

# *Memoirs* of Dr Abraham B., JDOKOKO

*"...selflessly adding value to other lives is the essence and true meaning of living/life."...Abraham IDOKOKO!*

**A**braham Idokoko was born at exactly 1:40am on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of January, 1983 at Notre Dame "Catholic Mission" Hospital, Agenebode, an historic River Niger water side town in present day Edo State of Nigeria to the monogamous family of Mr & Mrs Umoru Irene, Idokoko.

His dynamic 'volunteer-spirited' community development works today stems from his early contact with Divine Grace that envisioned him for a lifetime of maximum impact for as many everywhere. Traditional family values, virtues and exemplary parenthood had a very significant role that must be adequately acknowledged. He hasn't missed any stage of the characteristic milieu of challenges common to growing up in Africa yet, against all odds, he is excellently abreast with international best practices, dexterity and leadership-capacity associated with young professionals of his age anywhere on the globe.

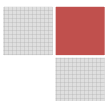
Abraham had an excellently smooth run through formal education from cradle till date. He had a brilliant preparatory primary education with exceptional abilities relative to peers. In 1999, he was the best graduating student at Our Lady of Fatima College, Auch, Nigeria besides winning several laurels in regional competitions as a representative of the school. The prestigious University of Lagos, College of Medicine meritoriously admitted him to study Medicine and Surgery in 2000, where he graduated cum laude in 2007 as a Medical Doctor. He had since gone further to obtain a postgraduate degree in organizational/project management from the Obafemi Awolowo University Postgraduate College in collaboration with the renowned Nigerian Institute of Management in Lagos, Nigeria.

Dr Idokoko is running with a mission to contribute indelibly to the development of effective public health policies, sustainable primary health care delivery systems, better health financing options and international diplomacy in Africa and the developing world, with specific interest in child and adolescent health and rights. He has been very passionate advocate of youth policy change and empowerment earned through 'being the change we seek'. He has always being an exceptional leader while going through all level of schooling where he served in many capacities in academic and non-academic civil society community development-oriented platforms.

His landmark volunteer free healthcare work began from the impoverished suburbs of Lagos and nearby Ogun State in Nigeria. As at today, Abraham has crossed the rugged borders of many African nations against fierce personal and economic security odds to deliver free healthcare services to the hard-to-reach rural communities.

It all started with an undying desire to leave this world better than i met it that stem from an innate sense of responsibility towards ensuring a working functional system in place everywhere within the jurisdiction of my capabilities. This naturally translated into a passion to selflessly serve my immediate community at every stage of my young life by being the change agent that we all desire though, at enormous personal cost. Nothing has been more satisfying which prioritized selfless community service a top irreplaceable component of my daily life schedules, thinking and future career action plans.

His sojourn as a volunteer medical doctor afforded me the opportunity to be exposed firsthand with the challenging socio-economic healthcare development needs across African communities which



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only re-ignited and re-focused his career direction. You need to know that your existence today will yield more value when someone somewhere gets a better life he wouldn't afford because of you. You find purpose when you keep being useful to the people in and around your life that would ordinarily not afford your expertise.

Abraham work currently as a community medical officer in a rural health centre in Ido-Ekiti, Nigeria under the volunteer National Youth Service Corps where he leads the Health & Medicals Community Development Service Group. While there, he has worked as a volunteer medical officer with the Nigerian Christian Corpers Fellowship (NCCF), that delivered free medical services to the rural people of Ara-Ikole Ekiti Village, Ekiti State, Nigeria for 3-days lasting March 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009. He is collaborating with policy makers and community leaders in the region to deliver essential healthcare services to the people in their communities through health screening and education campaigns. His mandate is clear, the people especially children, pregnant women, adolescent and the aged must have universal access to quality essential healthcare free or at minimal direct cost to them where ever i go. He volunteered as an Electoral Poll Clerk with the Nigerian Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) during the recent governor-ship re-run election conducted in Ekiti State, Nigeria on Saturday, 25th April, 2009.

November 2008, he was a volunteer medical doctor with the Nigeria Christian Graduates Fellowship (NCGF) & Africa Vision Tract House that delivered 2-weeks free healthcare services to the people of Calaba Town, Waterloo and other Freetown rural neighbourhoods in Sierra Leone from November 4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> during his quarterly 10-day leave as an intern. [www.ncgfafriavisiontracthouse.org](http://www.ncgfafriavisiontracthouse.org)

Dr Idokoko was in The Gambia in March 2008, again, as a Missionary Doctor with Pro-Health International from Nigeria and Pittsford Community Church members from Rochester, New York, USA. We offered a one-week long comprehensive specialist and general clinical services to the people of Serekunda and Banjul neighbourhoods. Again, this was during another 10-day quarterly leave as an intern. [www.prohealthinternational.org](http://www.prohealthinternational.org)

Several times between 2003 – 2007, he worked passionately as a Volunteer health officer with the Nigerian Conference of Christian Medical and Dental Students (NCCMDS) in collaboration with Mission Group International (MGI) deliver free community healthcare screening, education, treatment and referral in rural Ikorodu and Epe suburb villages, Alaba international market, etc in Lagos State, Nigeria.

From 2002 till 2007 while in Medical School, Abraham rose from a volunteer ordinary member to peer-educator and later director of programs and research of the Action Group on Adolescent Health (AGAH-Lagos), an undergraduate based advocacy group committed to the total wellbeing of young persons with special focus on their sexual and reproductive health and rights. During this period in 2006, he was co-leader/organizer of the first reproductive health walk in Nigeria among several other laudable projects. AGAH is the youth-led arm of The Campaign Against Unwanted Pregnancy (CAUP) based in Nigeria.

Also, in 2007, he volunteered as a Health officer with Chike – Okoli Foundation for a free cardiovascular health screening, education and campaign at the International Trade Fair Centre market in Badagry Expressway, Lagos, Nigeria on Wednesday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

No wonder, he earnestly sought the welfare of his colleagues and was overwhelmingly elected as the Welfare Secretary of the Association of Medical Students of the University of Lagos in 2004 during

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which period he pioneered several academic and social-economic welfare packages for his colleagues till 2006.

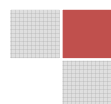
Considering his pragmatic and objective approach and contribution to policy issues and youth leadership, Abraham has worked with numerous development and policy-change organizations on national and international projects in many capacities. He was member of the management team of the Nigerian chapter of the Network for Youths and Adolescents of Africa (NAYA) and HIV/AIDS Prevention and care (HAPAC) project step-down officer with the Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria in collaboration with PPFA-I & the NACA (national agency for control of HIV/AIDS). He is also Co-director of the Save Children Now initiative that is committed to the defence of child rights globally ([www.savechildrennow.org](http://www.savechildrennow.org)). Dr Idokoko serves as an advisory programs director with the Nurses Across the Borders Humanitarian Initiative in Lagos, Nigeria ([www.nursesacrosstheborders.org](http://www.nursesacrosstheborders.org)).

Obviously, Abraham sacrifices a lot of his scarce time and even his hard-earned personal income in pursuit of free healthcare expertise delivery across board. Despite his very tight & busy academic and clinical work schedules which proves his uncommon sense of commitment to community development services especially in favour of people humanity in disadvantaged circumstances. Though, it must be reiterated that early exposure to Divine Grace made all of those efforts easier as it would never have been possible without GOD!

Volunteering is no wise challenging but, it positively influenced his final career path as it provided him the much needed platform to bring to bear my innate potentials and natural passions beyond the classroom/laboratory scientific processes which he did exceptionally excel in as well. In our mundane society that is devoid of merit and credible mentors, volunteering offers diverse opportunities to network towards possibilities of contributing your quota to the society in various roles and packages. It helps improve and sharpen those raw dreams and ideas of yours that would otherwise be too crude to scale the global challenges. He has been a volunteer all his life in service to his immediate community though, the clinical healthcare service dimension was born barely over 7years ago.

Firstly, African youths need to realise that running with a definite purpose orchestrate the sequence of action/courses that will yield your dream results or destiny. But, it's important to know that it is not just enough to find a purpose, it is imperative that it is discovered EARLY. Imagine a man who just discovered he was meant to be a footballer at age 50. So, early definition of your life purpose beyond secular/educational curriculum is a sine qua non to a life of impact. Secondly, they need to know that your discovered purpose should not in any way make your statutory obligations like formal education or work suffer or fail. You must learn to prioritise, plan and appropriate your time and calendar in a balance sheet. "By God's grace and mercy, the countless hours I spent on volunteer work never diminished my academic or job performance". Thirdly, you need to know that someone volunteered in time past to procure the institutional benefits you share today. So, you must create time out to give free service towards community development at least for posterity. However, your unflinching discipline and diligence will remain the most critical accessory to success as you start volunteering.

Needless to remind you that African people especially children are still waiting all over Africa; not necessarily in long queues. But, earnestly contending in their mind and hoping that you will act right in defence of their course someday!



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