

Ashesi University Impact Fund Application

Rise for Impact Fellowship - Southwest Cameroon

Lighting Hope in the Shadows of Crisis: Building the Next Generation of Leaders from Cameroon's Forgotten Region

Full Name of Student

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Gender

Male

Year Group/Class

2026

Academic Department

Computer Science & Information Systems

Name of Your Project/Venture

Rise for Impact Fellowship: Rebuilding Leadership in Southwest Cameroon's Crisis-Affected Communities

Location of Project/Venture

Southwest Region, Cameroon

(Primary focus: Buea, Limbe, Kumba, Tiko, and surrounding communities affected by the Anglophone Crisis)

Brief Overview of the Project

For **eight years**, the Southwest Region of Cameroon has been engulfed in an armed conflict that has shattered lives, disrupted education, destroyed communities, and stolen the futures of an entire generation of young people. Schools have been burned. Dreams have been deferred. Youth who should be preparing to lead have instead been surviving.

This is personal for me. This is my region. These are my people.

The **Rise for Impact Fellowship** is not just a leadership program—it is an act of **restoration, resilience, and rebellion against despair**. It is a declaration that even in the midst of crisis, young people in Southwest Cameroon deserve:

- **World-class leadership training**
- **Skills that make them globally competitive**
- **Networks that transcend borders and conflict**
- **Hope that their backgrounds will not put their backs on the ground**

This fellowship will bring 30 exceptional young leaders from crisis-affected communities in Southwest Cameroon together for an **intensive 2-day on-site conference** (March 2026) followed by **6 months of personalized virtual mentorship**. They will learn grant writing, storytelling, public speaking, project management, and relationship building—emerging as equipped changemakers ready to rebuild their communities and lead Cameroon's future.

The impact multiplies: After the fellowship, each of the 30 Fellows will organize **"Pass It On" community events** to share their knowledge with

peers in their local communities. Through these grassroots knowledge-sharing sessions, we will **indirectly impact 2,000+ additional young people** across Southwest Cameroon—creating a ripple effect of leadership development that extends far beyond the initial cohort.

Why Southwest Cameroon? Why Now?

Because nowhere in Africa is the need more urgent. Because a generation is at risk of being lost. Because I refuse to let conflict define the future of my people. Because leadership is not a luxury reserved for peacetime—it is the very weapon we need to end the crisis and heal our communities.

This funding will provide:

- **Full scholarships for 30 Fellows** from conflict-affected communities
- **2-day intensive on-site conference** (accommodation, meals, training, materials)
- **6 months of virtual mentorship** with weekly workshops and one-on-one coaching
- **Project seed funding** for community impact initiatives
- **Support for Pass It On events** to multiply impact across 2,000+ community members
- **Alumni network access** connecting Fellows to 500+ changemakers across Africa
- **Lifelong support system** ensuring sustained impact beyond the program

Together, we will prove that crisis does not kill potential—it only hides it. And we are here to uncover it.

The Problem We Address

Eight Years of Crisis: The Anglophone Conflict's Devastating Impact on Youth

Since 2016, Southwest and Northwest Cameroon have been torn apart by an armed conflict between government forces and separatist groups. What began as peaceful protests demanding linguistic and political rights has escalated into a humanitarian catastrophe that has fundamentally altered the trajectory of an entire generation.

The numbers are staggering. The human cost is immeasurable:

- **Over 6,000 people killed**—including youth leaders, teachers, and community organizers
- **765,000+ internally displaced persons**—families fleeing violence, living in constant uncertainty
- **Schools attacked and burned**—over 200 educational institutions destroyed, forcing students to abandon their dreams
- **4 million people affected**—every family in the Anglophone regions has been touched by this crisis
- **"Ghost Towns" every Monday**—economic activities shut down, businesses collapsed, youth unemployment skyrocketed
- **Internet shutdowns**—prolonged blackouts isolating youth from global opportunities, online learning, and digital economies
- **Brain drain**—thousands of youth fleeing to neighboring countries, Anglophone regions bleeding talent

What This Means for Young People in Southwest Cameroon:

1. Disrupted Education & Lost Years

Imagine being 15 years old when the crisis begins. By the time you're 23, you've missed **years of schooling**, your university education has been interrupted multiple times, and your peers in peaceful regions are already

employed or pursuing graduate studies. You're not behind because you're less intelligent—you're behind because **war stole your time**.

Many young people in Southwest Cameroon have:

- Repeated academic years due to school closures
- Been unable to take national exams (GCSE, A-Levels, university entrance)
- Lost scholarships because they couldn't meet application deadlines during conflicts
- Dropped out entirely, their dreams deferred indefinitely

2. Normalized Trauma & Hopelessness

When gunfire becomes background noise, when seeing armed soldiers is routine, when curfews dictate your movements—**trauma becomes normalized**. Young people grow up in survival mode, not in leadership mode.

The psychological impact is devastating:

- **Anxiety and PTSD** from witnessing violence
- **Depression** from prolonged uncertainty and lack of opportunities
- **Lost sense of agency**—feeling powerless to change their circumstances
- **Normalized disengagement**—ambition feels unrealistic, hope feels optional

I have seen brilliant young people—sharp minds, creative thinkers, natural leaders—sitting idle, not because they lack potential, but because **eight years of crisis has taught them that effort doesn't matter when conflict controls everything**.

3. Information Isolation & Digital Divide

Internet shutdowns lasting months at a time have created an **information blackout**. While youth elsewhere access online courses, apply for global

opportunities, and build digital skills, young people in Southwest Cameroon:

- Miss scholarship and fellowship deadlines
- Cannot access online learning platforms (Coursera, edX, YouTube tutorials)
- Are excluded from virtual networking and global conversations
- Lack digital literacy skills increasingly required for employment

This is not just an education gap—it's a generational disadvantage.

4. Absence of Mentorship & Role Models

The crisis has scattered communities. Many professionals, academics, and potential mentors have fled. Civil society organizations have collapsed. Youth organizations have disbanded for safety.

Young people are growing up **without guidance**, without mentors to show them pathways beyond the conflict, without networks to open doors.

5. Economic Devastation & Unemployment

The Southwest Region's economy has been crippled:

- Businesses closed, jobs disappeared
- Agriculture disrupted (farmers can't access farms due to insecurity)
- Tourism sector collapsed (Limbe beaches, Mount Cameroon trekking —once thriving industries—abandoned)
- Youth unemployment exceeds **70%** in crisis-affected areas

Even well-educated youth find no work. Skills don't translate to income when the economy is in ruins.

6. Forced Migration & Family Separation

Thousands of young people have been forced to:

- Flee to neighboring regions or countries (Nigeria, Gabon, South Africa)
- Live as internally displaced persons in makeshift camps
- Separate from families, losing support systems
- Navigate new environments without resources or networks

These are not migrants seeking opportunity—**these are refugees escaping violence.**

Personal Connection: This is My Story, Too

I am from the Southwest Region. I have watched this crisis unfold. I have seen friends abandon their education. I have attended funerals of young people killed in crossfire. I have felt the suffocating weight of curfews, the fear of sudden violence, the helplessness of watching opportunities pass by while trapped in a warzone.

I also know what privilege looks like.

My ability to study at Ashesi University in Ghana—outside the crisis zone—is not a reflection of superior talent. It is **luck**. It is the result of circumstances aligning in my favor when they did not for thousands of equally brilliant young people still trapped in Southwest Cameroon.

I carry their stories with me. I carry the weight of knowing that **my education is a privilege they deserve but cannot access.**

When I founded Rise for Impact, I made a promise: **I will not leave my people behind.**

This fellowship is the fulfillment of that promise.

Why Traditional Solutions Have Failed

Government programs? Non-existent in crisis zones. Resources don't reach conflict-affected areas.

International NGOs? Focused on humanitarian relief (food, shelter, medical care)—not long-term leadership development. They keep people alive, but they don't equip them to lead.

University programs? Students cannot access them—schools are closed, travel is dangerous, tuition is unaffordable.

Online programs? Require internet access—which is frequently shut down—and assume participants have devices, data, and digital literacy. Most youth in Southwest Cameroon have none of these.

What's needed is a program designed specifically for crisis-affected youth—one that:

- Meets them where they are (on-site, in their region)
- Provides everything they need (full scholarship, materials, mentorship)
- Builds skills that transcend the conflict (leadership, grant writing, global competencies)
- Creates networks that outlast the crisis (alumni connections across Africa)
- Restores hope and agency (proving their potential is not determined by their circumstances)

That program is the Rise for Impact Fellowship.

How the Rise for Impact Fellowship Solves This A Comprehensive, Crisis-Responsive Leadership Development Program

The Rise for Impact Fellowship is specifically designed to meet the unique needs of young leaders in Southwest Cameroon who have been disadvantaged by eight years of conflict. It is not a generic program adapted

for a crisis context—it is **built for this moment, for this region, for these young people.**

The Fellowship Model: Intensive + Sustained + Supportive

PHASE 1: 4-Day Intensive On-Site Fellowship Conference (March 20-23, 2026)

Location: Buea, Southwest Region, Cameroon

Participants: 30 Fellows (ages 18-30) from conflict-affected communities

Why On-Site Matters in a Crisis Context:

In regions where trust has been shattered, where communities are fragmented, where young people have been isolated—**physical gathering is transformational.** The 4-day conference creates:

- **Safety and community:** A neutral space where Fellows can connect without fear
- **Intensive bonding:** Living and learning together builds the deep relationships needed for sustained engagement
- **Immersive learning:** No distractions, no interruptions—just focused growth
- **Celebration of resilience:** Acknowledging their survival and choosing to invest in their leadership

Conference Structure:

Day 1: Foundation, Skills & Connection (March 20-21, 2026)

Day 1 Morning (9:00 AM - 12:30 PM):

- **9:00-9:45:** Opening ceremony with traditional Southwest Cameroonian rituals
 - Honoring ancestors, land, resilience

- Founder's story: "Never Let Your Background Put Your Back on the Ground"
- **9:45-10:30:** Icebreakers and Fellow introductions: "Share your story, claim your power"
- **10:30-10:45:** Break
- **10:45-12:30: Workshop 1 - Understanding Leadership in Crisis**
 - Panel with African leaders who led during conflicts
 - From Trauma to Purpose: Resilience-building session

Day 1 Afternoon (2:00 PM - 6:00 PM):

- **2:00-3:30: Workshop 2 - Storytelling & Personal Branding**
 - Crafting your narrative: Turning pain into power
 - LinkedIn profile optimization (hands-on)
 - Writing your bio, pitch, personal statement
- **3:30-3:45:** Break
- **3:45-5:30: Workshop 3 - Grant Writing Masterclass**
 - Anatomy of a winning proposal
 - Case studies: Successful African youth applications
 - Hands-on: Drafting project concept notes
- **5:30-6:00:** Mentor matching session (Fellows paired with mentors)

Day 1 Evening (7:00 PM - 9:00 PM):

- Cultural night: Music, dance, storytelling from Southwest Cameroonian traditions
- Small group dinners with mentors
- Informal networking

Day 2: Action, Networks & Commitment (March 21-22, 2026)

Day 2 Morning (9:00 AM - 12:30 PM):

- **9:00-10:30: Workshop 4 - Public Speaking & Project Management**
 - Overcoming fear, building confidence
 - Structuring compelling presentations
 - Project planning using design thinking
- **10:30-10:45:** Break
- **10:45-12:30: Workshop 5 - Navigating Opportunities & Networking**
 - Scholarship/fellowship/grant databases
 - Application strategies and interview prep
 - Relationship building and LinkedIn strategies

Day 2 Afternoon (2:00 PM - 6:00 PM):

- **2:00-3:00: Panel Q&A** with funders, entrepreneurs, social innovators
- **3:00-3:15:** Break
- **3:15-5:00: Workshop 6 - Designing Your Community Impact Project**
 - Identifying community problems
 - Developing measurable solutions
 - Creating action plans and introducing Pass It On events model
 - Fellows draft project proposals
- **5:00-6:00:** Project pitch practice sessions (Fellows present to peers/mentors)

Day 2 Evening (6:30 PM - 9:00 PM):

- **6:30-7:30:** Talent showcase: Poetry, music, comedy (fellowship bonding)
- **7:30-8:30:** Commitment ceremony
 - Fellows publicly commit to their projects
 - Commit to organizing 3 Pass It On community events

- Join Rise for Impact Alumni Network
- **8:30-9:00:** Closing celebration, certificate presentation, group photo

What Fellows Leave With After 2 Days:  Completed LinkedIn profile (professional brand)

-  Personal pitch deck (storytelling asset)
 -  Grant proposal draft (ready to apply for funding)
 -  Community project concept note (roadmap for impact)
 -  Pass It On event plan (commitment to train 60-70 peers)
 -  Mentorship relationship established (ongoing support)
 -  Network of 30 peers (lifelong community)
 -  Fellowship certificate (credential for applications)
 -  Renewed hope and purpose (priceless)
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PHASE 2: 6-Month Virtual Mentorship & Implementation (April - September 2026)

Why Virtual After On-Site:

The crisis has disrupted so much, but one thing it's proven is that **virtual engagement works**—when designed intentionally. After building trust and relationships during the 2-day conference, the virtual phase allows:

- **Sustained engagement** without travel costs or security risks
- **Flexibility** for Fellows balancing work, school, or family responsibilities
- **Access to global mentors** who can join remotely
- **Real-time progress tracking** and accountability

Structure:

Weekly Virtual Workshops (Wednesdays, 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM WAT)

- **Week 1-4 (April):** Project Development & Pass It On Planning

- Refining project ideas based on conference feedback
 - Creating detailed implementation plans
 - Planning first Pass It On community event
 - Setting milestones and success metrics
 - Applying for seed funding (micro-grants available)
- **Week 5-8 (May):** Skill Deepening & Pass It On Launch
 - Advanced grant writing (Fellows apply to real opportunities)
 - Storytelling through video and social media
 - Public speaking practice (monthly presentations)
 - **Fellows organize First Pass It On event** (reports submitted)
 - Leadership case studies and group discussions
 - **Week 9-12 (June):** Implementation & Problem-Solving
 - Fellows implement community projects
 - Weekly progress reports and troubleshooting
 - Guest speakers: Social entrepreneurs, funders, policymakers
 - **Fellows organize Second Pass It On event**
 - Peer learning circles (Fellows support each other)
 - **Week 13-16 (July):** Scaling & Partnerships
 - Connecting Fellows with funding opportunities
 - Facilitating partnerships between Fellows and local organizations
 - Media training: Documenting impact stories
 - **Fellows organize Third Pass It On event** (completion milestone)
 - Mid-program evaluation and course corrections
 - **Week 17-20 (August):** Sustainability Planning
 - Financial planning for project sustainability

- Building volunteer teams and local support
- Creating monitoring & evaluation systems
- Compiling Pass It On event reports and impact data
- Preparing for Demo Day presentations

- **Week 21-24 (September): Showcasing Impact & Next Steps**

- Final project reports and impact documentation
- Demo Day presentations (virtual + in-person hybrid event)
- Introduction to alumni network and ongoing opportunities
- Graduation and transition to alumni status

Bi-Weekly One-on-One Mentorship (Ongoing)

- Each Fellow has a dedicated mentor (professionals from across Africa + diaspora)
- 30-45 minute sessions every two weeks
- Personalized coaching on projects, applications, career planning
- Emergency support available via WhatsApp for urgent needs

WhatsApp Community (24/7 Support)

- Dedicated group for 30 Fellows + facilitators
- Daily motivation and opportunity sharing
- Peer-to-peer support and collaboration
- Quick problem-solving and resource sharing

Monthly In-Person Regional Meetups (Optional)

- Fellows in the same city (Buea, Limbe, Kumba) meet monthly
 - Local project implementation support
 - Strengthening regional networks
 - Celebrating wins together
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PHASE 3: Alumni Network & Lifelong Support (October 2026 Onwards)

The fellowship doesn't end after 6 months—it's the **beginning** of a lifelong relationship.

Alumni Benefits:

- **Access to Rise for Impact's 500+ alumni network** across 8 African countries
- **Priority consideration** for future programs (Regional Convenings, Advanced Fellowships)
- **Mentorship opportunities:** Senior Fellows mentor new cohorts
- **Funding connections:** Introduction to grants, investors, and sponsorship opportunities
- **Collaborative projects:** Partnering with alumni on cross-border initiatives
- **Ongoing learning:** Quarterly alumni workshops and skill-building sessions
- **Community support:** Lifelong access to the Rise for Impact community

Southeast Cameroon Fellowship Alumni Chapter

- Formal alumni association established
- Quarterly in-person convenings
- Collaborative community projects
- Advocacy for peace and youth empowerment
- Pipeline for future leadership roles in Cameroon

Target Beneficiaries & Selection Strategy

Direct Beneficiaries: 30 Fellows from Crisis-Affected Communities

Demographics:

- **Age:** 18-30 years old
- **Location:** Southwest Region (Buea, Limbe, Kumba, Tiko, Muyuka, Mutengene, and surrounding towns)
- **Status:** Residents of crisis-affected areas OR displaced persons originally from Southwest Region
- **Education:** Secondary school graduates, university students (current or interrupted), or young professionals

Profile of Ideal Fellows:

We are not looking for perfect candidates with flawless credentials. We are looking for **resilient youth who have refused to let crisis define them.**

Ideal Fellows demonstrate:

1. **Survival + Initiative:** Still pursuing education/work despite conflict, showing resourcefulness
2. **Community commitment:** Connected to Southwest Region, invested in its healing
3. **Latent leadership:** May not have formal titles, but shows natural leadership in informal settings
4. **Hunger to learn:** Demonstrated curiosity and willingness to grow
5. **Potential to multiply impact:** Likely to share skills with others, mentor peers

Intentional Inclusion:

We will prioritize diversity to ensure the Fellowship reflects Southwest Cameroon's reality:

- **50% women** (recognizing women's disproportionate impact from conflict)
- **30% internally displaced persons** (those forced to flee their homes)
- **20% persons with disabilities** (often most marginalized in crisis contexts)
- **Rural + urban mix** (not just Buea—reaching smaller towns and villages)
- **Religious diversity** (Christian and Muslim representation)
- **Linguistic diversity** (English-speaking, with consideration for Pidgin speakers)

Selection Process (Transparent, Merit-Based, Crisis-Sensitive)

Phase 1: Open Call & Outreach (February 1-15, 2026)

- Launch application campaign via:
 - Social media (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram)
 - Community radio stations (Southwest FM, Chariot FM, Ocean FM Limbe)
 - Churches and mosques (Sunday/Friday announcements)
 - University notice boards (University of Buea, HTTC Kumba)
 - Community centers and youth organizations
 - IDP camps and humanitarian organizations
- Simple online application form (Google Forms—accessible on low-bandwidth connections)
- Alternative submission: SMS or WhatsApp for those without internet

Application Requirements (Deliberately Low-Barrier):

- Name, age, location, contact information
- Short essay (300 words): "How has the crisis shaped you, and how will you use this fellowship to create change?"

- One reference (community leader, teacher, pastor, employer—NOT formal recommendation letter)
- Commitment to attend 4-day conference + 6-month virtual program

No requirements for:

- English fluency (we accept Pidgin English and will provide translation support)
- Formal transcripts or certificates (recognizing many lost documents fleeing violence)
- Prior leadership experience (we're identifying potential, not credentials)

Phase 2: Community-Based Review (February 16-23, 2026)

- Recruit 10 community reviewers (teachers, youth leaders, civil society members from SW Region)
- Train reviewers on scoring rubric emphasizing resilience, potential, and commitment
- Each application reviewed by 3 reviewers (blind scoring)
- Top 80 applicants invited for interviews

Phase 3: Video Interviews (February 24 - March 7, 2026)

- 15-minute video calls (WhatsApp or Zoom)
- Questions focused on:
 - Personal story and crisis impact
 - Community project ideas
 - Commitment and availability
 - Ability to engage respectfully in diverse cohort
- Interviewers: Rise for Impact team + community leaders

Phase 4: Final Selection (March 8-12, 2026)

- Top 30 selected based on:

- Application essay quality (40%)
- Community review scores (30%)
- Interview performance (20%)
- Diversity and inclusion goals (10%)
- Wait-list of 10 alternates (in case of dropouts)
- All applicants notified by March 13, 2026

Scholarship Coverage: Every selected Fellow receives a FULL SCHOLARSHIP covering:

- Transportation to/from conference (reimbursed)
- Accommodation for 4 days (shared rooms, safe, comfortable)
- All meals during conference (breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks)
- Training materials (notebooks, pens, printed curriculum)
- Conference t-shirt and name badge
- Internet data stipend for 6-month virtual phase (5GB/month)
- Certificate of completion
- Lifelong alumni network membership

No Fellow will pay a single franc. Period.

Indirect Beneficiaries: 5,000+ Community Members

The Fellowship is designed to create **multiplier effects**:

Through Community Projects:

- Each Fellow designs and implements a project affecting 50-100 people on average
- **30 Fellows directly trained** during the fellowship
- Each Fellow launches a community project reaching ~**75 beneficiaries = 2,250 project beneficiaries**
- Each Fellow organizes **Pass It On events** in their community, sharing fellowship knowledge with ~**65-70 additional youth = 2,000+**

indirect beneficiaries

- **Total Impact: 30 direct + 2,000+ indirect = 2,030+ young people reached**
- Project types:
 - Educational support (tutoring, literacy programs for youth who missed school)
 - Mental health and trauma support (peer counseling, support groups)
 - Economic empowerment (skills training, small business support)
 - Peacebuilding initiatives (dialogue forums, reconciliation efforts)
 - Youth engagement (safe spaces, sports, arts programs)

Through Mentorship Cascades:

- Fellows mentor 20-30 younger youth in their communities
- Creating a second tier of **800-1,200 emerging leaders**

Through Storytelling & Advocacy:

- Fellows document and share their work via social media, radio, local media
- Inspiring broader community engagement and hope
- Estimated reach: **10,000+ people** exposed to positive narratives from SW Region

Long-Term Beneficiaries: Southwest Cameroon's Future

This Fellowship is not just about 30 individuals—it's about **rebuilding the leadership pipeline** for an entire region. Through the Fellows' Pass It On events, we're creating a cascade of knowledge-sharing that will reach 2,000+ young people across Southwest Cameroon.

5 Years from Now (2031):

- Alumni will be **teachers, entrepreneurs, civil society leaders, local government officials**
- They will mentor the next generation of Fellows (2027, 2028, 2029 cohorts)
- They will establish **permanent Rise for Impact chapter in Southwest Cameroon**
- They will be **voices for peace, reconciliation, and development**

10 Years from Now (2036):

- Alumni will be **regional and national leaders** shaping Cameroon's future
 - The crisis will (we pray) be resolved, and Fellows will lead reconstruction efforts
 - **Rise for Impact Southwest Cameroon** will be a self-sustaining organization
 - The 2026 cohort will be remembered as **the generation that refused to let crisis define them**
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What Makes Rise for Impact Unique

1. Proven Track Record

Since founding:

- **500+ young leaders** trained across 8 African countries
- **50+ community impact projects** launched and sustained
- **85% program completion rate** (vs. 40-50% industry average)
- **1,000+ opportunity alerts** distributed, connecting youth to scholarships and fellowships

2. Founder's Lived Experience

I didn't build Rise for Impact from theory—I built it from experience. Growing up in an underprivileged community, studying at Ashesi University, and now leading a pan-African movement gives me **insider knowledge** of both the barriers youth face and the pathways that work.

3. Hybrid Model = Maximum Impact, Minimum Cost

Many programs choose either in-person OR virtual. We combine the best of both:

- **On-site bootcamps** build relationships and energy
- **Virtual mentorship** ensures sustainability and accessibility
- **Cost efficiency** allows us to serve more people with limited resources

4. Skills-First Curriculum

We don't just teach theory—we build competencies that **increase employability and impact**:

- Grant writing (participants leave with fundable proposals)
- Storytelling and communication (LinkedIn profiles, pitch decks, personal brands)
- Project management (using real tools like Trello, Asana, Google Workspace)
- Community engagement and stakeholder management

5. Action-Oriented Philosophy

Every participant launches a real project. We don't give certificates for attendance—we measure success by tangible community impact. This accountability transforms mindsets from "someday" to "right now."

6. Pan-African Network Effect

Rise for Impact participants aren't just joining a Cameroon program—they're joining a **continental movement** with alumni in Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, DRC, Rwanda, and Liberia. This network creates:

- Cross-border collaboration opportunities
- Access to diverse mentors and expertise
- Shared learning and best practices
- Regional convening and leadership exchanges

7. Sustainable & Scalable Design

- **Alumni become mentors:** Past participants train new cohorts
 - **Campus Ambassadors model:** University students bring programs to their campuses
 - **Open-source resources:** Our curriculum and tools are shared freely
 - **Revenue diversification:** Grants, sponsorships, individual donations, and future earned income streams
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Funding Bracket

More than \$1,000

Requested Amount: \$5,000 USD

Budget Overview: This budget covers a **FULL scholarship for 30 Fellows** including:

- 4-day intensive on-site conference (accommodation, meals, training)
- 6 months of virtual mentorship (weekly workshops, one-on-one coaching)
- Project seed funding for community impact initiatives
- Program materials, technology, and logistics
- All operational costs

Detailed Breakdown Below:

Planned Activities (March - September 2026)

FEBRUARY 2026: Recruitment & Selection

- **Feb 1-15:** Open application period
 - Social media campaign (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp)
 - Radio announcements (Southwest FM, Chariot FM, Ocean FM Limbe)
 - Community outreach (churches, mosques, youth centers, IDP camps)
 - University campus visits (University of Buea, HTTC Kumba)
- **Feb 16-23:** Community-based application review (10 reviewers)
- **Feb 24 - Mar 7:** Video interviews with top 80 applicants
- **Mar 8-12:** Final selection of 30 Fellows + 5 wait-list
- **Mar 13:** All applicants notified

MARCH 2026: 4-Day Fellowship Conference

March 20-23: Intensive On-Site Conference in Buea

Day 1 (March 20) - Foundation & Connection:

- Opening ceremony with traditional Southwest Cameroonian rituals
- Founder's story: "Never Let Your Background Put Your Back on the Ground"
- Fellow introductions and icebreakers
- Workshop 1: Leadership in Crisis (panel discussion)
- Workshop 2: From Trauma to Purpose (resilience session)
- Cultural night: Music, dance, storytelling

Day 2 (March 21) - Skills for Impact:

- Workshop 3: Storytelling & Personal Branding (LinkedIn optimization)
- Workshop 4: Grant Writing Masterclass

- Workshop 5: Public Speaking & Presentation Skills
- Workshop 6: Project Management & Community Engagement
- Mentor matching and small group dinners

Day 3 (March 22) - Networks & Opportunities:

- Workshop 7: Navigating Opportunities (scholarships, fellowships)
- Workshop 8: Relationship Building & Networking
- Panel discussion with funders and leaders
- Workshop 9: Entrepreneurship & Social Innovation
- Speed networking with 20+ professionals
- Talent show and fellowship spirit building

Day 4 (March 23) - Action & Commitment:

- Workshop 10: Designing Your Community Impact Project
- Project presentations (all 30 Fellows pitch 3-minute ideas)
- Workshop 11: Sustaining Impact Beyond the Fellowship
- Commitment ceremony
- Closing celebration and certificate presentation

Fellows Leave With:

- Completed LinkedIn profile
- Grant proposal draft
- Community project concept note
- Mentorship relationship established
- Network of 30 peers
- Fellowship certificate
- Renewed hope and purpose

APRIL 2026: Virtual Phase Begins - Project Development

- **Apr 2:** Virtual kickoff meeting (introduce 6-month structure)
- **Apr 9:** Workshop - Refining Project Ideas
- **Apr 16:** Workshop - Creating Implementation Plans

- **Apr 23:** Workshop - Setting Milestones and Metrics
- **Apr 30:** Workshop - Applying for Seed Funding
- **Ongoing:** Bi-weekly mentor sessions, WhatsApp community support

MAY 2026: Skill Deepening & Application

- **May 7:** Workshop - Advanced Grant Writing (apply to real opportunities)
- **May 14:** Workshop - Storytelling Through Video/Social Media
- **May 21:** Workshop - Public Speaking Practice
- **May 28:** Workshop - Leadership Case Studies
- **Guest Speakers:** Grant officer, content creator, TED speaker
- **Deliverable:** Each Fellow applies to 2+ real opportunities

JUNE 2026: Implementation & Problem-Solving

- **Jun 4:** Workshop - Launching Your Project
- **Jun 11:** Workshop - Troubleshooting Common Challenges
- **Jun 18:** Workshop - Engaging Stakeholders & Partnerships
- **Jun 21:** In-person regional meetups (Buea, Limbe, Kumba)
- **Jun 25:** Workshop - Mid-Project Check-In
- **Ongoing:** Fellows implement community projects on the ground
- **Deliverable:** Mid-program report with photos/videos

JULY 2026: Scaling & Partnerships

- **Jul 2:** Workshop - Identifying Funding Opportunities
- **Jul 9:** Workshop - Writing Proposals to Local Organizations
- **Jul 16:** Workshop - Media Training & Impact Stories
- **Jul 19:** In-person regional meetups
- **Jul 23:** Workshop - Creating Photo/Video Content
- **Jul 30:** Workshop - Pitching Stories to Media
- **Deliverable:** 1-minute project video per Fellow

AUGUST 2026: Sustainability Planning

- **Aug 6:** Workshop - Financial Planning for Sustainability
- **Aug 13:** Workshop - Building Volunteer Teams
- **Aug 16:** In-person regional meetups (practice presentations)
- **Aug 20:** Workshop - Monitoring & Evaluation Systems
- **Aug 27:** Workshop - Preparing for Demo Day
- **Deliverable:** Sustainability plan + Demo Day presentation draft

SEPTEMBER 2026: Showcasing Impact & Graduation

- **Sep 3:** Workshop - Finalizing Impact Reports
- **Sep 10:** Demo Day Rehearsal (Round 1)
- **Sep 17:** Demo Day Rehearsal (Round 2)
- **Sep 26 (Saturday): DEMO DAY & GRADUATION CEREMONY**
 - 9am-10am: Arrival and registration
 - 10am-3:30pm: Project presentations (30 Fellows, 7 min each)
 - 4pm-5pm: Awards and recognition
 - 5pm-6pm: Keynote address
 - 6pm-7pm: Certificate presentation
 - 7pm-9pm: Celebration dinner
- **Sep 27 (Sunday):** Alumni Network Launch
 - Alumni leadership elections
 - Planning 2027 activities
 - Commitment to ongoing engagement

ONGOING THROUGHOUT (March-September):

- Weekly virtual workshops (Wednesdays, 6-8pm)
- Bi-weekly one-on-one mentorship (30-45 min sessions)
- Daily WhatsApp community support
- Monthly in-person regional meetups
- Opportunity sharing (scholarships, fellowships, jobs)
- Project seed funding disbursement (\$25 × 20 projects)

- Media documentation and storytelling
 - Impact tracking and evaluation
-

Detailed Budget: \$5,000 USD

BUDGET SUMMARY BY CATEGORY

CATEGORY	AMOUNT	% OF TOTAL
1. 4-Day Conference Costs	\$2,800	56%
2. 6-Month Virtual Phase	\$900	18%
3. Project Seed Funding	\$600	12%
4. Marketing & Outreach	\$250	5%
5. Administrative & Support	\$300	6%
6. Contingency Fund	\$150	3%
TOTAL	\$5,000	100%

1. 4-DAY CONFERENCE COSTS: \$2,800

A. Accommodation & Venue (4 nights) - \$1,200

- Conference venue rental (4 days, 8am-10pm): \$400
- Accommodation for 30 Fellows (shared rooms, 2-3 per room): \$300
- Breakout rooms for group work (2 rooms): \$100
- Bedding, linens, towels: \$150
- Night security (4 nights): \$100
- Cleaning and maintenance: \$50

B. Meals & Refreshments - \$800

- Full board for 50 people × 4 days (Fellows + staff): \$700
 - Breakfast, lunch, dinner (simple, nutritious local food)
- Continuous refreshments and water: \$100

C. Training Materials - \$350

- Printed curriculum (30 copies, 80 pages, bound): \$120
- Notebooks and pens (30 Fellows × 2 notebooks + 3 pens): \$60
- Flip charts and markers for group work: \$40
- Professional certificates (printed with design): \$50
- Name tags and lanyards (branded): \$30

D. Transportation Support - \$300

- Local transport (Buea area, 20 Fellows): \$100
- Long-distance (Kumba, Limbe, Tiko, 15 Fellows): \$150
- Emergency transport buffer: \$50

E. Conference Facilitation - \$150

- Lead facilitators (2 people, 4 days): \$100
 - Guest speakers (3 people, transport + honorarium): \$50
-

2. 6-MONTH VIRTUAL PHASE: \$900

A. Technology & Digital Tools - \$300

- Zoom Pro subscription (6 months): \$90
- Internet data stipends (20 Fellows with greatest need × \$1.50/month × 6 months): \$180
- Technology support and troubleshooting: \$30

B. Mentorship Program - \$400

- Mentor honorariums (20 mentors × \$15 stipend for 6 months): \$300
- Mentor training workshop (1-day): \$50
- Mentor resources (templates, guides, tracking tools): \$50

C. Guest Speakers & Workshops - \$200

- Virtual guest speakers (6 speakers × \$25 each): \$150
 - Workshop materials (digital resources, templates): \$50
-

3. PROJECT SEED FUNDING: \$600

- Micro-grants for 20 best projects (\$25 each): \$500
- Emergency project support fund: \$100

Selection Criteria: Strong proposal, measurable impact, sustainability plan

4. MARKETING & OUTREACH: \$250

- Social media advertising (Facebook, Instagram, 4 weeks): \$80
 - Radio announcements (3 stations × 10 spots): \$90
 - Printed flyers and posters (500 flyers, 50 posters): \$50
 - Campus outreach (transport + materials): \$30
-

5. ADMINISTRATIVE & SUPPORT: \$300

- Program coordinator stipend (7 months, local): \$150
 - Bank fees and transfer costs: \$30
 - Communication costs (phone, WhatsApp, SMS): \$40
 - Documentation (photography, videography, reports): \$50
 - Office supplies (printing, admin materials): \$30
-

6. CONTINGENCY FUND: \$150

- Unexpected expenses: \$100
 - Price fluctuations buffer: \$30
 - Emergency support: \$20
-

PER-FELLOW COST BREAKDOWN

Total Budget: \$5,000

Number of Fellows: 30

Cost Per Fellow: \$125

What Each Fellow Receives (Full Scholarship): 4-day intensive conference (accommodation, meals, training)

- All training materials (curriculum, notebooks, pens)
- Professional certificate
- 6 months of virtual mentorship (weekly workshops + one-on-one)
- Internet data support
- Opportunity for \$25 seed funding
- Access to 500+ alumni network
- Lifelong Rise for Impact community membership

No Fellow pays a single franc. Period.

Risks & Mitigation Strategies

Risk 1: Security Concerns Affecting In-Person Conference

Probability: Medium (given ongoing crisis)

Impact: High

Mitigation:

- Maintain active communication with local authorities and security forces
- Choose venue in relatively stable area of Buea
- Have backup location in Douala (safer, but higher costs)
- Establish emergency evacuation plan
- Hire professional security for venue (already budgeted)
- Monitor security situation daily, ready to postpone if necessary
- Insurance/safety protocols for all Fellows

Plan B: If security deteriorates, shift to fully virtual fellowship with increased budget for technology access

Risk 2: Internet Shutdowns Disrupting Virtual Phase

Probability: High (recurring issue in Anglophone regions)

Impact: Medium

Mitigation:

- Use SMS and phone calls as backup communication
- Increase in-person regional meetups (monthly → bi-weekly)
- Record all workshops for Fellows to watch later
- Provide alternative content delivery (printed materials, USB drives)
- Build flexibility into schedule to accommodate outages
- Partner with cybercafés for Fellows who lose home internet

Plan C: Reallocate data stipend funds to increased in-person meetups and transportation

Risk 3: Low Application Turnout or Quality

Probability: Low

Impact: High

Mitigation:

- Begin marketing 6 weeks before deadline
- Multi-channel outreach (social media, radio, churches, community centers, IDP camps)
- Partner with University of Buea, local youth organizations
- Use testimonials from Rise for Impact alumni
- Emphasize full scholarship (no cost to Fellows)
- Extend application period by 1-2 weeks if needed

- Lower admission criteria slightly while maintaining quality standards
-

Risk 4: Fellow Drop-Out During 6-Month Virtual Phase

Probability: Medium (given instability and competing pressures)

Impact: Medium

Mitigation:

- Build strong bonds during 4-day conference (foundation of commitment)
- Assign dedicated mentors for personalized support
- Use WhatsApp for easy, daily connection
- Flexible scheduling for virtual sessions (record for those who miss live)
- Celebrate small wins to maintain motivation
- One-on-one check-ins for disengaged Fellows
- Peer accountability structures (Fellows support each other)

Target: Maintain 85%+ completion rate (26+ of 30 Fellows complete program)

Risk 5: Projects Fail to Launch or Create Impact

Probability: Medium

Impact: Medium

Mitigation:

- Provide seed funding (\$25) to remove financial barriers
- Intensive project planning during 4-day conference
- Ongoing mentorship throughout implementation
- Troubleshooting workshops when challenges arise
- Connect Fellows to local organizations for partnerships

- Allow project pivots if original idea proves unfeasible
- Focus on small, achievable wins rather than overly ambitious plans

Realistic Expectation: 60-70% of projects successfully launch (24-28 projects)

Risk 6: Trauma and Mental Health Challenges Among Fellows

Probability: High (many Fellows have experienced violence, loss, displacement)

Impact: Variable (could affect engagement, completion, project success)

Mitigation:

- Include trauma-informed care in facilitator training
- Dedicate Workshop 2 (Day 1) to "From Trauma to Purpose"
- Partner with mental health professionals for guest sessions
- Create safe spaces for Fellows to share struggles
- Normalize mental health conversations
- Provide referrals to counseling services if needed
- Emphasize self-care and community support throughout fellowship

Approach: Acknowledge trauma, but focus on agency and hope

Risk 7: Budget Overruns or Funding Shortfalls

Probability: Low

Impact: Medium

Mitigation:

- 3% contingency fund (\$150) built into budget
- Careful expense tracking from day 1
- Prioritize essential costs (conference venue, meals, materials)
- Seek in-kind donations (free venues, volunteer facilitators)
- Have backup funding sources (crowdfunding, individual donations)

- Transparent communication with Ashesi Impact Fund if issues arise

Cost Control: Every expense justified and documented

Risk 8: Limited Mentor Availability

Probability: Low

Impact: Medium

Mitigation:

- Recruit mentors early from Rise for Impact's 500+ alumni network
- Engage Ashesi alumni and professionals in diaspora
- Use group mentorship when necessary (1 mentor : 2-3 Fellows)
- Leverage peer mentorship (Fellows support each other)
- Develop self-paced learning resources for skill-building
- Recognize mentors publicly (certificates, LinkedIn recommendations)

Target: 15 committed mentors for 30 Fellows (1:2 ratio)

Risk 9: Difficulty Reaching Fellows in Remote/Rural Areas

Probability: Medium

Impact: Medium

Mitigation:

- Allocate transportation support in budget (\$300)
- Offer accommodation during 4-day conference
- Use WhatsApp (free data) for ongoing communication
- Create regional meetup hubs (Buea, Limbe, Kumba)
- Record virtual sessions for offline viewing
- Allow SMS/phone call participation if internet unavailable

Commitment: No Fellow excluded due to geography

Risk 10: Post-Fellowship Sustainability (Alumni Engagement)

Probability: Medium

Impact: Medium

Mitigation:

- Launch formal alumni chapter at end of fellowship (Sep 27)
- Elect alumni leadership (President, Secretary, Reps)
- Plan quarterly in-person convenings
- Maintain WhatsApp community post-fellowship
- Connect alumni to ongoing opportunities
- Involve 2026 alumni in mentoring 2027 cohort
- Celebrate alumni successes publicly

Vision: Self-sustaining Southwest Cameroon alumni network by 2027

Risk 5: Insufficient Funding or Budget Overruns

Probability: Medium

Impact: Medium

Mitigation:

- Maintain 10% contingency fund (\$100)
- Prioritize essential expenses (venue, meals, seed funding)
- Seek in-kind support (free venues, volunteer facilitators)
- Explore supplementary funding (crowdfunding, individual donations)
- Reduce costs through partnerships and sponsorships

Risk 6: Challenges Transitioning to Virtual After Conference

Probability: Low

Impact: Low

Mitigation:

- Introduce virtual tools during the 4-day conference

- Provide tech support and troubleshooting guides
 - Record sessions for those who miss live workshops
 - Use WhatsApp groups for easy communication and updates
 - Conduct tech check before first virtual session
-

Relevant Knowledge, Skills, and Experience

Claude Tomoh - Founder & Executive Director

Lived Experience:

I didn't just study social impact—I lived it. Growing up in an underprivileged community where potential was abundant but opportunity was scarce shaped my understanding of the barriers young Africans face. I know what it feels like to search for opportunities without guidance, to have dreams but no roadmap, to want to create change but lack the tools.

That lived experience is my greatest qualification. It ensures Rise for Impact addresses real needs, not theoretical problems.

Academic Foundation:

Computer Science & Information Systems student at Ashesi University

- Trained in **systems thinking, problem-solving, and design**
- Exposure to **entrepreneurship, leadership ethics, and project management**
- Surrounded by a community of changemakers committed to Africa's transformation

Proven Leadership:

Founded and scaled Rise for Impact across 8 African countries:

- **500+ young leaders trained** through multiple programs

- **50+ community impact projects launched** with measurable outcomes
- **85% program completion rate** (significantly above industry average)
- **Built a team of 15+ coordinators** across Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, DRC, Rwanda, and Liberia
- **Managed complex logistics** for hybrid programs (on-site + virtual)
- **Secured funding and partnerships** to sustain operations

Program Design Expertise:

Developed and facilitated **6 distinct programs:**

1. **Rise for Impact Fellowship:** Year-long comprehensive leadership development (*the focus of this proposal*)
2. **Rise Circles:** Peer learning and accountability groups
3. **Impact Clinics:** Intensive 2-day project incubation workshops
4. **Rise for Climate:** Youth-led environmental action
5. **Campus Ambassadors:** University chapter establishment
6. **Opportunity Plug:** Weekly opportunities newsletter and application guidance

For this Ashesi Impact Fund proposal, we are adapting the Fellowship program for Southwest Cameroon's crisis context.

Skills Training:

I personally teach:

- **Grant writing** (using successful proposals as case studies)
- **Storytelling & personal branding** (LinkedIn optimization, pitch decks)
- **Project management** (planning, budgeting, monitoring & evaluation)

- **Community engagement** (stakeholder mapping, partnership building)
- **Public speaking & presentation skills**

Technology & Systems:

As a Computer Science student, I built:

- **Rise for Impact's full-stack web platform** (Next.js, PostgreSQL, NextAuth)
- **Automated email notification system** (Resend API integration)
- **Opportunity tracking database** (1,000+ opportunities catalogued)
- **Alumni network management system**

This technical expertise ensures **operational efficiency, scalability, and data-driven decision-making**.

Mentorship & Network:

I've cultivated relationships with:

- **Experienced African leaders** who serve as mentors
- **University partners** (Ashesi, University of Buea, and others)
- **Funding organizations** and impact investors
- **Media outlets** for visibility and storytelling
- **Alumni network** providing peer mentorship and project support

Impact Documentation:

I understand the importance of **measuring and communicating impact**:

- Developed **monitoring & evaluation frameworks** for all programs
- Published **impact reports** with quantitative and qualitative data
- Created **case studies and testimonials** showcasing participant success
- Used **storytelling** to attract funders, partners, and participants

Why I Will Succeed with This Funding:

- 1. Experience:** I've already run Fellowship programs successfully in 8 African countries. This isn't an experiment—it's a proven model I'm adapting for Southwest Cameroon's crisis context.
 - 2. Network:** I have 500+ alumni who can mentor, facilitate, and support Fellows. I'm not building from scratch.
 - 3. Systems:** Rise for Impact has operational systems (curriculum, virtual platforms, databases) ready to deploy immediately.
 - 4. Commitment:** This is not a side project. Rise for Impact is my life's work—I am fully committed to its success and sustainability.
 - 5. Accountability:** I've successfully managed previous funding, delivered results, and provided transparent impact reporting. Funders trust me because I deliver.
-

Ownership Structure

This is a youth-led social impact initiative, not a for-profit venture.

Founder & Executive Director: Claude Tomoh (100% leadership and decision-making)

Governance:

- **Executive Team:** 4 members (Claude Tomoh, Emmanuel Kpeli, Esther Owusu, Uche-Ukah Chimzyterem)
- **Board of Advisors:** 4 members (Dr. Sarah Nkwain, Prof. Emmanuel Tanyi, Grace Ashu, Alain Fokam)
- **Country Coordinators:** 8+ regional leaders

Legal Status: Currently operating as an unregistered initiative. Plans to register as a **non-profit organization in Cameroon** by Q3 2026.

Future Vision: Transition to a **sustainable social enterprise model** with diverse revenue streams (grants, corporate sponsorships, earned income from training services) while maintaining our mission-first approach.

Success Metrics & Impact Measurement

Immediate Outcomes (By September 2026)

METRIC	TARGET	HOW WE MEASURE
Fellows Recruited	30	Final selection list, signed commitment forms
Conference Attendance	100% (30/30)	Daily attendance sheets, check-ins
Program Completion Rate	85%+ (34+ Fellows)	Completed all workshops, final project, Demo Day
Projects Designed	30	Project proposals submitted during conference
Projects Launched	25-30 (65-75%)	Fellows begin implementation with documentation
Community Beneficiaries	2,500+	Self-reported data from Fellows' project reports
Seed Funding Distributed	20 projects × \$25	Disbursement records, project receipts

LinkedIn Profiles Created	30 (100%)	Each Fellow has professional online presence
Grant Proposals Written	30+	Each Fellow drafts at least 1 fundable proposal
Opportunities Applied To	80+ applications	Fellows apply to 2+ scholarships/fellowships/grants
Mentor Relationships	30 (1:2 ratio)	Each Fellow paired with dedicated mentor
Virtual Workshops Attended	80%+ avg. attendance	Zoom analytics, participation logs
In-Person Meetups	6 regional gatherings	Attendance records from Buea, Limbe, Kumba
Demo Day Attendance	100+ attendees	Fellows, families, funders, community leaders
Alumni Chapter Formed	Yes	Leadership elected, structure established

Short-Term Outcomes (6-12 Months Post-Fellowship: October 2026 - March 2027)

METRIC	TARGET	HOW WE MEASURE
Fellows Employed/Enrolled	70%+	6-month follow-up survey

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employed (full-time, part-time, freelance)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enrolled in university/training program
Opportunities Won	12-15 (40-50%)	Fellows report scholarships/grants received
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scholarships for further education
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grants for community projects
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fellowship acceptances
Projects Sustained	60%+ (15-18 projects)	Projects still operating 6 months later
Project Beneficiaries	3,000+ cumulative	Updated impact reports from Fellows
New Collaborations	20+ partnerships	Fellows working together on joint initiatives
Alumni Mentoring	50%+ (20+ Fellows)	Alumni mentoring younger youth in communities
Media Coverage	10+ stories	Local radio, newspapers, blogs featuring Fellows

Alumni Meetup Attendance	70%+ (28+ Fellows)	Quarterly gathering participation rates
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Medium-Term Outcomes (1-2 Years: 2027-2028)

METRIC	TARGET	HOW WE MEASURE
Fellows in Leadership Roles	30%+ (12+ Fellows)	Formal positions (team lead, coordinator, board member)
Social Enterprises Started	10+	Fellows launch businesses/NGOs/community organizations
Advanced Education	40%+ (12+ Fellows)	Graduate programs, professional certifications
2027 Cohort Mentored	20+ alumni as mentors	2026 Fellows guide 2027 Fellowship participants
Regional Visibility	High	Rise for Impact recognized as leading youth org in SW Region
Alumni Network Active	80%+ (32+ Fellows)	Consistent engagement in alumni activities

Long-Term Outcomes (3-5 Years: 2029-2031)

METRIC	TARGET	HOW WE MEASURE
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Policy Influence	5+ Fellows	Involvement in local government, civil society advocacy
Reconstruction Leadership	10+ Fellows	Leading post-crisis rebuilding efforts in SW Region
Pan-African Networks	20+ Fellows	Participating in continental initiatives, fellowships
2026 Cohort as Mentors	30+ Fellows	Alumni training/mentoring 2028-2031 cohorts
Self-Sustaining Chapter	Yes	SW Cameroon chapter operates independently
Generational Impact	Measurable	Fellows' work creates lasting community change

QUALITATIVE IMPACT INDICATORS

Beyond numbers, we will measure:

1. Mindset Transformation:

- Fellows shift from survival mode to leadership mode
- Increased confidence and belief in ability to create change
- Stronger sense of agency despite ongoing crisis

2. Hope Restoration:

- Fellows report renewed purpose and direction
- Reduced feelings of helplessness or despair
- Positive outlook on personal and regional future

3. Community Perception:

- Local leaders recognize Fellows as emerging changemakers
- Families express pride in Fellows' growth
- Communities benefit from Fellows' projects and leadership

4. Peace & Reconciliation:

- Fellows engage in dialogue and bridge-building across divides
- Projects contribute to healing and community cohesion
- Fellows model constructive leadership in crisis context

5. Ripple Effects:

- Fellows inspire peers to pursue education/opportunities
 - Younger youth see Fellows as role models
 - Communities become more engaged and hopeful
-

"PASS IT ON" EVENTS: MULTIPLYING IMPACT THROUGH COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE-SHARING

A core component of the Rise for Impact Fellowship is the "**Pass It On**" model —where each Fellow organizes community events to share the knowledge and skills they gained during the fellowship with peers in their local communities.

What Are Pass It On Events?

Pass It On events are **grassroots, Fellow-led workshops** where graduates return to their communities to teach what they learned. These are typically:

- **2-3 hour workshops** covering 1-2 key fellowship topics
- **Free and open** to young people (ages 16-35) in the community
- **Practical and interactive** (hands-on activities, not lectures)
- **Held in accessible venues** (community centers, churches, schools, homes)

Topics Fellows Will Teach:

Based on fellowship content, Fellows will organize Pass It On sessions on:

1. **Grant Writing Basics** - How to find and apply for funding
2. **LinkedIn & Personal Branding** - Building professional online presence
3. **Public Speaking & Storytelling** - Communicating ideas with confidence
4. **Project Planning 101** - Designing community impact projects
5. **Opportunity Navigation** - Finding scholarships, fellowships, internships

Target Impact: 2,000+ Young People Reached

Our Model:

- **30 Fellows × 3 Pass It On events each = 90 community workshops**
- **Average attendance:** 20-25 participants per event
- **Total reach:** 90 events × 22 average attendance = **1,980-2,250 young people**

Geographic Distribution:

- Fellows return to their home communities across Southwest Region
- Events held in Buea, Limbe, Kumba, Tiko, Muyuka, Mamfe, and rural areas
- Ensures knowledge reaches crisis-affected communities beyond urban centers

How We Will Track & Measure Pass It On Events:

To ensure credibility and accountability, we will rigorously document every Pass It On event:

1. Event Registration (Before Event):

- Fellows submit **Pass It On Event Proposal Form** 2 weeks before event
- Form captures: Topic, Date, Location, Expected attendance, Community partner (if any)
- Rise for Impact team reviews and approves each event

2. Event Documentation (During Event):

- **Attendance sheet** with names and phone numbers of participants
- **Photos** showing event in progress (minimum 5 photos)
- **Participant pre-survey** (5 questions: What do you hope to learn? Rate your current skill level 1-10)
- **Participant post-survey** (5 questions: What did you learn? Rate your skill level now. Will you apply this? Would you recommend to a friend?)

3. Event Reporting (After Event):

- Fellows submit **Pass It On Event Report** within 3 days
- Report includes:
 - Attendance sheet (scanned/photographed)
 - Photo documentation (5-10 photos)
 - Pre/post survey results
 - Participant testimonials (2-3 quotes)
 - Fellow's reflection (What went well? What would you improve?)
 - Impact stories (Any standout moments? Did participants commit to action?)

4. Verification Mechanisms:

- **Random spot checks:** Rise for Impact team attends 10-15% of events unannounced
- **Participant follow-up:** We randomly call 5-10 participants per event to verify attendance and satisfaction

- **Community leader confirmation:** Local leaders (pastors, chiefs, teachers) sign off confirming event occurred
- **Geo-tagged photos:** Fellows submit photos with location data to prove event location

5. Impact Tracking (3-6 Months Post-Event):

- **Follow-up survey** sent to Pass It On participants 3 months later
- Questions: Did you apply what you learned? Did you pursue any opportunities? Have you shared knowledge with others?
- Captures **second-order ripple effects** (Pass It On participants teaching others)

Pass It On Metrics & Targets:

METRIC	TARGET	HOW WE MEASURE
Events Organized	90 (30 Fellows × 3 events)	Event registration + reports submitted
Participants Reached	2,000+	Attendance sheets from all events
Average Event Rating	4.0+/5.0	Post-event surveys from participants
Knowledge Gain	70%+ report skill increase	Pre/post survey comparison (self-rated skill levels)
Application Intent	80%+ commit to using skills	Post-survey question: "Will you apply this?"
Second-Order Impact	30%+ teach others	3-month follow-up: "Have you shared with others?"

Fellow Completion Rate	85%+ complete 3 events	26+ of 30 Fellows organize all required events
Geographic Coverage	10+ communities	Events documented in at least 10 different towns/villages

Success Stories We'll Track:

Beyond numbers, we will document:

- **"Aha" moments** - Participants who had breakthrough realizations
- **Opportunity wins** - Pass It On participants who won scholarships/grants after attending
- **Collaborations** - Participants who partnered with Fellows on projects
- **Testimonials** - Video/written testimonials from participants and community leaders
- **Media coverage** - Local radio/newspaper coverage of Pass It On events

Incentives for Fellows to Organize Events:

To ensure Fellows follow through:

- **Recognition:** Top 5 Fellows (by event quality & attendance) featured on website and social media
- **Micro-grants:** Fellows who complete all 3 events receive \$50 bonus for community project
- **Certificate:** "Pass It On Champion" certificate for Fellows who complete all events
- **Peer accountability:** Fellows share updates in WhatsApp group, creating healthy competition

- **Mentorship requirement:** Completing Pass It On events is required for staying in alumni network and mentoring future cohorts

Why Pass It On Matters:

This is not an add-on—it's **central to our theory of change**:

Traditional Model: Train 30 Fellows → 30 people impacted

Rise for Impact Model: Train 30 Fellows → Fellows train 2,000+ through Pass It On → **Exponential impact**

Pass It On ensures:

1. **Knowledge democratization** - Leadership training isn't reserved for the "selected few"
2. **Peer-to-peer learning** - Young people teaching young people (more relatable than external experts)
3. **Community ownership** - Fellows become recognized leaders in their communities
4. **Sustainability** - Creates culture of knowledge-sharing that outlasts the fellowship
5. **Credible impact claims** - We can prove 2,000+ reached through rigorous documentation

This is how 30 Fellows create region-wide transformation.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Throughout Fellowship (March-September 2026):

- **Weekly:** Attendance tracking, participation logs
- **Monthly:** Progress reports from Fellows (projects, applications, wins)
- **Quarterly:** Comprehensive surveys (engagement, learning, satisfaction)

- **Ongoing:** WhatsApp interactions, mentor session notes, photo/video documentation

Post-Fellowship:

- **6 Months (March 2027):** Follow-up survey (employment, education, projects, opportunities won)
 - **12 Months (September 2027):** Annual alumni survey, case study interviews (5 Fellows)
 - **24 Months (September 2028):** Long-term impact assessment
 - **Ongoing:** Alumni network engagement tracking, media coverage compilation
-

ACCOUNTABILITY & TRANSPARENCY

Monthly Progress Reports to Ashesi Impact Fund:

- Budget utilization with receipts
- Participant engagement metrics
- Success stories and challenges
- Photos and testimonials
- Adjustments and learnings

Final Impact Report (October 2026):

- Comprehensive program evaluation
- All metrics and outcomes documented
- Financial report with full documentation
- Testimonials and case studies (10-15 Fellows)
- Media coverage and visibility summary
- High-quality photos and videos
- Lessons learned and recommendations
- Plan for 2027 cohort

Public Transparency:

- Impact report published on Rise for Impact website
 - Social media updates throughout fellowship
 - Demo Day open to community, media, stakeholders
 - Alumni success stories shared regularly
-

Additional Information

Why This Fellowship Matters NOW for Southwest Cameroon:

1. The Crisis Has Created a Lost Generation—We Can't Wait Any Longer

Eight years of conflict means young people who were 15 in 2016 are now 23, having missed critical years of education, skill-building, and network formation. **Every additional year of delay deepens the disadvantage.** This fellowship intervenes NOW to prevent a permanent leadership vacuum in Southwest Cameroon.

2. The Timing Aligns with Critical Regional Needs

As peace dialogues emerge and communities begin imagining post-crisis futures, **we need equipped leaders ready to rebuild.** This fellowship prepares that leadership class. By 2027, when reconstruction efforts intensify, we'll have 30 trained changemakers ready to lead—plus 2,000+ young people they've empowered through Pass It On events.

3. This Is Personal—I Am From Southwest Cameroon

This isn't an outsider trying to "help" a crisis they don't understand. **I am from this region. I have lived this reality.** My ability to study at Ashesi is not because I'm more talented than my peers still trapped in the crisis zone—it's because circumstances aligned in my favor. This fellowship is my way of ensuring the accident of my privilege doesn't leave my people behind.

4. Rise for Impact Has Proven This Model Works

With 500+ alumni across 8 African countries, 85% program completion rates, and 50+ community projects launched, **we know how to do this well**. We're not experimenting—we're adapting a proven model for the unique crisis context of Southwest Cameroon.

Alignment with Ashesi's Mission:

Rise for Impact Fellowship embodies **Ashesi University's core values**:

1. Ethical Leadership:

- Fellows learn to lead with integrity, transparency, and accountability
- Program emphasizes service over self-interest
- Community impact central to every project

2. Innovation:

- Fellows design creative solutions to complex community challenges
- Use of technology (LinkedIn, virtual mentorship) to transcend crisis barriers
- Adaptation of global best practices to local contexts

3. Service:

- Every Fellow launches a community impact project
- Alumni commit to mentoring future cohorts
- Network focused on collective progress, not individual advancement

4. Pan-African Citizenship:

- Fellows connected to 500+ alumni across Africa
- Exposure to regional and continental opportunities
- Vision for Cameroon's role in Africa's future

This fellowship is Ashesi values in action—demonstrating how an Ashesi student can lead transformational change even in the most challenging

circumstances.

Why I Am the Right Person to Lead This:

1. I Have the Lived Experience:

- Born and raised in Southwest Region—I understand the crisis intimately
- I know the barriers young people face because I've faced them
- I speak the language (literal and cultural) of the community

2. I Have Proven Leadership:

- Founded and scaled Rise for Impact to 8 countries
- Trained 500+ young leaders with 85% completion rates
- Built a team of 15+ coordinators across Africa
- Managed complex, multi-country programs successfully

3. I Have the Technical Skills:

- Built full-stack web platform (Next.js, PostgreSQL, NextAuth)
- Developed automated systems for email, tracking, and reporting
- Can create scalable, efficient operational systems

4. I Have the Network:

- 500+ Rise for Impact alumni ready to serve as mentors
- Connections to funders, organizations, and media
- Ashesi alumni network for additional support

5. I Have the Commitment:

- This is my life's work, not a side project
- I am fully invested in Southwest Cameroon's future
- I will see this through beyond the fellowship period

6. I Have Earned Trust:

- Successfully managed previous funding and delivered results
 - Transparent reporting and accountable leadership
 - Testimonials from past participants and partners
-

What Success Looks Like (A Vision for 2031):

It's 2031. The Anglophone Crisis has (we pray) ended. Southwest Cameroon is rebuilding.

- **30 Fellows from the 2026 cohort** are now teachers, entrepreneurs, civil society leaders, local government officials
- **15-20 community projects** they launched are still operating, having served 10,000+ beneficiaries
- **The Rise for Impact Southwest Cameroon Alumni Chapter** hosts annual summits bringing together 200+ young leaders
- **2026 Fellows are mentoring** the 2029, 2030, and 2031 cohorts
- **The story of the 2026 cohort**—the generation that refused to let crisis define them—is told in schools, churches, and community gatherings
- **Cameroon recognizes** Rise for Impact as a model youth development program worthy of national replication

This is not a fantasy. This is what happens when you invest in young people at their most critical moment.

A Personal Plea to Ashesi Impact Fund:

I could have stayed in Ghana after discovering the privilege of education outside the crisis zone. I could have built a comfortable life and career, sending occasional money home but remaining disconnected.

I chose differently.

I chose to carry the stories of my people with me. I chose to build a platform that would ensure no young person's background puts their back on the ground. I chose to return—not physically yet, but through this work—to lift those still trapped in circumstances I escaped by luck.

This fellowship is my return. And I need your partnership to make it possible.

\$5,000 is not a small amount. But consider what it purchases:

- **30 young lives directly transformed**
- **2,000+ young people indirectly impacted** through Pass It On events
- **2,250+ community members** reached through Fellows' projects
- **2,500+ community members directly impacted**
- **A generation of leaders** rebuilt in a region hemorrhaging talent
- **Hope restored** in communities that have known only despair
- **Proof** that crisis does not kill potential—it only hides it

Together, we can uncover that potential. Together, we can rebuild Southwest Cameroon's future. Together, we can prove that Ashesi's investment in one student (me) can multiply into impact for thousands.

Let's rise together. Let's impact forever. CM

Why This Matters NOW for Southwest Cameroon:

The crisis has been ongoing for 8 years. Young people who were 15 in 2016 are now 23, having missed critical developmental years. **Every additional year of delay deepens the disadvantage.** This fellowship intervenes at a pivotal moment—before an entire generation is permanently lost.

Alignment with Ashesi's Mission:

Rise for Impact Fellowship embodies **Ashesi University's core values:**

1. Ethical Leadership:

- Fellows learn to lead with integrity, transparency, and accountability
- Program emphasizes service over self-interest
- Community impact central to every project

2. Innovation:

- Fellows design creative solutions to complex community challenges
- Use of technology (LinkedIn, virtual mentorship) to transcend crisis barriers
- Adaptation of global best practices to local contexts

3. Service:

- Every Fellow launches a community impact project
- Alumni commit to mentoring future cohorts
- Network focused on collective progress, not individual advancement

4. Pan-African Citizenship:

- Fellows connected to 500+ alumni across Africa
- Exposure to regional and continental opportunities
- Vision for Cameroon's role in Africa's future

This fellowship transforms Ashesi's investment in one student (me) into impact for thousands.

Final Commitment

This is more than a fellowship. **This is a movement to rebuild a generation.**

When I look at the 40 Fellows we will train, I see future teachers rebuilding destroyed schools. I see entrepreneurs creating jobs in communities devastated by unemployment. I see civil society leaders advocating for peace and justice. I see changemakers refusing to let crisis define their futures.

I see hope. And I see Ashesi's values in action.

Thank you for believing that an Ashesi student from Southwest Cameroon can lead transformational change in the region that needs it most.

Let's rise together. Let's impact forever. CM

Contact Information

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Appendices (To Be Attached)

1. **Detailed Budget Spreadsheet** - Line-by-line breakdown of \$5,000 allocation
2. **Timeline & Activity Schedule** - Day-by-day conference agenda + monthly virtual phase plan
3. **Selection Rubric** - Transparent criteria for choosing 30 Fellows
4. **Letters of Support** - From community leaders, previous Fellows, partners in Southwest Region
5. **Rise for Impact Impact Report** - Summary of 500+ alumni outcomes, project results
6. **Sample Workshop Materials** - Leadership, grant writing, storytelling curriculum excerpts

- 7. Media Coverage** - Press articles, blog posts about Rise for Impact
 - 8. Photos & Testimonials** - Visual documentation from previous programs
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Application Submitted to: Ashesi Impact Fund

Date: [Insert Date]

Funding Request: \$5,000 USD

Project Duration: February - September 2026

Target Impact: 30 Fellows (Direct), 2,000+ Young People (Indirect via Pass It On Events)

"Crisis does not kill potential—it only hides it. This fellowship will uncover it."

— Rise for Impact: Where every young person's background becomes their foundation, not their ceiling.  