embedded in the ambassadors to show up.

CODAP TRAINING

THE FIREWOOD APPROACH (RATIONALE)

- At the end of the FIREWOOD approach training in the CODAP timeline, the ambassadors were able to:
- Understand **community problems, needs, constraint and barriers at a deep level.**
- Learn **how to conduct field research, who and how to interview as well as how to gather relevant information from the field.**
- Know **how to brainstorm, synthesize and derive opportunities and solutions from relevant information gathered in the field.**
- Master **the process of initiating, planning and executing development projects in their communities.**

CODAP TRAINING

FIELD TRAINING (MALARIA AWARENESS)

We extended the firewood training to the field as the ambassadors executed a malaria sensitization and awareness project in their community, Agwan Dadi.

During the information gathering stage, the team was able to collect relevant health data as it relates to the root causes of malaria in their community and with that information in hand were able to design a unique awareness and prevention programme suited to their



The awareness project was a practical demonstration of their training which engaged them and also embedded the project training deeply in them. Through this malaria awareness and prevention programme, they were able to liaise with community leadership on the way forward as well as educate members of the community on how to prevent the spread of malaria within the community. Issues such as stagnant water, location of farms near residences and poor sanitation habits were amongst some of the issues addressed.

INFORMATION GATHERING: Interview was one instrumental the ambassadors used in gathering community opinions about malaria. An elder, the Gbayi community chairman of Angwan Dadi and some community members were

CODAP TRAINING

FIELD TRAINING (MALARIA AWARENESS)



CODAP in its pilot phase was successful in its capacity building objective and understanding of the necessary variables and measures would go a long way in making youth in the rural communities an active channel for achieving peace through the sustainable development Goals (SDGs) and create self-sufficiency in youth in vulnerable communities.

Ebere Ujam-Ojadua
Executive Director,
Egunc Education Support Foundation



INFORMATION GATHERING by Ibrahim Dangana through observation was also key. Findings would be used to sensitize his people, the Gbayi community of Angwan Dadi.

