Creating African Talent for the Global Games Industry

Hugo Obi

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My Background

- I grew up in Lagos, Nigeria and moved to the UK to study
- I studied economics & finance, and worked in the city
- My first startup in diversity recruitment was started in 2008
- Moved back to Lagos in 2012 to start Maliyo Games

Create a pathway for others.

Build a successful company

Contribute to the growth of the economy

Africa is NOT a Country

- 1.4 Billion People
- 54 Countries, countless tribes and languages
- 70% of the Population Under 30
- Varying Socio-Economic & Political Challenges
- 300 million smart phones
- $1 billion revenue in 2023
- 95% mobile market
- Ambition of the People Exceeds their Reality

Early Successes & Challenges

- We focused on making games for mobile
- Focused on art and design
- Outsourced engineering to Asia & Eastern Europe
- Okada Rider, Mosquito Smasher, Aboki Run
- Market enthusiasm & media interest

Inability to find people with technical skillset	Self-taught individuals with limited experience	Struggled to work in teams environment

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Our Outsourcing Problem

If you're a startup

- Unable to retain the knowledge gained completing projects
- There's no loyalty; your culture is diluted
- Difficulty in building consistency
- It can be expensive to scale

Lack of Authenticity	Disconnect with target market	Consumption over Production

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Building for Tomorrow

- Turn of the decade moment of reflection
- Fear of inaction & possible regret
- Lack of framework and foundational solution
- My inability to build a competent team was a motivation

| Multi-billion dollar global industry | Africa's growing mobile market | Growing technical skills due to bootcamps |

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Best Talent Are Distributed

- Create a curriculum
- Open application to people with existing technical skills
- In-person 3 months paid training
- Hire best talent
- Then... Covid19

Move from in-person to online	Open to people anywhere in Africa	A strong community component

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Gaming Up Africa

- 5-month free technical training programme
- Targeting individuals with existing programming skills
- Participants from 3 African countries initially
- Partnership with Google
- **Community component**
- **Global mentoring pool**

Learning	Community	Mentoring	Project

Trust the Process

- Technical assessment for selection
- Peer-support community
- Weekly technical walk-in sessions
- Guest speaker events
- Learning groups
- Volunteers to support learning & community

Commitment	Competence	Creativity

Making Games, by Making Games

- Game design curriculum
- Safe space to learn and make mistakes
- Personal growth and development
- Buddy support system
- **Rapid Prototyping Model**

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The Maliyo RP Model

- 2 Developers
- 6 Weeks
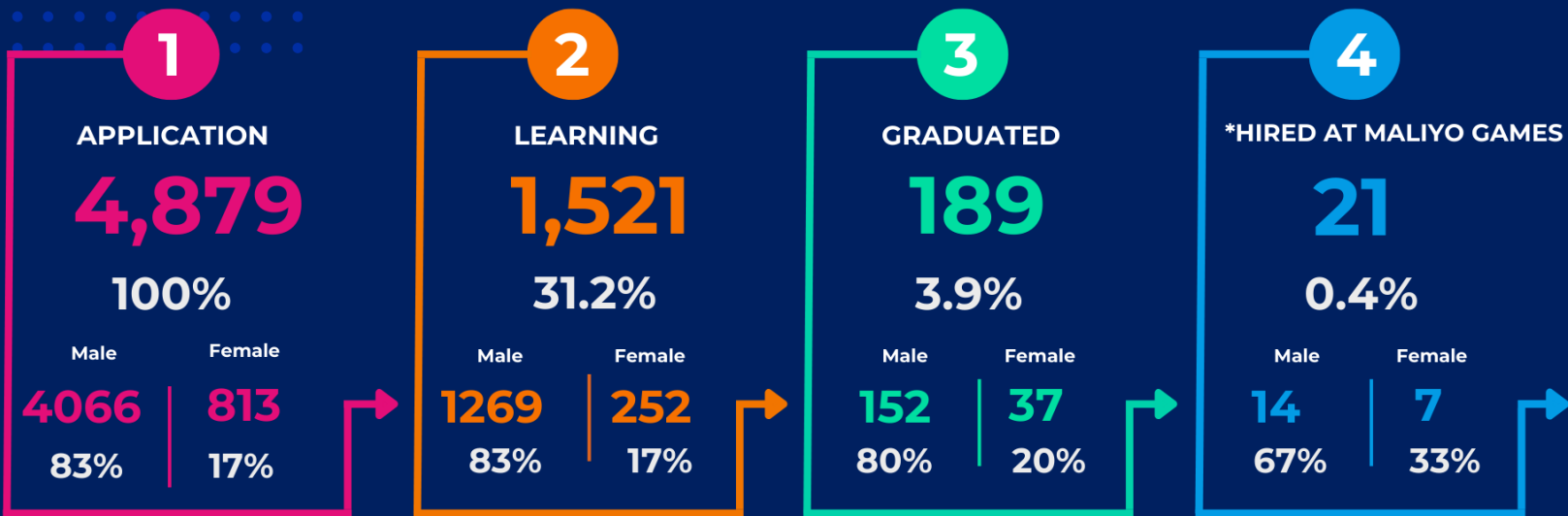- 1 Game Prototype
- Swap & Repeat

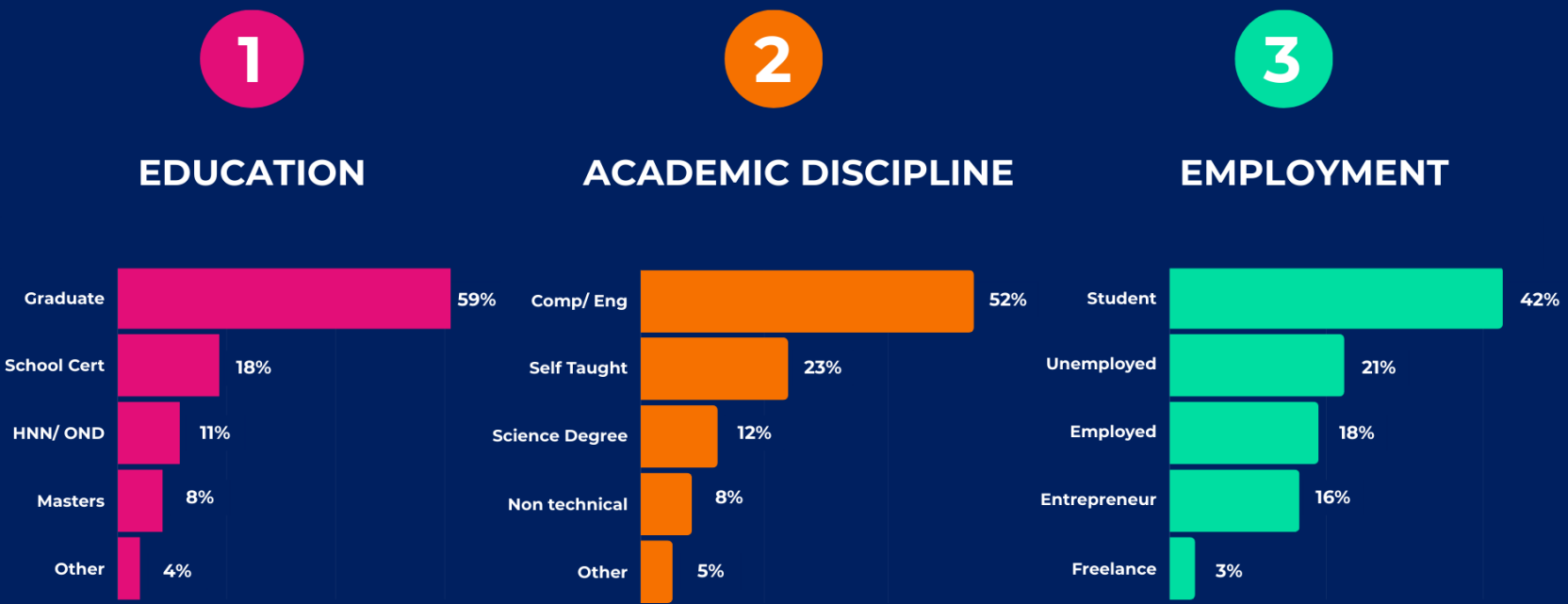| Learn by repetition | Working in teams | Standardized Workflow | Time bound development |

Stats Stats Stats

GameUp Africa Stats (2021 - 2023)

GAMEUP AFRICA

1 APPLICATION
4,879
100%

Male	Female
4066	813
83%	17%

2 LEARNING
1,521
31.2%

Male	Female
1269	252
83%	17%

3 GRADUATED
189
3.9%

Male	Female
152	37
80%	20%

4 *HIRED AT MALIYO GAMES
21
0.4%

Male	Female
14	7
67%	33%

- Several graduates from the program have been recruited by various studios across the continent; however, we have not maintained a record of these placements

1 EDUCATION

Graduate	59%
School Cert	18%
HNN/ OND	11%
Masters	8%
Other	4%

2 ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

Comp/ Eng	52%
Self Taught	23%
Science Degree	12%
Non technical	8%
Other	5%

3 EMPLOYMENT

Student	42%
Unemployed	21%
Employed	18%
Entrepreneur	16%
Freelance	3%

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Luck = Opportunity + Preparation

- Re-engineer proven mechanics
- Master the building blocks of games (deconstruction, FTUE, core loop, find the fun, meta game etc)
- Evaluate individual and team competence
- Find winning combinations
- Get games in the hands of users quickly
- Collect player feedback and iterate
- Move well-executed ideas to full production

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Disney Iwájú Rising Chef

- Disney came to Africa looking for the best game development team

- We pitched and won

- We worked for 14 months with the Disney Games team to produce Disney Iwájú Rising Chef

- Game was released on the 28th of Feb on Android & iOS

- The game received a worldwide feature on the App Store

- The team feels validated and confident to take on new challenges

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Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

These are some of the people who supported me and the team during the delivery of Disney Iwájú Rising Chef.

Sergiu Tiplea
Art Director

Finn-Lilly Heartwood
Game Designer

Chris Wilson
Creative Director

ADVISORS

Cassia Curran

Kim Nordstrom

Nik Suresh

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What Next?

- Continue training developers, but we don't want to hire anymore

- Expand to art, audio, ui/ux. These are the areas of need for the studio

- Help other studios hire from the programme, but we're not a recruitment agency

- Bring training to other parts of the world, but we're not a training company

- Build **GameUp Africa** as a standalone business with it's own management team… Now you're talking ☺

Thank You

Linkedin.com/in/hugoobi

hugo.obi@maliyo.com

www.maliyo.com