TEMI A. OGUNYOKU, PH.D.

Professional Profile

I am a research leader who empowers teams to develop innovative solutions that address human needs with empathy and analytical evidence.

Accomplishments (selected)

TRANSFORMED A SYSTEM TO OPERATE EFFICIENTLY AT SCALE

A social investment organisation's flagship investment had a product which was scaling at a national level, but the team that developed the product did not have the processes or systems in place to meet the demands of their clients. As the Head of Data Strategy, I used a design thinking framework and led the team to identify the goals, workflow, pain points, and opportunities of their processes and data infrastructure system. Engaging directly with a service provider, I led the team to iteratively design and implement new systems that could organise multiple datasets and reduce the data processing time by 185%.

IMPROVED THE TECHNICAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF NEW SANITATION SYSTEMS WITHIN NIGERIA AND KENYA

A major donor organisation was seeking to commercialise its novel sanitation systems in low-income countries. As the Senior UX Researcher, I led a multicultural team to conduct in situ qualitative research (i.e., contextual interviews, focus groups, participatory design, and observations) with potential users across two countries. We identified and delivered user, technical, and environmental requirements to the donor organisation's partners who previously lacked the data required to develop effective sanitation systems in the targeted markets.

CONNECTING HUMAN NEEDS TO TECHNOLOGY WITHIN EAST AFRICA

A key goal for IBM Research| Africa was to address developmental challenges specific to Africa. IBM Research| Africa's lab solutions all contained a deep technical foundation but needed more connection to the needs of the average African consumer. I developed a process to systematically determine user needs and iteratively facilitate constant feedback from users during development. The methodology connected research teams to build user empathy and the required evidence to develop meaningful solutions.

UNCOVERED UNTAPPED VALUE CHAIN OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Most development projects in sub-Saharan African countries lacked a feasible economic plan to be sustainable. I developed a research strategy that addressed the lack of capital to sustain waste management. I established a partnership between IBM Research| Africa and a prominent Kenyan sanitation service provider and led a team to analyze the operation data to derive opportunities for their value chain. Specifically, metadata analysis led to the recommendation to sell their waste by-product to untapped agricultural markets to increase revenue.

CONNECTING LABORATORY KNOWLEDGE TO PEOPLE TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE IN LOW-INCOME COUNTRIES

The storage, removal, transport, and disposal/reuse of fecal sludge is a big challenge for communities in low-income countries due to a lack of public services. I researched and developed a novel treatment process that disinfected fecal sludge within shared pit latrines for safe disposal. This innovation was deployed in Nairobi and was able to disinfect the fecal sludge ~1000 times faster than a traditional treatment method.

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🌐 Citizenship: USA, Nigeria
Visa: UK Skilled Worker

Education

University of California, Davis
Ph.D. in Civil & Environmental Engineering, 2011
Dissertation Title: *"The Determination of the Fate of Triclocarban and Triclosan in Biosolid Processing Systems, and Soils Amended with Biosolids and Biochar."*

University of California, Davis
M.Sc. in Civil & Environmental Engineering, 2008
Master Report Title: *"The Implementation of Sustainable Point-of-Use Water Treatment and Sanitation Systems in Rural Uganda."*

University of California, Riverside
B.Sc. in Chemical Engineering, 2005

Engineer-In-Training
California/ 2005/EIT 123593

Transferable Skills

- Leadership and Teaching/Mentoring
- Programme Management
- Cross-Functional Collaboration
- Stakeholder Management
- Research Strategy & Design
- Complex Problem Solving
- Data Analysis

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Experience (selected)

Senior/Lead User Experience Researcher| Aug. 2021 – Present
Meta, United Kingdom

- Develop collaborative cross-functional relationships to effectively understand target users, measure impact and inform the product strategy.
- Lead both foundational and evaluative research to understand the behaviour, attitudes, needs and wants of highly skilled advertisers.
- Work with other cross-functional leads to evaluate and strengthen the execution of the department's strategy.

Head of Data Strategy| Oct. 2019 – May 2021
Innovation Edge, South Africa

- Developed and executed a strategy that aimed to build the systems and teams necessary to enable the use of data collection tools at scale, and to optimise the use of data to drive quality enhancement in early learning programmes.

Researcher| Mar. 2018 – Sept. 2019
Dimagi, South Africa

- Secured over USD 675,000 in research funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program, while streamlining the grants development lifecycle to improve productivity.
- Supported the design, execution, and analysis of research projects across the different business units (i.e., South Africa, India, USA, West Africa).

Research Scientist| Aug. 2013 – Mar. 2017
IBM Research| Africa, Kenya

Design Thinking Facilitator/User Experience Researcher
- Supported healthcare, public safety, and financial inclusion to apply design thinking and agile methodologies.
- Applied various UX methodologies to understand target users and obtain their requirements during the design and development of products for the African market.

Project Leader
- Led cross-functional teams, including software development and engineering to design, test, and deploy mobile applications.
- Led a team to develop a system that used advanced analytics to analyze public safety security data and contextual information, in real-time, helping to identify, qualify, and corroborate security incidents.

Postdoctoral Researcher| Oct. 2011 - Mar. 2013
University of California, Berkeley, Civil & Environmental Engineering

- Modeled and experimentally determined the inactivation rates of pathogenic indicator organisms in human excreta using a newly developed disinfection approach.
- Designed and fabricated a low-cost waterless toilet for high-density urban communities in low-income countries.

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Methods

- User Experience (UX) Research / Design Research / Product Research
- Interviewing
- Concept Testing
- Usability Testing
- Focus Groups
- Workshop Facilitation
- Competitive Analysis
- Prototyping
- Remote Research
- Moderated Research
- Unmoderated Research

Competencies

- Generative / Foundational / Discovery Research
- Tactical / Evaluative Research
- Public Speaking

Publications

Patents and peer-reviewed journal articles are on my personal website:
www.taogunyoku.com/publications/