

Brit stranded in Africa launches Corona app with local youth

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27-year-old Queen's Young Leader Adam Bradford is stuck in Cotonou, Benin and has decided to work with local people to combat COVID-19

Adam Bradford, from Sheffield, is currently in Benin Republic, West Africa. A few weeks ago land borders were closed and flights out of the country are now sparse. He was in the country working on a project to support young people to become entrepreneurs. His programme, AdamStart, has seen over 8000 young people apply and be supported with their ideas since 2010.

With global cases of COVID-19 now in the millions, it is imperative that the world acts quickly to come up with solutions to avert the crisis.

Adam has decided to make the most of his time stranded in Africa to make a difference. He has teamed up with local health professionals, entrepreneurs and tech talent to create an online COVID kit which helps to share information on the disease, prevention and the latest advisories. It launches as an app this week and will be shared throughout African countries, beginning in Benin Republic and Nigeria.

Adam's initiative AdamStart, is accepting ideas which tackle Coronavirus problems such as access to food and water, renewable energy and prevention equipment. Adam will fund and incubate the ideas along with a team of local businesspeople and mentors. Millions of young people across Africa are now grounded, unable to go outside or be economically active. The objective is that this initiative will keep people productive and safe during the pandemic. Almost one thousands people have submitted ideas to the contest already with some being picked up by prominent officials including Government ministers and major corporations.

His programme has today announced its support of KnowCovid19 Nigeria, a platform designed and developed by young entrepreneurs Abdulhakeem Abdulkareem and Abideen Olasupo. The platform shows real-time data on COVID-19 cases, recent contact history, state by state data and includes an online symptom checker and mass information campaign. Using a creative variety of cartoons, graphics and easy to understand information, the enterprising duo hope the platform will be the go to place for information for Nigerians on Coronavirus. They also have plans to expand the platform across the Africa region. On the announcement of their venture's support today, Mr Abdulhakeem commented: 'We are delighted to be spotted and supported by AdamStart. Our goal is to leverage on this partnership and support to reach a wider community, most especially, in Africa.'

AdamStart has also partnered with Teens World Empowerment, a local youth organisation in Nigeria founded by 16-year-old Dahunsi Oluwanifemi, to host training courses for young people in the areas of web design, graphic design, 3D printing and entrepreneurship. Similarly, 19-year-old Aliu Toluwani Victor has been supported to run a youth training camp through his organisation Upsurge Global which featured local social media influencers and high profile businesspeople encouraging young people to stay productive during the crisis.

The organisation has the support of Cherish Enterprise Institute, a University and education system founded by former Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Dr Abba Ruma in Nigeria, the Ubong King Foundation, Global IT Service in Benin and other local organisations who are backing the project.

Today Adam said: 'The Coronavirus is sweeping through communities and breaking up the fabric of the world's economies, services and people. We need to put a stop to it. Rather than wallowing in the fact that I am stuck abroad, I am mobilising a global movement out of Africa which will come up with solutions that can impact the world. Our strategy is first about information sharing, ensuring people are aware of the risks and the latest safety advice. Secondly we will focus on solutions and antidotes to the problem, not necessarily a cure, but it would be amazing if we can find one.'

His spokesperson said: 'After having launched the competition as a response to our work launching AdamStart in Africa, we never knew that this response would be so huge. Adam is currently on lockdown in Cotonou, Benin Republic, after his flights back home got cancelled. Instead of wasting away time and being unproductive, we are supporting ambitious ideas from education projects through to wholesale solutions which will make this crisis much easier to bare with.'

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Mr Benson Ekpo, a lifestyle influencer and Regional Director of AdamStart Africa, said: 'This pandemic has forever changed the state of the world; it is imperative to our survival as a race to adapt quickly to the changes that will arise from this. I couldn't be prouder to be associated with an organization such as AdamStart which is setting the pace and activating young talents to innovate with the future in view.'

The AdamStart Corona Innovation Challenge is accepting proposals on a rolling basis at www.adamstart.com/covid19.

— ENDS —

Notes to Editors:

- The online Coronavirus kit can be found at www.corona-19kit.com and the AdamStart Corona Innovation Challenge can be found at www.adamstart.com.
- Adam Bradford is from Sheffield and is the recipient of a Queen's Young Leaders Award. The Award, presented by Her Majesty The Queen in yesterday, which is part of The Queen's Young Leaders Programme, and celebrates the achievements of young people who are taking the lead to transform the lives of others and make a lasting difference in the communities.
- Diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome aged 11. He doesn't let it hold him back, and supports other people with Autism to do the same. In 2013, he launched the 'Look Past the Label' campaign, to raise public awareness of Autism.
- Adam is committed to transforming the lives of young people. His work has led him to mentor over 1,000 young people through organisations including UnLtd, Virgin StartUp, Learning Initiatives for Employment, STEMNET, and the Peter Jones Foundation.
- He is on the advisory board of the Queen's Commonwealth Trust, whose President is Prince Harry.
- He rose to prominence in the UK as an anti-gambling campaigner after his father was jailed for stealing money from his employers to fund his secret online gambling habit.

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