



ASHOKA LET'S SUPPORT LEADING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS IN AFRICA

ABOUT ASHOKA IN AFRICA

Ashoka pioneered the field of social entrepreneurship in the early 1980s, coining the terms “social entrepreneurship” and “changemaker” and starting the first network of social entrepreneurs. Since then, we have found and empowered social entrepreneurs whose system-changing innovations solve deep-rooted social problems around the world through the Ashoka Fellowship. After a rigorous selection process focusing on both the entrepreneur and her solution, we invite the candidates into the Ashoka Fellowship - providing early-stage financial support and a unique lifetime membership into an extensive network of peers and partners, enabling them to expand their vision, sharpen their leadership skills and accelerate their impact.

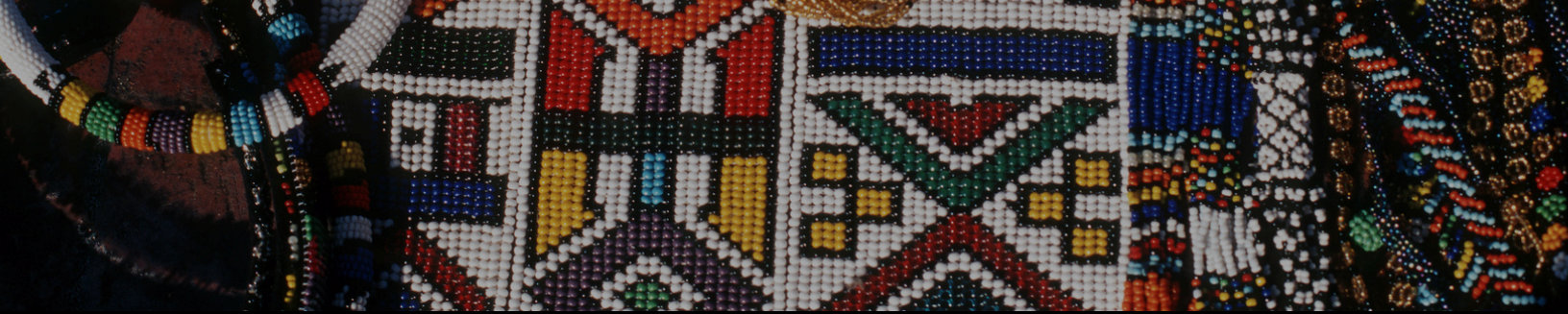
Being at the center of this network of over **4,000** social entrepreneurs in **90+** countries elected on the basis of their “new idea” provides Ashoka with a deep understanding of the key levers to bring about sustainable social change as well as insights into future trends. These insights have influenced our current vision of Everyone a Changemaker™ (EACH): empowering everyone to have greater agency in a world of complex societal problems and accelerating change. In collaboration with a range of strategic partners, we want to ensure that each individual, regardless of age, gender, or socio-economic class has the freedom, confidence and societal support to step into their changemaker power and drive change, in small or bigger steps.

Ashoka has had a presence on the African continent for over 30 years and has impacted the lives of millions of people through a vibrant network of over **500 Fellows**, carefully selected, developing innovative solutions across fields of work. Our presence spans over 24 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa with 4 regional offices in Nairobi, Lagos, Dakar and Johannesburg.

Ashoka Fellows’ results are remarkable. Our 2022 global impact study shows that: **76%** of respondents in Africa have achieved legislative change; **88%** have seen their solution replicated by other groups or organizations; **91%** are still pursuing the idea for which they were elected a Fellow, even 5 or 10 years later, illustrating the outstanding sustainability and resourcefulness of the social entrepreneurs whom we select and support.

Individually and as a collective, Fellows actively contribute to the SDGs by developing insightful, relevant and scalable solutions that address some of the toughest societal issues. They activate many around them to become changemakers as the foundation for sustainable change.

In 2024, Ashoka was ranked **#7 amongst social good organizations** worldwide by thedotgood (previously NGO Advisor).



FIVE KEY SELECTION CRITERIA FOR ASHOKA FELLOWS

Every year, we elect new Fellows into the Ashoka network based on a rigorous and tested process, with the same standards and criteria everywhere in the world. We assess holistically the entrepreneur and their model for positive change to ensure that we invest in systems-changers:



A NEW IDEA

A new solution or approach to a social problem that will change the pattern in a field, be it human rights, the environment, or any other.



SOCIAL IMPACT

Ashoka is interested in ideas that it believes will change the field significantly and that will trigger systemic impact.



CREATIVITY

Successful social entrepreneurs must be creative both as goalsetting visionaries and as problem solvers capable of engineering their visions into reality.



ENTREPRENEURIAL QUALITY

Entrepreneurial quality defines leaders who see opportunities for change and innovation and devote themselves entirely to making that change happen and for all.



ETHICAL FIBER

Trusted and inspiring social entrepreneurs across different stakeholder groups to deliver major structural changes to society.

THE VALUE OF THE ASHOKA FELLOWSHIP

The Ashoka Fellowship is a unique blend of financial support to the entrepreneur and lifelong support through our global, regional and local networks. We talk about the five Cs approach:

- **Capital:** A three-year unrestricted stipend to enable them to focus full-time on their social venture and reduce their risk.
- **Community of Peers:** Peer-to-peer conversations, consultations and network of support.
- **Connections:** Connections to opportunities for growth and to possible supporters for visibility, funding, etc.
- **Capacity Building:** Strategic support on core priorities such as systems change, financial sustainability and personal sustainability as well as pro-bono support from Ashoka partners to help Fellows scale their impact through critical expertise.
- **Collaboration:** Bringing together “mosaics of solutions” around a given field of work and building synergies for greater impact.

RECENTLY ELECTED ASHOKA FELLOWS IN AFRICA

We are looking for vision-aligned partners to co-invest with us in the following outstanding social entrepreneurs who have been confirmed as Ashoka Fellows. The Ashoka Fellowship including the 3-year stipend will help them bring their impact to the next stage. In 2024, for the first time, we have elected Fellows in the DRC.

EDUCATION



Gideon Olanrewaju - AREAi - Nigeria

Gideon has developed an alternative transformative educational model for out-of-school, displaced children affected by the refugee crisis in Nigeria addressing the gaps in the traditional educational system and meets the unique needs and challenges of refugee youth through a three-pronged approach.



Busisiwe Mkhumuzi - ThinkShift - South Africa

Busisiwe is capacitating young people from disadvantaged schools with the necessary 21st century competencies to allow them to thrive in today's ever changing and 4th IR driven markets.



Malik Shaffy - Kina Rwanda - Rwanda

Malik is redefining play's role in Rwandan society challenging conventional norms, liberating play from confined spaces and advocating its universal application. Through a fusion of media advocacy, community engagement, and policy reform, he's driving a profound mindset shift, empowering play to be a catalyst for societal transformation.



Elvis Nshimba - Umoja Sport Foundation - DRC

Elvis's goal is to eliminate restrictive attitudes towards girls' and women's roles, gender norms, and promote social acceptance. His approach cultivates empathy and teamwork in families by creating and playing new games with family members and their social circles. Elvis trained 10,000+ coaches, teachers, and leaders, impacting numerous youths and students across Africa, benefiting over 34,000 communities.



Grace Matlhape - SmartStart - South Africa

Grace is improving the educational outcomes of children from underserved and marginalized communities in South Africa by recruiting, training and equipping unemployed individuals from local townships to operate their own SmartStart centers that provide quality early learning programs.

ENVIRONMENT



Blessing Limbi - Ecological Balance - Cameroon

Blessing is empowering communities in Cameroon to have a voice and agency to develop sustainable economic alternatives to deforestation, as well as protect their forests from the activities of loggers destroying natural forests. She is doing this through several programs that include raising awareness of the forests' economic benefits, and ultimately giving men, women and youth, skills to protect their forests through sustainable practices.



Muthi Nhlema - Baseflow - Malawi

Muthi is changing the way that ground water is understood and managed in Malawi to ensure sustainable water supply to rural communities and effective water governance by the government. He uses a data intensive approach that involves mapping of water sources, cutting edge technologies and comprehensive reporting to ensure effective resource management.



Nicole Menemene - Plastycor - DRC

Nicole incubates new solutions in the DRC by leveraging social networks to test and develop plastic recycling initiatives rapidly. By focusing on creating social benefits over profit and engaging youth, she aims to create sustainable wealth opportunities through plastic waste valorization. Plastycor recycled 280,000+ bottles for bags, repurposed seven tons for paving stones, and used 80,000 bottles for the Tilatopia project, crafting an artificial island on Lake Kivu.



Hanli Prinsloo - I Am Water - South Africa

Hanli is building a generation of children from underprivileged communities near oceans and rivers who will contribute to the protection of the environment throughout their lives, through transformative immersive ocean and river experiences.

HUMAN RIGHTS



Funke Adeoye - Hope Behind Bars - Nigeria

Funke is transforming the entire prison experience by engaging directly with inmates, offering legal aid, providing psychosocial support, and introducing innovative income-generating initiatives within the prison walls.



Andre Kangni Afanou - CDFDH - Togo

Andre is creating a continent-wide network of young human rights defenders informed by the experiences of their elders and equipped to lead efforts to respond to familiar as well as new threats.

HUMAN RIGHTS cont.



Omowumi Ogunrotimi - Gender Mobile Initiative - Nigeria

Omowumi is working to prevent sexual harassment in higher education institutions by helping them introduce new rules and regulations designed to mitigate, punish, and hold perpetrators accountable.



Nelson Olanipekun - Citizens' Gavel - Nigeria

Nelson is enabling the administration of justice by introducing tech solutions to improve the management of cases and the access to legal help for all.



Mamounata Ouedraogo - REPAFER-Burkina - Burkina Faso

Mamounata has created a systemic process for ending the discriminatory norms and practices of hereditary rulers who exercise customary authority over the daily lives of people living in rural communities and small cities in Burkina Faso. Now she is spreading her idea to the cities and counties in neighboring countries that are immediately adjacent to Burkina's central and southern borders – Mali, Niger, Benin, and Ivory Coast.



Jacques Mbusa - UPDECO - DRC

Jacques, through his organization UPDECO, developed a comprehensive step-by-step blueprint for the full reintegration of child soldiers with their families. In 2023, over 10,000 former child soldiers were successfully reintegrated across DRC. This pioneering approach by Jacques has gained official recognition and adoption by a consortium comprising DRC federal agencies, international NGOs, and national NGOs.



Henoc Muhindo - PPSDR - DRC

Henoc advocates for full economic citizenship rights for Pygmy communities in Africa. Over eleven years of dedicated work, he successfully secured citizenship for Pygmies in the DRC. Henoc has established a network of schools accessible to Pygmies and disadvantaged individuals from various tribes, facilitating education and economic integration for marginalized communities. Henoc has empowered over 125,000 Pygmy families, enabling them to cultivate their own food and lessen dependence on Bantu farms. Moreover, more than 800,000 individuals have received training in agri-food processing, encompassing skills such as bread-making and maize flour production.

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE



Paschal Achunine - Health Emergency Initiative (HEI) - Nigeria

Paschal is transforming the way the healthcare sector delivers emergency medical care, before and after patients reach the hospitals by empowering and training citizens as first responders in post-crash care and support.



Lucy Mukuria - True North - Kenya

Lucy is pioneering a holistic approach to veteran care, with a special focus on mental health. Through their innovative Cradle-based model, encompassing physical and mental well-being, they're reshaping reintegration for a brighter future and advocating for systemic change, even within the challenging landscape of the existing system.

ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT



Vanessa Zawadi - Women for Peace and Dignity - DRC

Vanessa's groundbreaking initiative in the Democratic Republic of Congo involves spearheading a national network of women engaged in agriculture. Vanessa optimizes the agricultural value chain, introducing innovative processing techniques and value-added products, empowering women farmers to maximize the potential of available resources and create sustainable solutions for their communities. Vanessa's expanded impact has facilitated 10,000 households to access agricultural loans at reduced interest rates, aiding small-scale producers. This endeavour has positively affected 50,000 children by granting them access to nutritious food.



Sage Rutakaza - Sage Entrepreneurs Academy - DRC

Sage revolutionizes value chains for small-scale entrepreneurs by establishing public production facilities that function as incubators, utilizing previously wasted products to generate wealth for food industry entrepreneurs. Starting in South Kivu in 2018, Sage expanded his impact province by province, fostering a conducive business environment for startups and local entrepreneurs. Sage trained 20,000+ entrepreneurs regionally and in Uganda. Production labs benefited 10,000 women and 8,000 youth in product development and market understanding. Sage maximizes the food industry's potential in the Great Lakes region.



Heritier Kitumaini - RAVEC & BCECOLOANS - DRC

Three-quarters of DRC citizens lack access to bank accounts and microfinance services. Heritier initiated community savings groups in 2014, introducing an innovative incentive system for ground banking agents to drive financial inclusion rapidly through financial literacy. His efforts led to regulatory reforms that transition shared savings groups into formal financial services associated with health insurance, now expanding across the DRC. Héritier is forming a proximity banking network of 3,000 agents within the DRC with a first-stage goal of reaching approximately one-third of all the 22 million unbanked citizens in the DRC within the next 5-7 years.

Please contact Josephine Nzerem (jnzerem@ashoka.org) or Stephanie Schmidt (sschmidt@ashoka.org) for additional information about joining us as partner.