



Aba Abia State, Nigeria

Best Intellectuals Model School

**How a viral music video boosted
morale at a time of turmoil**



**WORLD'S
BEST SCHOOL**
Overcoming
Adversity



TEMPLETON WORLD
CHARITY FOUNDATION



**WORLD'S
BEST SCHOOL
PRIZES**

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Introduction

Best Intellectuals Model School, a school in Ohanku, Aba Abia State, Nigeria made a music video to boost student morale during a period of turmoil that rocked Nigerian society and went viral in the process.



Profile:



Country:

Nigeria



Region:

Aba Abia State



School type:

Private - International School



Location area:

Rural



Student population:

101 to 200



Prize Category:

Overcoming Adversity

“The pandemic brought a lot of vices. I wanted to think outside of the box...people in my community love music, especially when it’s presented by children, so if this music got into the hands of people in my community, it’s going to address all these ills.” – Happiness Klau, Headmistress of Best Intellectuals Model School



In-depth look

CONTEXT AND CHALLENGE

A small, rural school in Aba Abia State, Nigeria, Best Intellectuals Model School has limited resources with only five computers.

In 2021, the school faced many crises. Not only did it have to contend with the COVID pandemic, but a wave of school drop-outs owing to the financial strain brought by the pandemic on so many families.

With the country also experiencing a high unemployment rate and a marked increase in crime, the conditions Best Intellectuals Model School faced forced it to reevaluate how it would continue to open its doors and keep up the morale of demoralised students and the wider community.

Nigerian society had also been rocked by the kidnappings of thousands of schoolchildren in Northern Nigeria, with many schools closing for fear of suffering the same fate. Meanwhile, the country has faced environmental degradation due to the rush for oil and mining activities.

Within this context, the Best Intellectuals Model school decided to lend their voices to the fight for a better Nigeria. The school used the power of music to help address the deep-rooted societal issues prevalent in Nigerian society whilst boosting morale.

Raising funds took some months and the school had to contend with a lack of professional producers, however, it was able to use its limited resources to come up with a music video made by young students that spoke about the wider issues within the community.



“There is no right time to start working towards the change you wish to see. When we started this music video, the COVID pandemic was still raging, the economic meltdown... nonetheless we went forward.”

- Joy Ifunaya, Teacher at Best Intellectuals Model School



EXPERTISE AND APPROACH

Students were selected across all age groups and recognised for their singing and dancing talent. The project was an undertaking that no other school in the rural area had done before.

Over a period of several weeks, two tracks were written and suitable music was composed. It took a few more weeks for students to learn their lines. The school had no musical instruments, so the faculty got creative and used what they had, namely: the internet. Background music was downloaded online and served as the backdrop to the video production. Students came up with several dance steps that would suit the music.

The next stage of the project was recording in the studio. This was the most time-consuming and intensive part of the school's journey. Since the school is in a rural community with bad roads and poor road networks, reaching a recording studio was an arduous task. Somedays, they would arrive dirty from mud splatters on the road. After several days of recording at the studio, the final stage was shooting. It took about two days to complete. In all, it took around four months, from concept to launch and the music video was released.

Because of the limited funding, the school could only use a select number of locations to shoot the music video. It could not afford to pay hotels or parks to use its premises. Thus, the school had to use two locations – the school itself and a clubhouse offered to the school after the owners were told of the project.



“There is this adage that says ‘If you want to go fast, go alone but if you want to go far, you have to go in a group, so collaboration is one of the main keys.’”

- Splendor Kalu, teacher at Best Intellectuals Model School



OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

Best Intellectuals Model School became the first-ever school to release a music video to creatively address Nigerian societal issues while keeping students busy. In the end, the video was considered a viral hit amongst the community.

The expertise also kept students busy during the pandemic since they could not join online classes like their counterparts in the cities as a result of a lack of devices, internet and electricity. Most importantly, it helped promote the school's brand and brought in funds that went towards its maintenance.



Key Steps



UTILISING RESOURCES

As the school operates in a small rural community, there were no devices for its students to join online classes as there was little access to the internet or electricity. There was a strong need to keep students engaged, whilst boosting morale and addressing national challenges. Resourcefulness helped the school's faculty to think outside the box and come up with expertise that helped address these problems, and at the same time raise funds for the school.



HARD WORK

The school worked with the pupils and students through the journey of producing the music video. It overcame the difficulty that came with travelling through bad roads over long distances in order to reach the desired goal.





COMMITMENT

It took many months for the school to produce its first track while observing all COVID-19 protocols. Staff provided students with masks and ensured social distancing throughout the project. The faculty helped the children to learn to sing as well as dance to the music, whilst finding suitable locations to film the video.



PERSEVERANCE

The faculty almost gave up due to numerous factors ranging from bad roads to lack of funds to lack of transport as well as money for studio time. Sometimes staff would forgo lunch for students to eat during breaks and avoid using money on public transport so there would be enough funds.



Advice and Guidance

The school would advise that you don't have to make a lot of money to start a project. It's important to think outside the box and improvise whenever possible. In its mind, Best Intellectuals Model School overcame its challenges because it believed in the project and was determined to see it through.

More information

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