Engaging Employer Partners to Commit to Job Placements for Women in Tech
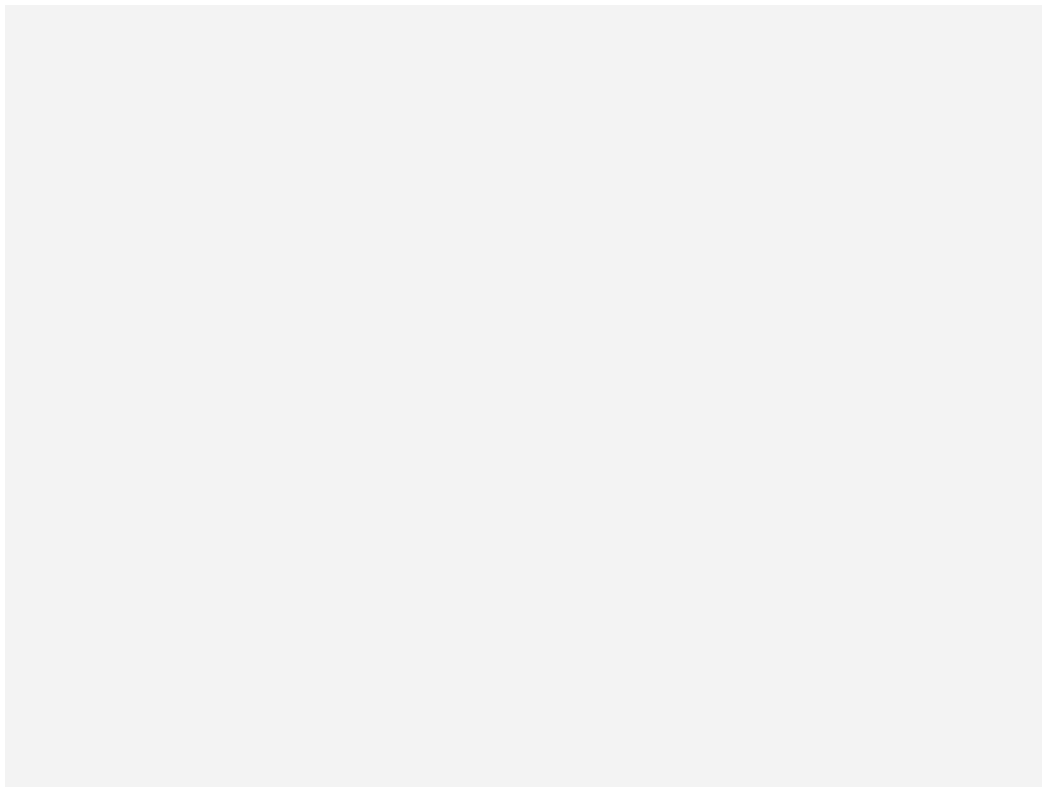
+SocialGood
Oct 15 · 4 min read

By *+SocialGood Connector* *Ashley Bass*

Left to Right: Ashley Bass, +SocialGood Connector, Diwura Oladepo, Executive Director for Tech4dev, Nylana Murphy

The UN Solutions Summit is an annual catalytic gathering at United Nations Headquarters in New York during the UN General Assembly. This initiative lifts up and advances the work of exceptional teams already developing innovative solutions that address the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It shows that people already have extraordinary solutions in progress to our most complex challenges.

During the Solutions Summit, a group of selected global innovators give a 'lightning talk' outlining their breakthrough efforts to an audience of senior policymakers who have the means to pave solid regulatory foundations, investors who care deeply about long-term change and impact, industry leaders who are able to deploy quickly and at scale, fellow entrepreneurs

who can share wisdom on starting up, and members of the general public, including youth, who bring additional creative insight. The Ford Foundation hosted the global innovators during a reception ceremony, where people from the community were able to mix and mingle with the innovators to discuss their organizations and involvement with the Solutions Summit.

One innovator that stuck out to me was Diwura Oladepo, Executive Director of Tech4Dev. Tech4Dev is a non-profit social enterprise that uses technology solutions to ensure people are engaged in decent work, promoting social and economic development in Africa. They create opportunities for decent work engagement through digital skills empowerment and advocacy.

Tech4Dev, describes themselves as "using technology to create decent work for sustainable development." They have reached out to several underserved communities across different states in Nigeria where it focuses on empowering people (women, teenagers, and young adults), creating opportunities for decent work through technology-based training, which include coding skills, deep tech skills, employability skills and basic digital skills. These initiatives are in alignment with their goals to prepare people for the future of work.

The Nigerian Women Techsters bridges the digital knowledge divide between men and women by training 2,400 women in underserved communities across Nigeria, resulting in increased access to more coding talent, capable of improving the quality of work within organizations and eventually, promoting economic growth and development in Nigeria.

The training provides adequate learning opportunities for participants to develop knowledge and build capacity that translates their experience into relevant skills and competencies in the workplace and business ideas worthy of incubating into competitive start-ups.

Goal: To train 2,400 women between the ages of 16–40 across underserved communities in 12 states, in coding and deep tech skills

Objectives:

● To empower African women to establish start-ups or technology-enabled businesses and to facilitate entrepreneurship them

● To support women to become digital enabled, social champions, and owners of businesses

● To bridge the digital divide between men and women in the tech space while contributing to economic growth

● To ultimately improve the socio-economy of the Africa continent by providing skills that will elevate women from poverty

The Scale Up: Women Techsters

Women Techsters will be teaching 5 million women across Africa by 2030 in

Women Techsters will be teaching 5 million women across Africa by 2030 in digital and deep tech skills in 5 learning tracks: Web and mobile development, games development, embedded systems, data science and artificial intelligence.
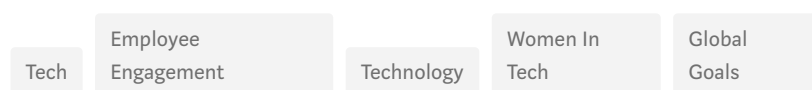
As an advocate for increasing the number of Women in Tech specifically women of color, I couldn't help but ask Diwura about her experience (from a grassroots non-profit perspective) with engaging employer partners, whom of which play a huge role as a stakeholder in programs such as this.

In order to reach the majority of their goals, the need for employer partners to employ women post training program is a huge metric. Often times in the tech community we hear about the lack of women in tech roles, the lack of diversity amongst staff, as well as the need for employers to decrease and/or eliminate a degree requirement for certain tech jobs where skills can be acquired through non-traditional routes such as free tech training programs like The Nigerian Women Techsters.

Even though there are free tech training programs for women, there's still a battle to effectively engage with employers to commit to job placement for graduates of these programs, in comparison to fee-based tech training bootcamp programs that have more resources (administratively and financially), to help create pipeline opportunities for job placement. I pose this question;

> Despite all of the statistics around the lack of diversity, gender pay gaps, and gender equity in tech careers, why is it still so hard for non-profits or smaller boot camp programs to place women into tech roles post completion?

In efforts to work towards closing the gender gap, providing quality Education for community members, and proving decent work and economic growth to the community and beyond, which are three SDGs; I challenge senior leaders and hiring managers think open up your doors to working with smaller local organizations who are running free tech training programs that have a talent pool of individuals from non-traditional and low socioeconomic backgrounds.

| Tech | Employee Engagement | Technology | Women In Tech | Global Goals |

👏

4 claps

Medium