

A GLOBAL INNOVATION LAB FOR THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENTS GOALS

OCTOBER 2017 OVERVIEW & FEEDBACK REPORT









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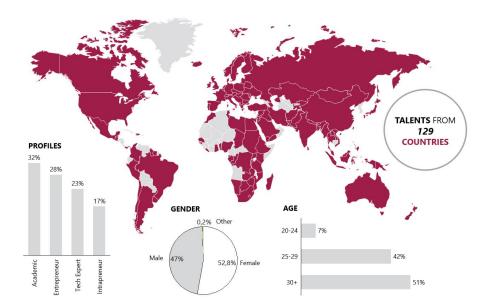


UNLEASH – Innovation Lab for the Sustainable Development Goals

UNLEASH is a non-profit initiative aiming to address the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by bringing young talents from across the world together to innovate and collaborate on new solutions to global challenges. Each year leading up to 2030, 1,000 selected talents from academia, business, and civil society will gather for an immersive 9 days of co-creation and problem-solving. Talents apply to UNLEASH with ideas or insights on how to meet the SDGs, and solutions are developed by challenging, merging, and improving these ideas. Channels of support, ranging from financial aid to pro-bono consulting, are available to the best ideas to ensure implementation. In this way, UNLEASH will foster action-oriented innovation and practical solutions.

OVERVIEW OF UNLEASH INNOVATION LAB 2017

The first UNLEASH Innovation Lab, held in Denmark on August 13-21, 2017, was supported by a global consortium of actors, including UNDP, Deloitte, Dalberg, DI, the Carlsberg Foundation, +170 knowledge and talent partners, and +35 company sponsors and donors. The event focused on seven themes linked directly to the SDGs: Education & ICT, Energy, Health, Food, Sustainable Consumption & Production, Urban Sustainability, and Water. Out of 3,600 applicants sourced from 172 talent partners and through an open call for applications, 1,000 talents were selected to participate.



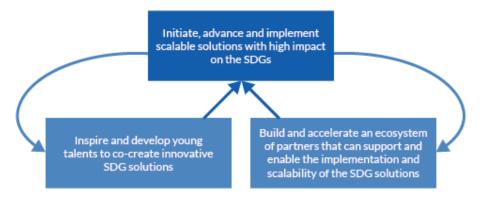
During UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017, participants spent two days in Copenhagen receiving an introduction to issues in global development, the SDGs, as well as sustainability strategies employed by innovative Danish companies. Participants then spent five days at 10 different Folk High Schools, where they co-created solutions to global challenges. The event culminated in an awards show in Aarhus with speeches by VIPs including:





THEORY OF CHANGE

The UNLEASH Theory of Change has three pillars:



INITIATE, ADVANCE, AND IMPLEMENT SCALABLE SOLUTIONS WITH HIGH IMPACT ON THE SDGS

The primary and overarching goal of UNLEASH is to initiate, advance, and implement solutions to the SDGs. These solutions can take a wide variety of forms, from non-profit initiatives and for-profit social enterprises to government partnerships and programs designed for corporate implementation.

The short-term outcome of the UNLEASH Innovation Lab is to bring together diverse talents who can *initiate* and *advance* solutions that address the SDGs. The long-term outcome of UNLEASH is to *implement* these solutions. To achieve these outcomes, UNLEASH supports the development and capacity building of young talent and the expansion of a supportive ecosystem, both of which are essential inputs to the implementation of SDG solutions.

INSPIRE AND DEVELOP YOUNG TALENTS TO CO-CREATE INNOVATIVE SDG SOLUTIONS

Engaging youth as drivers of social change has been a high priority, not only in the context of the SDGs, but in all issues of global development. Today's youth have the potential to be a force for progress and positive social change in their communities and the world. Yet there have been few large-scale global initiatives catering specifically to this demographic, and many youths continue to face obstacles in accessing the educational, economic, and leadership opportunities they need to develop their full potential. The UNLEASH Innovation Lab inspires and invites young people with the skills, expertise, and talent to realize their potential of contributing to the SDGs. We encourage global talent to address issues through the development of tangible solutions, thereby providing them with the skills and capacity for a lifetime of leadership.

BUILD AND ACCELERATE AN ECOSYSTEM OF PARTNERS THAT CAN SUPPORT AND ENABLE THE IMPLEMENTATION AND SCALABILITY OF THE **SDG** SOLUTIONS

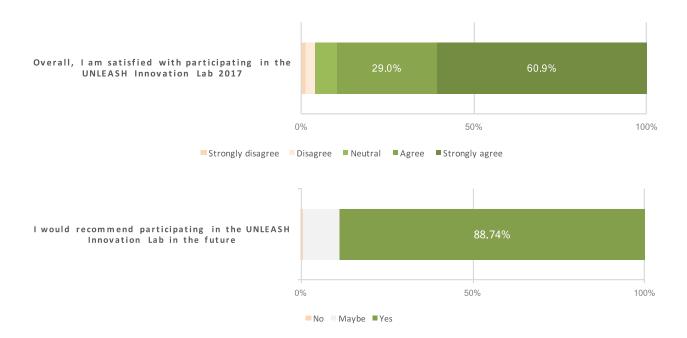
There are currently many disparate players addressing the SDGs and cross-sector engagement is limited. UNLEASH brings together players from all aspects of the ecosystem - including companies, government, and civil society - to create a stronger support network that can accelerate solutions to the SDGs and help them achieve widespread impact. We place youth in the middle of this ecosystem because we believe the SDG movement needs leaders who can build on past efforts and bring fresh perspectives to persistent and emerging problems. UNLEASH therefore contributes to connecting young people with networks, mentors, and movements – in formal and informal learning settings – that enable them to learn social change by doing social change. By ensuring access to the right support structures, we pave the way for young talents to leverage their new skills and implement solutions.



In the following sections, we first present the overall talent feedback received from our survey. Based on this feedback, we assess the achievement of the three pillars of our Theory of Change.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF UNLEASH INNOVATION LAB 2017

To assess the success of UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017, we conducted a participant survey¹ in September 2017. As depicted below, most feedback was overwhelmingly positive with 90% of participants agreeing or strongly agreeing that overall they were satisfied with participating in UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017. Furthermore, 89% of participants would recommend participating in a future UNLEASH event.



The above data points are backed by additional participant feedback, as shown by the examples below.

Without any doubt UNLEASH is THE BEST time and experience in my life. (...) I don't think I can come up with a word to express my feeling and appreciation"

> Hama Osman, Iraq

Makes me so happy and grateful to know that over 1,000 people go back into the world with renewed energy and hope to inspire others. Thank you UNLEASH"

> Samantha Braithwaite, South Africa

The diversity of people was awe inspiring - I never imagined I could interact with people from Nicaragua and Nepal face to face at the same time"

Nwoko Okechukwu, Nigeria



 $^{^{}m 1}$ The feedback from talents is based on responses from 444 talents who participated in the survey.

PILLAR 1: SOLUTIONS DEVELOPED AT UNLEASH IN 2017

The UNLEASH Innovation Lab seeks to initiate, advance, and implement solutions addressing the SDGs. In doing so, our short-term and long-term goals are as follows:

Short-term goals

- Diverse teams of talents develop actionable problem framings
- Teams co-create solutions to problem framings

Long-term goals

- 1. Solutions advance through the UNLEASH innovation process
- 2. Solutions are implemented with the support of the UNLEASH ecosystem

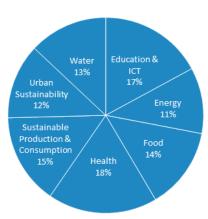
2017 ACHIEVEMENTS

During the nine days at UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017, talents developed 197 tangible out-of-the-box solutions. 18% of these solutions targeted SDG 3 (Health), while 17% focused on SDG 4 (Education & ICT) and 15% on SDG 12 (Sustainable Consumption & Production). From a geographic perspective, Sub-Saharan Africa was the biggest target market with 39% of solutions focusing on this region, while the second and third most targeted regions were South and Central Asia and North America with 11% and 10% respectively.

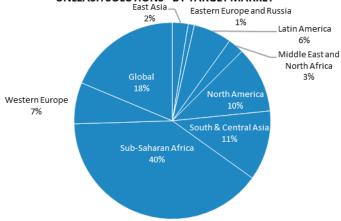
Solutions were developed through the UNLEASH innovation: a unique methodology that motivates and enables participating talents to design innovative solutions for the SDGs and leverages the best approaches in design thinking and human-centered design within a sustainable development context. Throughout the program, talents co-created solutions based on their diverse experiences. They collaborated with facilitators, experts and investors from the public and private sectors, and the civil society sector to ensure realistic and feasible implementation plans. The innovation process was developed by UNLEASH, Monitor Deloitte and a high level innovation advisory board

As part of our effort to encourage viability, talents were strongly urged to estimate their projected financial asks. Out of the 197 solutions, 120 had a combined financial ask of US\$ 53 million, with solutions targeting Sub-Saharan Africa estimating their combined need to be US\$ 25 million. The combined financial asks for North America-focused solutions and Latin America-focused solutions were US\$ 7 million and US\$ 5 million, respectively. The corresponding numbers for sectors were US\$ 15 million for SDG 7 (Energy), US\$ 10 million for SDG 11 (Urban Sustainability) and US\$ 7 million for SDG 6 (Water).





UNLEASH SOLUTIONS - BY TARGET MARKET





At the end of the nine days, 12 awards were given to the top solutions. These included the top solution in each thematic area, as well as five special awards, namely Most Impact Potential, Best Prototype, Most Compelling Communication, Most Collaborative Team, Most Visionary Team Below are examples of winning solutions developed during UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017:

Doti Gold (SDG 2)

In Nigeria, at least 1 million children suffer from acute malnutrition, while the cost of farming is rising due to the dependence on imports for farm inputs. Doti Gold harnesses the power of black soldier flies to locally convert food waste into animal feed and fertilizer, thereby improving farming outputs and farmers' livelihoods.

BlockFakeRx (SDG 3)

120,000 children die due to counterfeit antimalarial drugs in Africa each year. BlockFakeRx uses blockchain technology, which is a secure, immutable and auditable solution for tracking the supply chain movement of drugs, providing patients with a verifiable record of their drug's provenance through a mobile application.

SmartWrapR (SDG 12)

Shrink wrap is one of the largest hidden pollutants in the world. Replacing plastic shrink wrap with a reusable smart pallet cover, SmartWrapR reduces pallet wrapping costs to customers by half while reducing environmental impact by 50% in plastic waste, 95% of petroleum use, and 80% of CO2 emissions.

The full idea catalogue can be accessed at www.unleash.org/solutions.

Reflecting on the future, talents anticipated that they would remain engaged with each other and their solutions post-UNLEASH. Asked what types of support participants would require for further development of their solutions, responses varied across the targeted sectors, with the top three needs being help with fundraising or investment (27%), advice for business plans (12%), and access to corporate partners (18%).

SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION (SDG 12)

- Help with fundraising and investments 24%
- 2. Advice for business plans 24%
- 3. Technical advice 8%

ENERGY (SDG 7)

- Help with fundraising and investments 57%
- 2. Advice for business plans 14%
- Help with travel for your team to meet up 8%

HEALTH (SDG 3)

- Help with fundraising and investments 54%
- 2. Advice for business plans 22%
- 3. Technical advice 8%

URBAN SUSTAINABILITY (SDG 11)

- Help with fundraising and investments 54%
- 2. Advice for business plans 22%
- 3. Technical advice 8%

EDUCATION AND ICT (SDG 4)

- Help with fundraising and investments: 39%
- Access to corporate partners
 15%
- 3. Advice for business plans 12%

FOOD (SDG 2)

- Help with fundraising and investments: 38%
- Advice for business plans 30%
- Access to corporate partners 15%

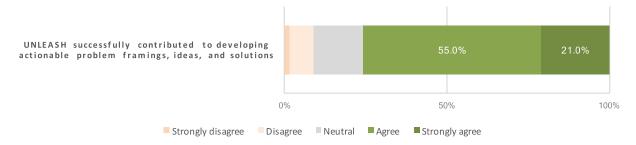
WATER (SDG 6)

- Help with fundraising and investments 48%
- Access to corporate partners 24%
- 3. Advice for business plans 12%

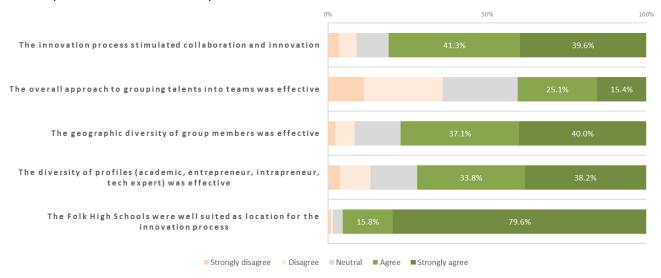


FEEDBACK BY TALENTS

The conducted survey also included questions to assess the first pillar of our Theory of Change. Responses showed that 76% of respondents believe that UNLEASH's short 9-day program successfully contributed to developing tangible solutions.



Respondents generally agreed that the UNLEASH innovation process stimulated collaboration and innovation, and that they benefited from the diversity.



Participants also overwhelmingly agreed that the setting of the Danish Folk High Schools was conducive to working together to generate solutions, and this is something UNLEASH should aim to replicate in other countries as it moves around the world.

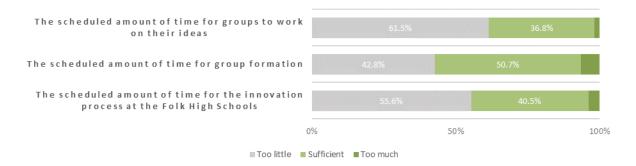
"I hope that wherever UNLEASH goes next, you can find some sort of setting outside of a major city where groups can work and bond in a similar way."

"The Folk High School experience was incredibly valuable and beneficial for the Innovation Lab process. The space held the group together well; and inspired companionship and hard work by its traditions. The early morning activities (swimming, running, etc.), the hospitality and genuine care from the staff, and the singing combined to make for a kind of immersive incubation of the Innovation process."

Feedback on the approach to grouping talents into teams was mixed. The results of team formation and talent satisfaction with their teams was inconsistent – some teams were very happy with the process and outcome while



other teams did not get along as well. Additionally, many respondents agreed that the amount of time reserved for the innovation process, meeting mentors, and working on their deliverables was insufficient.



While the UNLEASH program was busy and, and for some very intense, the overall feedback is that the UNLEASH process is a significant contributor towards innovation.

"I loved the process. It was very stimulating. Tedious in the moment, but rewarding and enlightening once reflected on. It was the thing which stood out to me most during the program."

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

While the UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017 received predominantly positive feedback, there are several areas of improvement that will enhance participant experiences and outcomes for future events.

In response to the talent feedback on group formation, we believe that there are two areas of improvements in team formation. First, we would like to refine the team selection process, building in more time for group formation and team member input. Second, we would like to improve our communication prior to UNLEASH to align expectations with talents, ensuring that all talents are aware that UNLEASH is not an accelerator to work on existing start-ups but an innovation lab to co-create new ideas with a diverse group of people.

Furthermore, forming teams earlier in the program and increasing the amount of time that teams should work together will enable teams to progress further through the innovation process and have more fully developed solutions. Without extending the overall length of the UNLEASH program, future UNLEASH events should consider reallocating time in order to dedicate more time for team formation and the innovation challenge.

PILLAR 2: PERSONAL CAPACITY BUILDING AT UNLEASH IN 2017

The process of designing and creating solutions to the SDGs is key in unleashing significant young talent that can address the SDGs both now and in the future. Regardless of whether solutions successfully materialize after the UNLEASH Innovation Lab, the program is designed to build the personal capacity of participants by inspiring diverse ideas, enhancing skills, and building confidence in participants' ability to quickly design and build solutions in collaboration with others. This personal capacity building outlasts the finite UNLEASH event, and increases the likelihood that talents contribute towards other solutions to meet the SDGs in the future.

Aside from personal capacity building, the talent development process also exposes talents to local culture through networking with local employees and experience with local technologies. Such experiences are meant to enhance participants' interest in returning to the host country after the UNLEASH Innovation Lab, perhaps even to the companies and organizations they have been in contact with during the event.



Short-term goals:

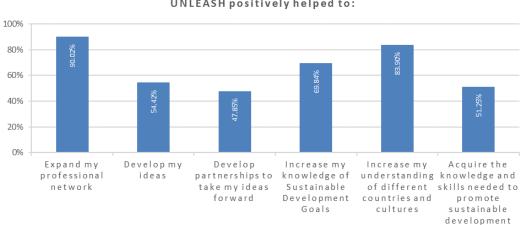
- 1. Talents with skills and expertise are motivated to contribute more fully to the SDGs
- 2. Talents gain user-centered design skills needed to co-create appropriate and implementable solutions
- 3. Talents gain confidence in their ability to take action on addressing the SDGs

Long-term goals:

- 1. Talents contribute to implementing solutions that address the SDGs (whether the solution is developed at UNLEASH Lab or elsewhere)
- 2. Talents work with a company or organization that focuses on solutions to the SDGs

2017 ACHIEVEMENTS

To best prepare next-generation leaders in global development, UNLEASH seeks to inspire and motivate talent; equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to advance new, innovative solutions; and connect them to a network of stakeholders who can rally around those solutions. The UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017 brought together 1,000 talents from 129 countries. The geographical diversity, as well as diversity in terms of age, gender, and profession, provided talents the opportunity to gain deep insight into the social and environmental challenges experienced by different groups, as well as the priorities and working cultures used in addressing them. In fact, almost 84% of participants reported an increase in their understanding of different countries and cultures.



UNLEASH positively helped to:

In addition to enhanced international understanding, most participants felt that UNLEASH contributed to expanding their professional networks, understanding of the SDGs, and acquiring necessary knowledge and skills to promote sustainable development, all of which are important first steps in taking action towards implementing SDG solutions.

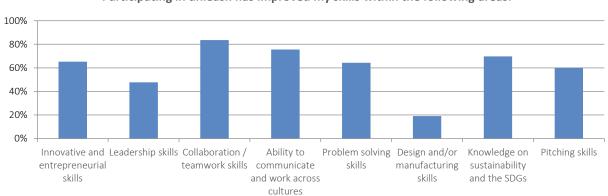
The above findings are accentuated by the fact that we are increasingly seeing talents organizing independently. While not all solutions created during UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017 will see continued development, talents are staying active in innovating and addressing the SDGs by engaging in online activities on the community board, sharing resources, and participating in regional meetups. A cursory overview shows that talents are currently selforganizing across a range of channels. As of October 2017, there are 31 unofficial UNLEASH-affiliated groups on WhatsApp – one for each thematic area, most others regional groups, and the remaining groups for purposes of social coordination. On Facebook, there are 10 groups – one group per thematic area, and regional groups for North America, Asia, and Europe. Meanwhile, the "official" UNLEASH group on Facebook shows strong continued involvement, with over 2,500 posts, comments, and reactions on the page in the last 28 days.

The UNLEASH Secretariat continues to track the advancement of solutions through our ongoing monitoring and evaluation, gathering data for future analysis.



FEEDBACK BY TALENTS

As part of the feedback survey, respondents were asked how UNLEASH contributed to developing multiple skills.



Participating in unleash has improved my skills within the following areas:

Respondents ranked collaboration / teamwork skills and their ability to work with culturally diverse groups as the skills that they improved the most during UNLEASH. These were followed closely by improving their knowledge on the SDGs, their innovation and entrepreneurial skills, and their pitching skills. Talents ranked the improvement of design and manufacturing skills as the lowest. Overall, participants found that UNLEASH contributed to building their personal capacity to work towards solutions to the SDGs.

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

We believe that design and manufacturing skills were improved less than other skills during UNLEASH because only a limited number of teams had the time to reach the physical prototyping phase of the innovation process. This feedback is corroborated by the previously mentioned time constraints. We hope to increase the time allotted to the innovation process at future UNLEASH events to enable teams to work together for longer so they can develop both their personal skills and ideas further.

PILLAR 3: EXPANSION OF ECOSYSTEM AT UNLEASH IN 2017

UNLEASH is centered on the next generation and the goal of creating a global movement of young talents that not only believe in the need for sustainable change, but also have the power, will, and capabilities of creating social good. As such, the UNLEASH networks builds on transformative partnerships with relevant actors, ranging from states, municipalities, and businesses to foundations, knowledge institutions, and NGOs. UNLEASH thus raises awareness about the SDGs throughout the broader global society.

To do so, UNLEASH organizes activities including media events with VIP speakers, program events primed for media coverage, and partnership outreach to players who can replicate UNLEASH in other locations.

Specifically, UNLEASH builds and expands the ecosystem of players addressing the SDGs through the following short-term and long-term goals:

Short-term goals

- 1. Companies, non-profits, and governments have increased awareness about the SDGs
- Companies, non-profits, and governments commit to tangibly support the implementation of new solutions to the SDGs

Long-term goals

 Companies, governments, investors, and other players directly facilitate the implementation of solutions through internal products/services, hiring SDG-focused talent, and/or supporting non-profit or for-profit start-ups



2017 ACHIEVEMENTS

The UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017 drew on a global consortium of 173 talent partners, 27 foundation partners, 16 corporate partners, and six execution partners (UNDP, Deloitte, Dalberg, the Confederation of Danish Industry, the Carlsberg Foundation, and the Danish Folk High Schools). Hundreds of facilitators, experts, investors, mentors and judges participated at different stages of UNLEASH, creating a rich and supportive ecosystem conducive not only to the talents, but it also contributed to the development and implementation of SDG-solutions and capacity building among participants. The ecosystem was a key factor of UNLEASH both before (event formation), during (event execution) and after the event (implementation).

In preparation for the UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017, 173 partners nominated talents for participation, while an even higher number of partners shared our call for application. Meanwhile, corporate partners and foundations contributed to content creation by developing thematic tracks and providing insights into global challenges used in forming problem framings. The UNLEASH Innovation Advisory Board, composed of thought leaders in innovation, design, and global development, developed the UNLEASH curriculum based on the overall strategic direction set by the execution partners.

During the event, the program and curriculum was executed with the help of 57 facilitators (excluding staff at the Folk High Schools), 96 corporate and content experts, 58 investors, 35 track judges, and 160 volunteers. While experts and investors provided industry insights and guidance, track judges contributed by assessing solutions developed by talents. Finally, the 160 volunteers contributed mainly with logistical assistance throughout the nine days of programming.

Following UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017, UNLEASH has drawn on its extensive partner network to ensure platforms for implementation of SDG solutions. Among these is a tailored platform (accessible via community.unleash.org), which facilitates continued conversations between talents, partner organizations, and the UNLEASH Secretariat, enabling sharing of valuable access and resources. UNLEASH will continue to build a network of accelerators, sponsors, and other experts on the platform to act as mentors as talents continue their collaboration on solutions to address global social and environmental challenges.

Furthermore, UNLEASH is currently collaborating with Dalberg and the International Finance Corporation (IFC, a member of the World Bank Group) to structure a US\$ 300,000 venture fund, which will be made accessible to UNLEASH participants. The fund will provide talents with access to seed capital through a special application process. As the fund is expected to last until 2030, we will continue to attract funding from interested investors and sponsors, whose contributions will be match funded by the IFC.

Finally, the extensive eco-system surrounding UNLEASH resulted in broad media exposure. In the three weeks leading up to the UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017, www.unleash.org had over 80,000 individual visitors. Between August 21st and 25th, content posted through UNLEASH social media channels with the hashtag "#UNLEASHLAB2017" reached over 23,500,000 people, making it the number one trending hashtag in Denmark for two days. Leading up to the event, over 250 individual posts were posted to the UNLEASH blog², garnering over 13,000 views in the month of August. Finally, the UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017 has seen coverage in over 100 media outlets, with 59 newspaper articles, 38 online articles, 8 TV segments, and 5 radio segments. These media outlets included some of the biggest newspapers and TV stations in Denmark (such as Jyllands-Posten, Politiken, Berlingske, Børsen, Information, DR, and TV2); and international news outlets (such as CNN, the Huffington Post, and CNBC Africa).

Media coverage and publicity via social media contributed to raising national and international awareness about UNLEASH, the UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017, and the SDG agenda. By presenting ideas, solutions, and talents to a global audience, it highlighted the need for innovation within the development space, simultaneously positioning

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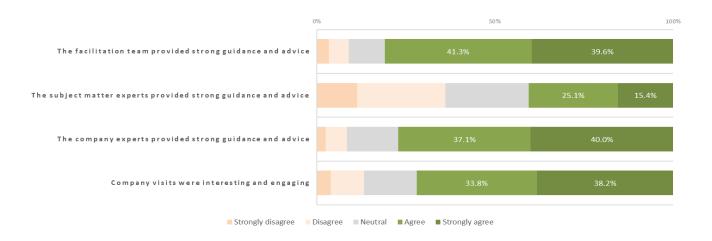


² Accessible via www.medium.com/unleash-lab

UNLEASH as a unique, recurring SDG-initiative and UNLEASH sponsors as partners helping to catalyze social change. Finally, international coverage contributed to the branding of Denmark as a frontrunner nation for SDG solutions.

FEEDBACK BY TALENTS

Interactions with the broader with UNLEASH ecosystem were positively reviewed by talents. More specifically, the teams of facilitators and experts received generally positive reviews from survey respondents.



Feedback on company experts and company visits varied, with some receiving neutral reviews and others receiving strongly positive responses from participants. Talents responded especially well when companies played the role of an outside expert who was there to support them with their ideas. There was a consensus among participants that company experts should draw from their experiences to guide development on the premise of the solutions and corresponding issues, rather than be too directive based on what might be in the interest of the company.

The feedback on the investor meetup event mirrors the feedback on the company visits, and was highly dependent on the personal experience and interaction of each talent. Several participants reported the need to create a more formalized process to network with potential funders. Other participants sought mentoring by organizations that were less commercialized and investment-focused.

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

In response to variable participant feedback on their interactions with companies, investors, and mentors, we see two ways to enhance future UNLEASH programs.

First, we would like to improve the process for talents to meet impact investors by creating a more structured format for this event, and by engaging impact investment networks to host the event rather than be invitees.

Second, we will seek to accommodate non-commercial ideas further by reaching out to civil society partners, NGOs, and philanthropic funders, thus providing a stronger support ecosystem for non-commercially viable ideas that have a large impact on achieving the SDGs. We hope to engage these parties as both partners and judges during our selection process for winners.



CONCLUSION

The feedback received following the UNLEASH Innovation Lab 2017 was overwhelmingly positive, and we are beginning to make progress towards achieving our Theory of Change. The UNLEASH Innovation Lab is unique in its scale, ability to garner support from a wide network of stakeholders, and specific focus on inspiring young talents to realize their potential of contributing to the SDGs. Through our participant survey, we have identified several areas of improvement that we will work on implementing for the 2018 event. As we continue to track and support talents and solutions, we will gather additional data at periodic intervals on our overall impact, including the development of solutions, talents' individual contributions to the SDGs, and the support of the UNLEASH ecosystem in implementing ideas. These ongoing evaluations will allow us to expand and improve the size and offerings of our ecosystem over time. Drawing on the resources of our knowledge partners from the private, public, and civil society sectors, we can equip talent with the concrete skills and confidence needed to achieve widespread impact throughout a lifetime of leadership.

NEXT STEPS: BRINGING UNLEASH TO NEW DESTINATIONS

UNLEASH is currently in dialogue with partners in London, Singapore, San Francisco, Dubai, Beijing, and Cape Town to establish new destinations for UNLEASH Innovation Lab in 2018 and beyond.

In terms of supporting existing talent and solutions, UNLEASH is working to expand its eco-system through ongoing dialogue with a wide variety of global partners. One critical part of our talent support is adding new functions to our online community platform, providing talents with opportunities to learn about and access partner organizations and other implementation partners. In addition, we are encouraging continued conversations among talents through the establishment of Regional Ambassadorships, whose role it will be to organize meet-ups and networking opportunities for UNLEASH talent.

Ultimately, UNLEASH is working to create global impact. Leading up to 2030, UNLEASH plans to mobilize up to 14,000 top talents from across the world, creating a large-scale SDG community of next-generation leaders. By the deadline of the SDGs, talents will have developed approximately 2,800 solutions, making UNLEASH the leading platform for innovative solutions to the SDGs. Solutions will be supported by an ever-growing eco-system of companies, including investors and funders capable of accelerating solutions. We thank our existing partners (in appendix A) who have contributed to catalyzing UNLEASH and getting it off the ground.



APPENDIX A

FOUNDATIONS:











































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