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We, people of today on the way to 2030

Close your eyes and imagine your life in 2030. You wake up in the morning, how do you feel? You open the window, what do you see? You check your mobile phone, what do you read? Your way to the office, what does it look like? You talk to your family, to your colleagues, to your friends, what are you talking about?

2030

That year in 2030, we will be 8.5 billion people. The world will be home to 8.5 billion souls, minds and bodies, brain power and human power. The world will be an arena for 8.5 billion actors. We will hear about 8.5 billion solutions, unique and valuable, each life contributing to a better world – no matter your sex, your age (yes babies and children will play a role too), your education (schooled or unschooled, graduated or not graduated), your location (North or South, East or West in the world), your condition, your story, etc. Each and every one will play a role, no one will be left behind.

The 7.6 billion people of 2017 and the 8.5 billion people of 2030, this growing population is the biggest response to global challenges. Every single life in this billion is needed to achieve the global agenda of a world free of poverty, hunger and inequality. Every single life brings a unique solution, you, me, all of us. Are you aware of that? Is she aware of that? Is he aware of that? Let's create that awareness, let's unleash the potential of this 7.6 billion today, let's unleash the potential of each single human life. We are born with unique DNA, we are each of us a unique model and so are the solutions that we will bring to this world. Let's unleash them!

Unleash

This is what the UNLEASH Innovation Lab started this year in Denmark: unleashing the human potential of the young generation to provide unique solutions. UNLEASH is a new global initiative that believes in the passion, the energy, the creativity of people to define new ways of thinking and working in a new era of development. One thousand young talents, aged from 20 to 35, from six continents and 129 countries, gathered for nine days in Denmark in August. One thousand young academics, intrapreneurs, entrepreneurs and tech experts.

Leave your fears, leave your comfort zone, leave your assumptions, go and meet people, create bridges, anyone and anywhere can start co creating with you, venture with people you never met or never spoke to. Beautiful collaboration will come out, unique solutions will come out. I lived with people I had never met, I ate with people I had never met, I worked with people I had never met, and it turned out to be one of the most beautiful human and social experiences ever. Life lessons and insights came out. Altogether, we were singing, dancing, playing, telling stories to stimulate our minds to learn and create more. All of that set the tone for innovation and changed the way we hoped to address global problems.

Great outcomes emerged: two hundred solutions to achieving the SDGs, a global network of one thousand young implementers, a global partnership with Denmark, companies, UNDP, a platform for innovations, etc.

We are the hyper connected generation. We share instantaneously, we go viral, we make buzz. So, we can impact thousands, millions and billions of people in no time at all. We can replicate anywhere as we take a flight so easily, we travel with so much ease, we are hyper connected. Only together we can make things bigger and bolder. Only through people we will have deeper impact.

I believe UNLEASH is a seed that will flourish and multiply.

Invest in people

The best technology and the best investment we need today is an exponential solution to reach out to the 8 billion people and unleash their potential for change.

Today I work for the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) here in Rome and we work to transform rural areas for the agenda 2030. Our motto: "Invest in rural people", rural transformation cannot be achieved without people, rural transformation is an inclusive process. If you think of a technology, invest in the people who will create it, invest in the people who will use it, invest in the people who will benefit from it. What I love the most in my job, my passion, my mission and my vision, is empowerment. People with power for change. Unleashing the potential of people for powerful and transformational changes.

This year in March, I went to Sierra Leone to review a project funded by IFAD. The best part of that review was the moment I met the beneficiaries. They were able to tell their stories and their pathway to change. I met a

former group of street boys who used to move as a gang, untouchable, the “bad boys”. They used to train other boys to steal and become professional thieves. Two of them told me that they used to think that street life was the best life ever. Today they belong to a local NGO and work as community facilitators, one became a pastor, some went back to school. They were very happy and defined themselves as change agents. What happened in-between is an investment on people, the project empowered them. In their baggy trousers and their arrogant attitude, they were invited to training sessions. They came because food was provided. The training was based on a participatory action learning system, using visual and practical tools, to empower marginalized people living in rural communities. It turned out to be a life changing training that led to transformational changes. Invest in people, empower people.

We are the generation that will make that happen. Knowledge, technology, money, networks, connection, all resources are available, what we need is to unleash them. I want to wake up in 2030 and feel alive, energetic and full of enthusiasm. When I open my window, on my way to the office, the landscape is so green and beautiful. Good news and positive changes are reported everywhere, as I look at my phone, as I talk to my colleague, etc. There is a global movement that we cannot stop, 2030 is just a milestone.

So, remember that you are a unique solution among billions and you are undeniably needed to achieve the agenda 2030. By the way, talking about billions of people, do you know that the church, the global network of Christian believers, is the biggest human network ever? It counts more than 2.2 billion people in the world, do you see the change coming? Do you see an exponential change starting?