



MANDELA WASHINGTON FELLOWSHIP

FOR YOUNG AFRICAN LEADERS



USAID
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COUNTERPART
INTERNATIONAL



FINAL PROGRAM REPORT

Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders

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Table of Contents

- A. Executive Summary4
- Key Program Learnings.....6
- Recommendations for Future Engagement8
- B. Progress and Accomplishments.....9
 - I. Program Updates.....9
 - 1. Structured Networking Opportunities within the MWF Community..... 34
 - 2. Access and Introduction to External Networks that Support Fellows’ Individual Goals 39
 - 3. Practical Learning Opportunities..... 51
 - 4. Tailored Leadership Development 59
- C. Administrative Updates 67
- D. Communications 74
- E. Monitoring and Evaluation..... 78
 - Progress against Indicators..... 90
- F. Conclusion 112
- G. Attachments..... 112

Acronyms

AOR	Agreement Officer Representative
CoP	Community of Practice
DOS	Department of State
ECA	Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (State Department)
IREX	International Research and Exchanges Board
LDP	Leadership Development Plan
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MWF	Mandela Washington Fellowship
OPI	Organizational Performance Improvement
RAB	Regional Advisory Board
STG	Speaker Travel Grant
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VSO International	Voluntary Service Overseas
WACSI	West Africa Civil Society Institute
YALI	Young African Leaders Initiative
SAT	Southern African Trust

A. Executive Summary

IREX is a global development and education organization providing thought leadership and innovative programs to promote positive lasting change globally. IREX embraces a people-focused approach to development that invests in human potential and the conditions that help people to thrive. We work with partners around the world to promote more just, prosperous, and inclusive societies by engaging and empowering youth, cultivating leaders at all levels of society, strengthening institutions, and expanding access to quality education and information.

As part of the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), USAID's Mandela Washington Fellowship (MWF) built the skills of young African leaders to improve the accountability and transparency of government, start and grow businesses, and serve their communities. The program supported the Fellows as they developed the leadership skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to become more active and constructive members of society. It achieved this through Leadership Development Plans that the Fellows completed and posted online for comment, professional practicums and collaboration grants in Africa that provided the Fellows with practical experience and skills transfer and application, and individualized mentor matches that allowed the Fellows to further develop their identities as leaders. The program also helped Fellows establish broad and enduring networks to support, sustain, and multiply the impact of the MWF programming. It achieved this through the selection of Regional Advisory Boards comprised of Fellows who communicated regularly with their peers, provided USAID and IREX with feedback, and led and implemented communities of practice and other community-oriented and networking initiatives, Conferences and Convenings that allowed the Fellows to network with one another as well as with external organizations and companies, and Speaker Travel Grants that elevated Fellows' voices on the world stage by providing them with funding to speak at international, high-profile conferences.

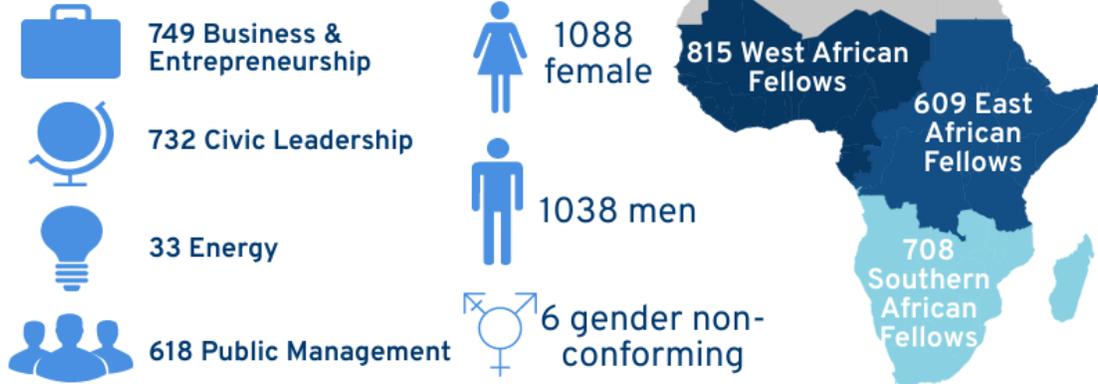
To support and enhance these activities, IREX ensured the empowerment and inclusion of women, the disabled, LGBTIQ individuals, and other marginalized youth. It also emphasized the participation of the Fellows in the creation and development of programming so as to be as responsive as possible to their needs and interests and established significant partnerships with the private sector to leverage resources, increase impact, and enhance sustainability of planned activities.

Over the course of more than five years, and working with five cohorts of Fellows starting with the 2014 cohort and concluding with the 2018 cohort, IREX made significant progress towards the programs broad goal of building the skills of young African Leaders to improve the accountability and transparency of government, start and grow businesses, serve their communities. Please see the below highlights of cumulative impact achieved.

2014 - 2018 Mandela Washington Fellowship FOLLOW ON PROGRAMMING WRAP UP

2,198 Fellows participated in USAID-funded follow-on interventions

59.5% of the 2014-2018 cohorts



2,825 Fellows completed and submitted their Leadership Development Plans

774 Fellows gained insight in their fields through mentoring opportunities.

669 Fellows built skills & grew their networks through professional practicums

169 Fellows honed presentation & networking skills through Speaker Travel Grants

151 served and represented their peers on the Regional Advisory Board

104 Fellows received Collaboration Fund Grants

76.3% of Fellows who participated in USAID-funded follow-on activities contributed to a cross-sector network



\$7.6 million leveraged from the private sector to support Fellows' professional development.

\$8.43 million in support provided directly to Fellows through cash loans, equity financing, and in-kind support.

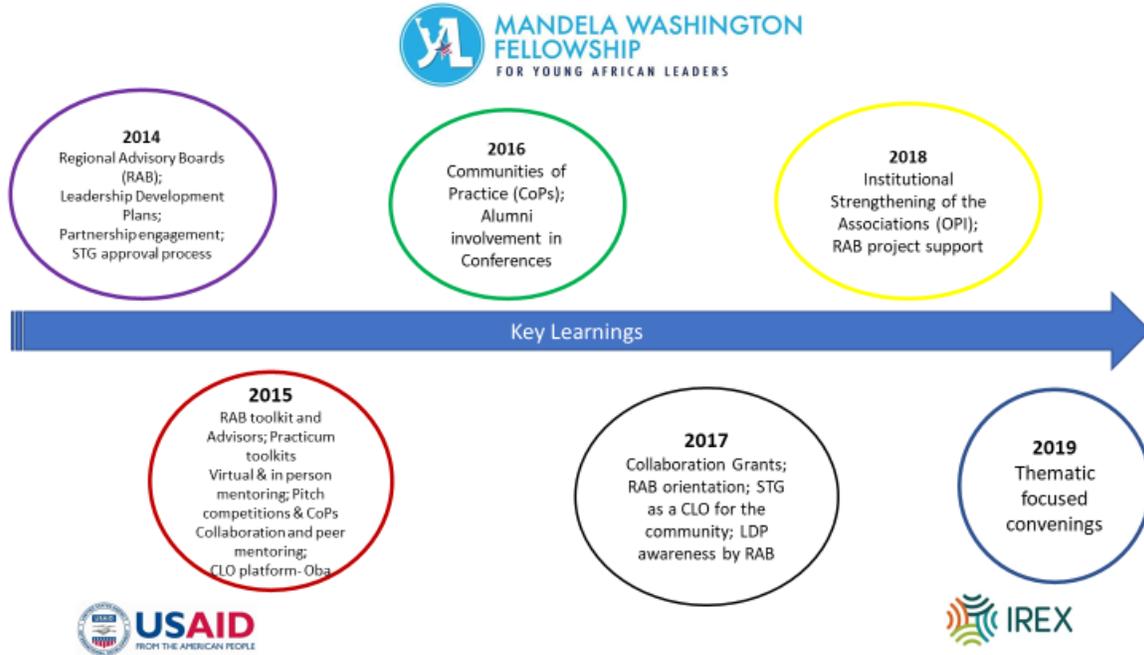
85% of Regional Advisory Board members increased their experience with principles of board governance.

72.1% of Fellows indicated that their business revenue increased the year after the Fellowship

12.4% increase in civic knowledge, skills, and leadership

Key Program Learnings

IREX employs a learning mindset and adaptive management approaches to iterate and improve program outcomes over time. Below is a depiction that shows at what points we learned and pivoted around program interventions and innovations over time with a description of IREX’s key program learnings and actions taken as a result of the learning.



Key Program Learnings	
Key Learning	IREX Actions
Fellows want to collaborate with each other (in-person and virtually)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer Mentorship and RLC/Fellow mentoring Collaboration Grants Implementation of Conferences (2015- 2018) and thematically focused Convenings (2019)
Regional Advisory Board Model is effective as a bridge between USAID, IREX and other program stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IREX developed toolkits, provided governance training through its implementing partner, WACSI In-person training and virtual orientation Provision of communication stipends to enable them to connect virtually 2018 RAB each received a small grant of up to 6000 USD to implement a project in their region.

<p>Community Engagement provided an opportunity to demonstrate leadership in action and give back.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Development Plan • Collaboration grants • RAB Project grant
<p>Communities of Practice (CoPs) contributed to skill-building; knowledge sharing and cross-sectoral collaboration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toolkit and training of the RAB • Advisory role • Worked with the RAB to develop the content for the conferences
<p>Partner Engagement was critical to program success and we have a pool of partners (including mentors) who wish to remain engaged.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing partners brought their technical expertise- WACSI, VSO & Southern Africa Trust • Learning opportunities and networking events with partners such as Oracle, PWC, Microsoft • Mentors acknowledgement & involvement in Conferences when possible
<p>Individual learning opportunities- Practicums, Mentorships and Continued Learning Opportunities (CLOs) enabled Fellows to entrench the leadership learnings from their US experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-border practicums • Collaboration grants • Leadership Development Plan
<p>Program had to apply adaptive management tools to learn from partners, staff and Fellow community in order to create responsive program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning with partners • Annual RAB retrospective before the Summit • Annual Surveys • Most Significant Change (MSC) process – 2015 – 2018) • Quarterly learning meetings • Annual debrief USAID/planning meetings • Ongoing interaction with the Regional PoCs at USAID

Recommendations for Future Engagement

Based on our five years implementing the program, our learning from program evaluation, and feedback received from Fellows and stakeholders over time, IREX makes the following two high level recommendations for how USAID can continue engagement with the Fellowship in the future:

1. Strengthen the relationship with and the work of the Mandela Washington Fellows in line with USAID strategic objectives:

- Peer mentoring program across the Fellows and the Regional Leadership Center participants
- Provision of Collaboration opportunities
- Position the Fellows to be influencers by providing policy learning opportunities
- Incorporate Fellows from the private, public, and civic sectors with USAID partners such as Fellows entrepreneurs as advisors/implementers within the work of the Regional Trade and Investment Hubs

2. Strengthen, expand, and sustain the Network through:

- Alumni Association Strengthening through the Organization Performance Improvement (OPI) tool and process
- Entrenching the Regional Advisory Board model, inclusive of the Regional Leadership Center Boards
- Enable the Communities of Practice to continue and expand
- Emphasize the “give back” aspect of servant leadership across the YALI community

Please see [Attachment 1](#) for more intervention specific recommendations.

“The Africa based follow-on activities has helped me to found this NGO: Zoulgouta Foundation, to empower vulnerable for fostering economic development through agriculture, health and education. The idea was in my mind in U.S. but discussion in CoP, webinar with IREX, and collaboration grant help me to achieve this.”

B. Progress and Accomplishments

I. Program Updates

Regional Advisory Boards



The Mandela Washington Fellowship Regional Advisory Boards (RABs) were the primary instrument through which Fellows could advise on USAID-funded follow-on programming on the Continent. The Advisory Board model was introduced by IREX based on its long history of working with youth and learning that youth should be engaged in decision-making for programming which they are a beneficiary. The model was also in line with USAID's Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach.

From 2014 through 2019, RAB members:

- Advised IREX in implementing USAID supported activities;
- Helped define Board rules and term limits;
- Informed annual workplans through outreach to Fellows within their region;
- Encouraged Communities of Practice (CoPs) among Mandela Washington Fellows, across regions and tracks;
- Advised on themes for continued networking and learning events representing Fellows' sectorial interests;
- Advised on themes for Regional Conferences (2015 – 2017), Continental Conference (2018), and Regional Convenings (2019);
- Served as a voice for Fellows in their region and,
- Supported program monitoring and evaluation

Country Representation on Regional Advisory Boards (2014 – 2018)	
Countries with RAB representation every year	Countries with representation just once or not at all
Zimbabwe	
Zambia	
Uganda	Togo
South Africa	The Gambia
Tanzania	Somalia
Nigeria	Mali
Mauritius	Djibouti
Madagascar	Mauritania*
Liberia	Eritrea*
Kenya	Guinea-Bissau*
Ghana	Sierra Leone*
Ethiopia	Sao Tome and Principe*
Democratic Republic of Congo	Equatorial Guinea*
Cameroon	
Botswana	

*These countries were never represented on the Regional Advisory Boards

Regional Advisory Board Election Process | Following the Mandela Washington Fellowship’s Summit of 2014, the RAB nomination and election process began in earnest, and was refined over the years. Beginning in summer 2014, IREX worked closely with the Alumni Affairs website team at Department of State to design and roll out the web-based competition for Fellows to nominate themselves to serve on the RAB. Throughout the years, as the RAB became known as a prestigious role within the Fellowship community, Fellows began lobbying their peers during the annual Summit and created sophisticated on-line campaigns to garner votes.

After the nomination period, the wider Fellow community voted, which informed, but did not determine, final Board member selection. Each Fellow had one vote and only Fellows from the current cohort could vote.

IREX then reviewed votes and finalized RAB selection with an eye toward balancing gender, track, linguistic diversity, and country size. USAID gave concurrence on each Board, and Fellows were notified of their election in early October and IREX began planning for their first in-person Board meeting.



Regional Advisory Board Meetings and Good Governance

Through the Years: Regional Advisory Board Meeting Locations	
Cohort Year	Meeting Location
2014	Meeting #1 and #2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Africa: Kampala, Uganda • Southern Africa: Johannesburg, South Africa • West Africa: Accra, Ghana
2015	Meeting #1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Africa: Kampala, Uganda • Southern Africa: Johannesburg, South Africa • West Africa: Lagos, Nigeria Meeting #2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
2016	Meeting #1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Africa: Kigali, Rwanda • Southern Africa: Johannesburg, South Africa • West Africa: Accra, Ghana Meeting #2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Africa: Dar es Salaam, Tanzania • Southern Africa: Johannesburg, South Africa • West Africa: Accra, Ghana
2017	Meeting #1 & #2: Johannesburg, South Africa
2018	Meeting #1: Johannesburg, South Africa Meeting #2: Virtual by Region



2015 Fellow Collins Nakedi gives remarks at the 2016 East Africa Regional Conference.

The 2014 through 2017 cohorts then attended in-person meetings in November and February, while the 2018 cohort met only once face-to-face in November, executing the rest of their meetings on virtual platforms like WhatsApp or Skype.

For every Board, the initial meeting proved crucial. It served to introduce the members not only to each other, but to IREX and USAID, as well as the purpose and mandate of the Board. In the November meeting, RAB members voted on leadership positions (Chairperson, Secretary and Communications Officer), discussed Board

communication with IREX, USAID, and the Fellowship community, and the projects they wanted to implement during their tenure. The Boards generally had a second meeting in the early part of the following year (February) where the focus was on planning the annual Regional Conferences.

For the 2014 and 2015 cohort, all RAB meetings took place regionally, independent of the other Boards but they were e-introduced to each other by IREX. However, the second meeting of the 2016 cohort, both meetings of the 2017 cohort, and the only meeting of the 2018 cohort brought the full 30-member board together for one meeting. Though the reason for bringing the full RAB together for these meetings varied, from budgetary restrictions to location concerns, the format yielded positive results. The Board members were better able to share Conference planning ideas and work more effectively together, particularly in the case of the 2017 RAB, when they supported the planning and execution of the Continental Conference. Due to budget constraints in Year 5, the 2018 RAB only met face-to-face once. Thus, IREX emphasized their participation in the pre-meeting virtual orientation, where they familiarized themselves with their key roles and responsibilities in advance of the November 2018 meeting.



2014 Regional Advisory Board members collaborate during a working session at an in-person meeting.

In 2014, to ensure that the Boards functioned efficiently, IREX developed a Board Charter, which included terms and conditions, communications and reporting expectations, and a structure for each meeting. Over time, following feedback from the RAB members themselves, the Charter evolved into a Toolkit that included content for Conference planning, CoPs, M&E, self-reflection tools, and an expansive contact list of Board members from each cohort.

In 2014, 2015, and 2016, the tightly packed three-day RAB meetings left little time to emphasize the importance of Board governance, the way in which members communicate and work together to achieve their goals. Recognizing that the RAB members could work together more effectively and efficiently, IREX introduced a virtual Good Governance Board Orientation, facilitated by the West African Civil Society



Left: 2016 Regional Advisory Board members provide opening remarks at the 2017 Leadership Summit. Right: 2018 East Africa Regional Advisory Board members pose with US Ambassador to Rwanda Peter. H Vrooman at the East Africa Regional Convening in Kigali, Rwanda.

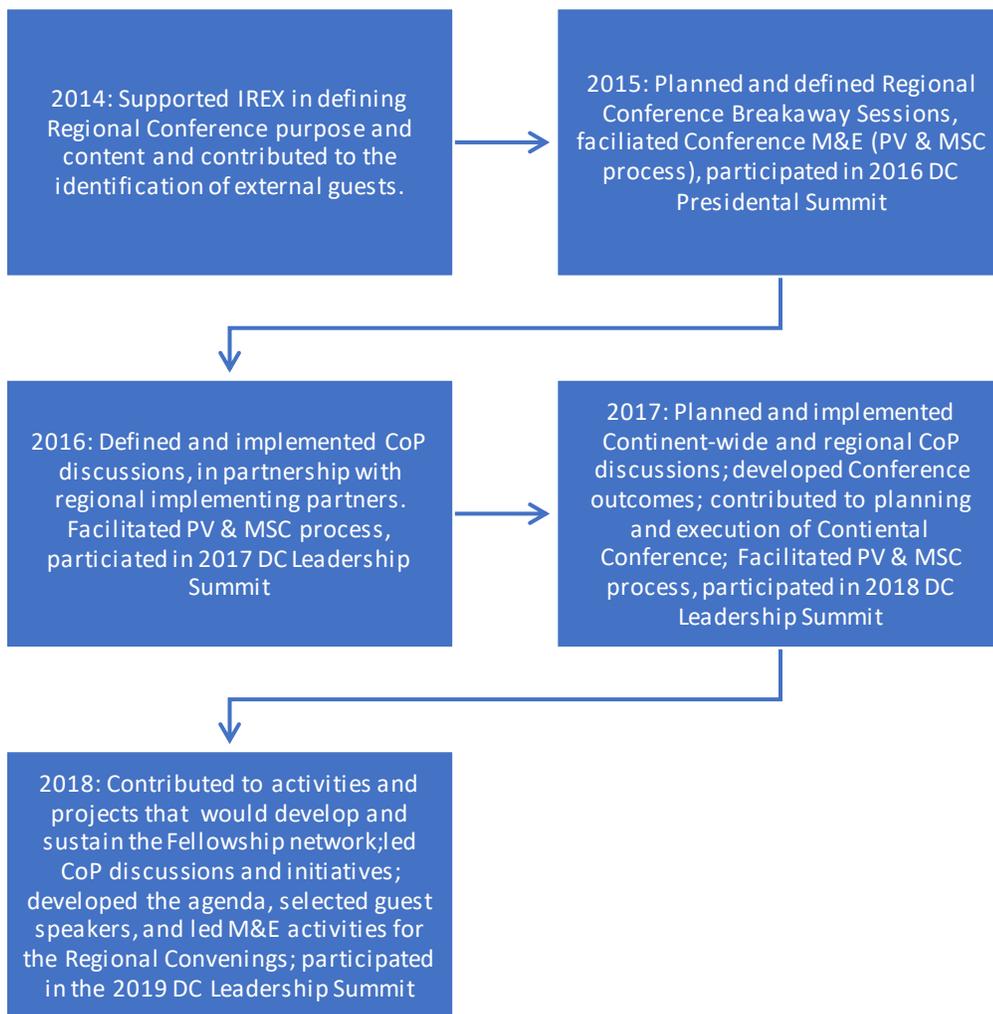
Institute (WACSI), for the 2017 and 2018 RAB members. These sessions supplemented the in-person meetings and provided the Board members with a third-party (WACSI), to engage with should one of their complaints concern IREX. It allowed the deepening of their understanding of their roles and the limits of their mandate.

See **Attachment 2** for the Final RAB Toolkit and **Attachment 3** for a full list of RAB bios.

Regional Advisory Board Projects and Activities

The programming, activities, and responsibilities of the RAB members evolved dramatically over the years. The table below shows major changes and additions to RAB roles and responsibilities over time.

Through the Years: Regional Advisory Board Member Roles and Responsibilities



Additional Board Roles

In addition to the roles outlined above, a significant portion of RAB responsibilities involved communication with the Fellowship community. Over the years, the Boards used WhatsApp country groups, direct phone calls, and e-newsletters. The e-newsletters, in particular, provided RAB members

with an opportunity to share their work with the broader Fellowship community. Overtime, IREX sourced valuable success stories from these newsletters. Unfortunately, the quality and frequency of the newsletters was not consistent across all three regions and the quality was heavily dependent on the ability of the RAB Communication Officer to drive the e-newsletter.

Additionally, throughout the years, two to three Board members enjoyed the opportunity to attend the following years' Summit in Washington, DC and serve on the incoming Board as an advisor. In this role, RAB members attended debrief sessions with IREX and the Regional Implementing Partners; participated in meetings on Capitol Hill, with USAID, and other stakeholders; and participated in the Summit, which included managing a table at the Partnership Expo and speaking on a Next Steps panel with IREX and USAID.

RAB Advisors, nominated by other Board members provided informed feedback to the incoming Board, participated in the first meeting of the new RAB and shared best practice and guidance on how to effectively engage the Fellowship community in program activities and decision making.

Lessons Learned

- To ensure each Board represented the full diversity of sub-Saharan Africa, IREX acted as a fair and objective oversight body to the RAB elections. In five years of RAB elections, conflict never arose. However, RAB members did raise that elections may have been more representational if Fellows had been only allowed to vote in their own region.
- The RAB Toolkit provided a necessary, but flexible, means for IREX to ensure that RAB roles and responsibilities remained consistent but adaptable to new program demands.
- Fellow-driven communication tools, such as WhatsApp and the e-newsletters acted as more effective ways to engage the Fellowship community than general IREX outreach.
- The provision of the communications stipend made it possible for all RAB members to fully participate in planned calls and connect one-off with Fellows as needed.
- Collaborative opportunities – such as having the RAB members work together to plan and implement the Continental Conference and work together on CoP planning – had to be intentionally fostered by IREX and did not just happen organically.
- Engaging select RAB members as Advisors for the next cohort better enabled incoming RAB members to understand best practices, which they incorporated into their projects and activities.
- The two face-to-face Board meetings (2014 – 2017) enabled the RABs to have time to bond and discuss their CoP ideas in advance of developing the Regional and Continental Conference agendas.

- 2018 RAB members received small grants to implement projects aligned with the CoPs and Regional Convenings and which served to sustain the Fellowship network. These projects, discussed in detail within the CoP section of this report, are an example of the tangible impact of the RAB.

Communities of Practice

“The [Community of Practice discussions] brought home the message that there is need for a multi-stakeholder approach that starts at grassroots level through to government policy formulation. Engaging with other Fellows across the three Fellowship tracks of Public Management, Business & Entrepreneurship, and Civic Leadership was informative, as each Fellow brought unique expertise to the table and participants complemented each other in the discussions. All conclusions, which will turn into action items, were well-rounded. I believe that this is how development should always be. All inclusive!”

Liswaniso Kabwela | 2018 Mandela Washington Fellow | Zambia

At the beginning of the program, Communities of Practices (CoPs) were envisioned as platforms where Fellows could engage with each other on issues of interest and concern; and develop plans of action for eventual execution. Initially, CoPs were implemented only at the Regional Conferences but IREX quickly realized that CoPs must be developed well in advance of the physical gathering to facilitate meaningful outcomes. Further, IREX recognized that RAB members were the most effective driving force behind the discussions. Overtime, the CoPs offered Fellows an opportunity to actualize



In the final year of the program, RAB members produced detailed reports and graphics, such as the one above, on each CoP discussion.

servant leadership skills including “listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to people, and building community,” as defined by Larry Spears.

Throughout the years, RAB members used various mechanisms to educate the Fellow community about the CoPs. They created flyers which were distributed via email and WhatsApp and used their e-newsletter and the closed Fellowship Facebook groups to share the information. Ultimately, WhatsApp became the preferred communication platform, as it allowed for Fellows to participate in the discussion with minimal interruption to their workday and limited use of data.

With the creation of a CoP reporting template and IREX’s increased focus on explaining the importance of quality reporting, the RABs became more efficient at providing feedback to IREX on Fellow participation and engagement. By the 2018 cohort, for example, the reports were very sophisticated, covering the participation data, the key themes, and the emerging topics for the Convenings. It also identified top contributors who were then chosen by the RAB as convening moderators or presenters.

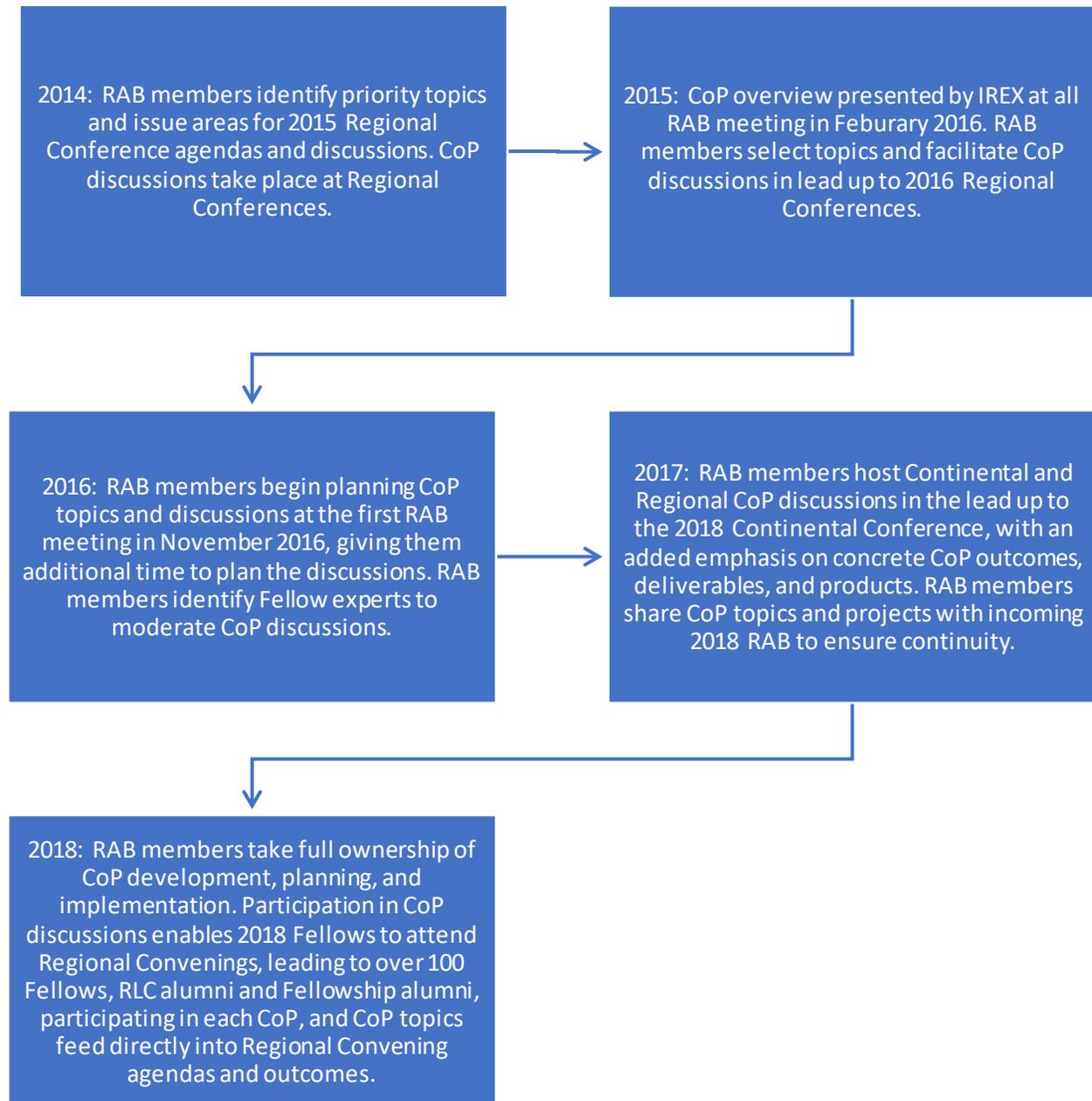
In Year 4, the Boards were required to work together to implement Continent-wide CoP and regional CoP discussions could be taken forward beyond their tenure and they did so by developing **MWF Kopano**, their Fellow-driven platform for collaboration and a short-lived but with great potential social media platform to promote peace and democracy - **#MWFpeaceMOB**

During the 2018 RAB tenure, they were given the additional role of undertaking an activity or activities that would contribute to the further development and sustainment of the Fellow network by turning a CoP discussion into action. This funding was equitably available to each Regional Advisory Board, however, the eventual spend was based on their project submissions and budgets. The funds were used towards specific activities or resources needed to continue or implement a project proposed and agreed upon by the RAB. Given the uniqueness of this year’s RAB role, it is important to highlight these projects again as it demonstrates the value of having the Advisory Boards.

- East Africa: [Good Governance Toolkit](#)
- Southern Africa – sponsored an environmental clean up day throughout the region
- West Africa – See **Attachment 4** for the EduHeros Toolkit

Through the Years: Communities of Practice		
Select 2015 Communities of Practice		
West	Southern	East
The Contributions of Women in Developing West Africa; Governance and Security in West Africa; Youth Engagement for Good Governance	Growing the Green Economy in Southern Africa; Youth Employment and Empowerment for Active Citizenship; Regional Trade and Investment for the Development of Southern Africa’s Youth	Refugee and IDP Communities in Development; LGBT Communities: Creating Space for Dialogue; Food Security and Sustainable Development
Select 2016 Communities of Practice		
Human Rights, Gender Equality, and Disability; Assessing Readiness for Climate Change Adaptation Reforms; Promoting Youth Contributions to Agribusiness	Youth Contributions in Promoting Sustainable Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises; Technology and Innovation; Good Governance and Democracy	Cultural Barriers to Inclusive Development – Acknowledgment and Action; Post-Conflict Reintegration and Reconciliation – Challenges for Youth, Responses by Youth
The 2017 Continental Community of Practice discussions addressed questions such as...		
How can Fellows contribute to Peace Building and Tolerance across the continent? How can they address tribalism, counteracting terrorism and xenophobia across the continent?		
How can the Fellow community contribute to increasing innovation within education to enhance learning and promote literacy in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)?		
How can the Fellow community contribute to democracy being defined for the African context?		
Select 2018 Communities of Practice		
Fostering entrepreneurship, education, and professional skills development for increased youth employment; Curbing challenges to access to quality education	The role of the private sector in ensuring youth employability; Technology as a response to unemployment	Youth participation in civic engagement and governance; The role of data in promoting good governance

Through the Years: Communities of Practice Discussions



Lessons Learned

- CoPs contributed to skill-building; knowledge sharing and cross-sectoral collaboration within the Fellowship community. However, CoP hosts and facilitators will need to be incentivized and provided with connections to USAID to enable other Fellows to understand the value of engagement.
- A consistent definition of what constitutes a “Community of Practice” proved important. Likewise, it was important for RAB members or other Fellow experts to develop concept notes to frame the topic in advance of the discussion.
- Attempting to cover all issues and topic areas within CoP discussions proved overwhelming. As the Fellowship community grew, RAB members began surveying their peers to assess the level of interest associated with various topics, which piqued Fellow interest and led to increased CoP engagement from the community at large.
- Accessible and affordable platforms were key to the success of a CoP discussion. While WhatsApp and Twitter functioned as great communication platforms, it was difficult to track the conversation and log the names of participants.
- Linking participation in CoP discussions to the 2018 Continental Conference and the 2019 Regional Convenings encouraged meaningful Fellow engagement in the discussions. Additionally, RAB members were better able to select Fellow moderators and experts for the Conferences, given their engagement during the CoP discussions.

Alumni Association OPI Pilot

In Year 5, IREX launched the Alumni Association Organizational Performance Improvement Pilot (OPI). This ambitious and highly successful activity was born from IREX’s commitment to the sustainability of YALI, institutional learning, and the creative adaption of IREX tools, and fostered by USAID’s trust in IREX and willingness to experiment. The OPI journey began in Year 4 as IREX considered the eventual end of the program and honed its focus on the overall impact of the five year follow-on program and the sustainability of YALI. IREX concluded that ultimately the impact and sustainability of the MWF would be determined on how well IREX achieved the two program purposes:

Program Purpose 1: Broad and enduring networks are established to support, sustain, and multiply the impact of MWF programming.

Program Purpose 2: Young Africans leaders develop the leadership skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to become active and constructive members of society.

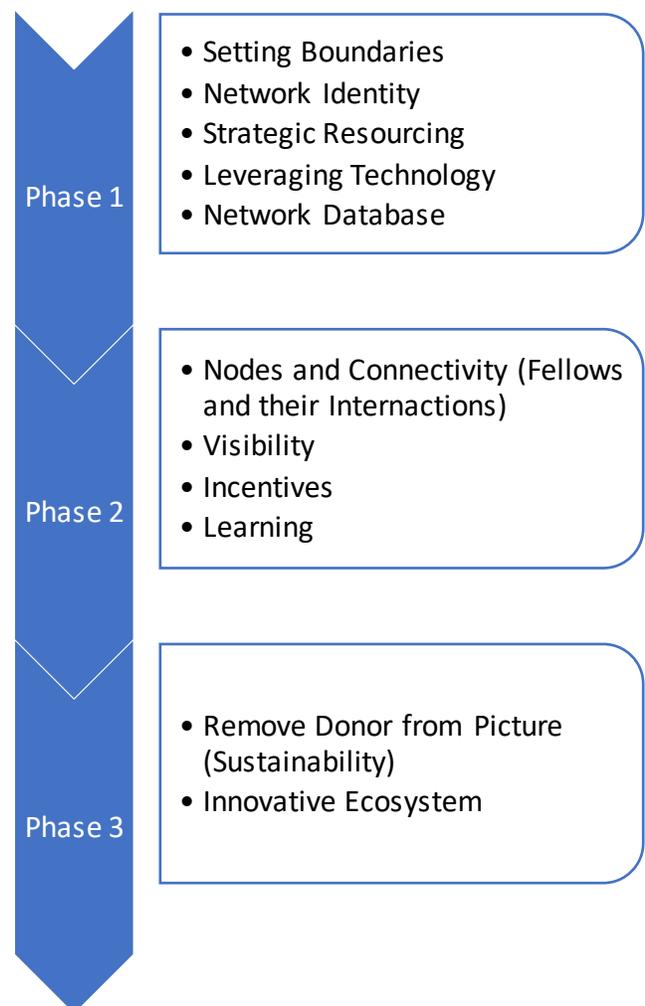
After reflection, IREX was confident that program purpose 2 was being achieved. We had developed clear indicators for the program’s various interventions and as the number of completed practicums, mentorships, and STGs etc. rose with each cohort, based on annual survey data and interactions with Fellows, it was clear that the program was developing strong individual leaders across the continent. However, IREX realized that the great potential of the MWF would only be realized to the extent that we achieved Program Purpose 1. In order to shape the future of Africa for years to come, the individual leaders being formed by the program needed to be networked in order to “support, sustain, and multiply the impact of MWF programming.”

Based on the numerous success stories, it was evident that the Fellowship was generating a network of young African leaders who were collaborating across countries and regions, sharing innovations and business solutions, and impacting beneficiaries in local communities across Africa, but the reality of this network was difficult to quantify and communicate. If IREX was serious about sustainability and achieving the all important Program Purpose 1, then it had to commit itself to learning about network development and understanding how MWF programming was in fact contributing to the development of “broad and enduring networks.”

IREX consulted internal and external experts and conducted a focus group with Mandela Washington Fellows to better understand how networks operated, their key elements, and how they could be strengthened within the context of the MWF.

Through its research, IREX identified three key phases¹ in Network Development that helped us evaluate our efforts to create an MWF Network and plan where to focus our efforts in Year 5.

Phase 1 had been achieved. The Fellow selection process set clear boundaries on the network and its members. The network was benefiting from the strong brand and identity of YALI and the MWF. The various interventions funded by USAID and implemented by IREX represented strategic resources that promoted



¹ This Three Phase Process of Network Development was shared with IREX by Jona Repishti of MIT’s D-LAB and based on her work at MIT on the USAID funded International Development Innovation Network (IDIN).

activity and the potential for engagement in the network, while IREX's comprehensive social media strategy leveraged technology to communicate to network members and IREX's project database provided clear data on the members of the network.

It was clear that the network was in Phase 2 of development and that IREX should focus its efforts on furthering facilitating Fellow collaboration within the network, making the network more visible, identifying effective incentives for promoting Fellow engagement, and learning from IREX's network development activities to better prepare USAID and its partners to strengthen the network in the future.

Phase 3 aligned with IREX's goal for network sustainability and in order to achieve it, IREX would have to develop a network development approach that empowered Fellows to lead the network without formal support or funding from USAID and IREX.

As IREX grappled with the challenge of making a significant contribution to the long-term development and sustainability of the MWF Network within the constraints of a finite project with finite resources, it identified two key principles that would inform its network development approach. IREX would need to initiate **1) Intentional Engagement** with the network that would facilitate increased **2) Fellow-led Collaboration**. Founded on these two principles, IREX developed a feasible network development approach that would adapt OPI to intentionally engage and measurably strengthen the MWF network by improving the performance of select national alumni associations which, as IREX was learning, were developing organically and represented dynamic centers of Fellow-led collaboration. This approach was launched as the Alumni Association OPI Pilot in October 2018 (Q19).

Based on its [Guide to Organization Performance Improvement](#) and implemented in collaboration with WACSI, The Trust, and VSO, the pilot has enabled associations to strengthen their governing and organizational structures, and provided them with tools, resources, and support to eventually assist less established associations in their development. The OPI Pilot invested in alumni associations to help them improve and expand the ways by which Fellows were *already* driving development in their communities. The OPI Pilot was designed to intentionally engage and connect multiple alumni associations through its interactive application process and to bring six semi-finalists (two per region) into direct collaboration. Though the pilot will not continue beyond the MWF project, IREX believes that these important linkages will persist and offer an opportunity for future YALI partners to promote cross-country collaboration, and inspire the development of new alumni associations. The OPI Pilot has contributed to the sustainability of the YALI and MWF networks by supporting and encouraging the continued growth of individual alumni associations (proxies for the MWF network) and providing a scalable model capable of sustaining the MWF network in the future and contributing to an enduring continent-wide YALI network.

to OPI and collaboration with RLC participants. Semi-finalists were notified and asked to submit a formal proposal and budget for their joint project with an RLC alumni chapter that would be considered after the in-person OPI workshop when IREX and its implementing partners would be selecting three finalists.

YALI Alumni Association Organizational Performance Improvement Workshop

Two alumni association representatives from Benin, Comoros, Côte D'Ivoire, Central African Republic, Rwanda, and Zimbabwe traveled to Nairobi, Kenya to attend the first ever MWF Alumni Association OPI workshop on February 12 – 14, 2019. Throughout the three day workshop, alumni association members were re-introduced to core principles of OPI through a combination of interactive presentations and hands-on group work sessions that allowed the participants to begin applying performance improvement concepts to their associations.

The association members arrived in Nairobi highly motivated and were actively engaged throughout the workshop. This motivation was critical to the workshop's success as each session was informed by the preceding sessions. In order to be ready for the next day's sessions, association members spent their evenings working. On Day 1, associations developed their vision and selected their outcomes. On Day 2, the first day's work was critical as associations defined their Ideal State in relation to their Current State and began to identify performance gaps that could prevent them from achieving the outcomes if left unaddressed. Day 3 built on the first two days as association members developed realistic and tailored performance solutions. Later in the day each association presented their draft OPI workplans summarizing their vision, outcomes, gaps and planned performance solutions. By the end of the workshop, each association had worked through the first 4 phases of the OPI process and were ready to return home and begin the implementation of their performance solutions.



The motivation, commitment, and hard work that the alumni association members demonstrated during the workshop cannot be overemphasized. Not only was the ultimate success of the workshop and subsequent OPI stages dependent on their high-level of participation, but the engagement of the associations, which was remarkable for this type of training, indicates just how relevant the workshop material was to the alumni associations and suggests that OPI is of value to YALI Alumni Associations seeking to grow and engage with the larger network.

“[The workshop] truly opened my eyes to ways in which I can practically improve performance. I now understand that before I fill my life with activities to prove I am doing well, I should actively think of my vision and my outcome. Two big lessons: not all improvement is equal and outputs are not outcomes.”

Participant, YALI Alumni Association OPI Workshop, February 2019

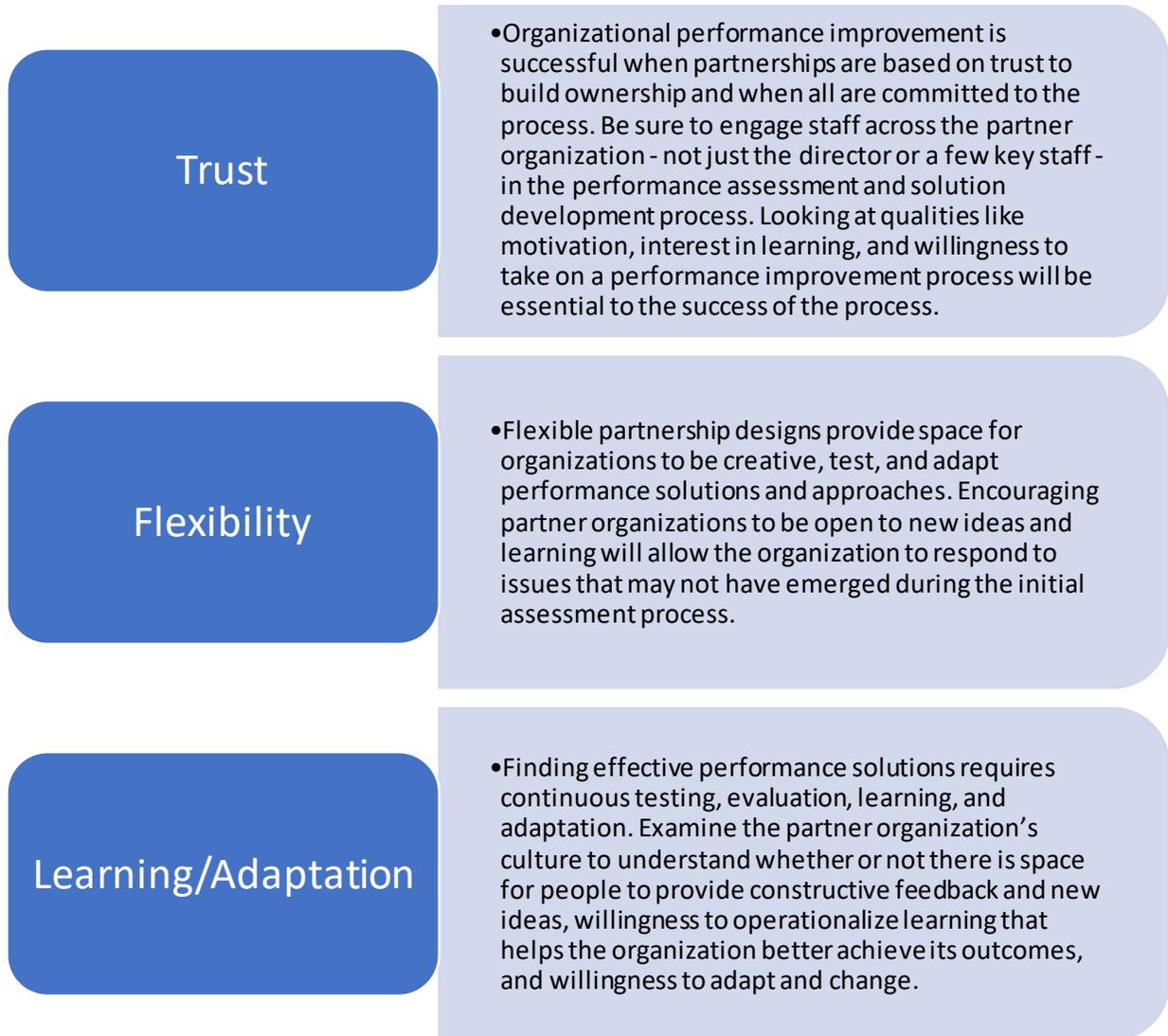
OPI Finalist Selection and Implementation

IREX and implementing partner staff evaluated each presentation based on how well each association had incorporated what they learned at the workshop into their performance solutions. Using this criteria, Benin, Comoros, and Rwanda were selected as OPI Finalists and informed that they would be participating in the OPI Pilot. The members of the finalist associations who had attended the workshop, returned home and shared their experience, information on OPI, and worked with their peers to adapt and commit to the OPI workplans they had drafted in Nairobi. In early March, IREX issued fixed amount awards to its regional implementing partners that included deliverables that were flexible enough to allow the partners to tailor their technical assistance to the specific OPI processes of each finalist, yet intentionally structured to ensure each partner/association pair’s OPI process was aligned with the core principles and stages of the IREX OPI approach.

IREX provided high-level coordination and led kick off calls to establish the relationships between the regional implementing partners and their respective alumni associations. Over the next five months, WACSI, VSO and the Trust worked with their respective alumni associations from Bénin, Comoros, and Rwanda to finalize their OPI work plans, develop an OPI Evaluation plan, and conduct a series of in-person and virtual trainings along with weekly coaching and mentorship as the associations implemented their performance solutions and pursued their prioritized outcomes. Throughout the implementation, each partner faced challenges related to culture, geography, and competing opinions among association members (not to mention a cyclone in the case of Comoros). As the partners navigated these challenges, they developed trusting relationships with their associations that allowed them to refine and adapt their OPI workplans as they implemented. The workplans of Benin and Comoros did not change significantly from the drafts that were presented at the workshop, but the Rwandan Alumni association altered their course dramatically and shifted their vision and outcomes from an external focus on developing leaders in their communities to an internal focus on improving the policies and practices of the association.

The ability of the partners and their associations to change course mid-pilot highlights the degree to which IREX and its partners successfully incorporated the key principles of IREX’s OPI approach into the pilot as well as how important the principles of IREX’s approach were to the success of the pilot. Without the

principles of trust, flexibility, and learning and adaptation, it is unlikely that the partners and the associations would have been able to agree on a plan and gain the commitment of each association's membership.



Below is a summary of the targeted technical assistance that the partners provided to the alumni associations in the form of performance solutions. It should be noted that more general assistance was provided by IREX and other solutions were completed by the associations on their own. These solutions are summarized in the table below.

Summary of Outcomes and Performance Solutions: Benin YALI Alumni Association

OPI Vision	Prioritized Outcome	Performance Solution	Impact
<p align="center">Have a well-integrated and active YALI Alumni Association that is contributing towards the development of an inclusive and empowered generation of youth leaders.</p>	<p align="center">At least 50% of Benin YALI Alumni are actively and regularly involved in the activities of the association supporting community youth development.</p>	<p align="center">Mentimeter Online Survey Tool procured by IREX</p>	<p>BYAA used Mentimeter to send monthly surveys on to collect alumni feedback on association activities and increase engagement and alumni ownership. Alumni confirmed to WACSI that Mentimeter has proven to be a useful tool for collective feedback.</p>
		<p align="center">Communicating Impact Training (WACSI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Communications Training filled an identified gap and helped alumni become more connected to the association via social media. This greater connectedness in turn has improved the association’s ability to engage alumni through the dissemination of publications and announcements. In WACSI’s post evaluation, alumni expressed widespread satisfaction in the level of engagement and activity of the association on social media. The training included a session on Website Development which helped BYAA update its website to better communicate its impact to alumni and potential partners. They are in the process of profiling all Alumni on the website (www.yalibenin.org) The various training modules focused on the important techniques to be mastered to effectively manage communication before, during and after the execution of a project. This directly impacted the RLC Collaboration Project and for the first time BYAA expanded its communication beyond simple posts. They conducted Facebook Live interviews, developed quality graphics, and made 7 press releases. These communications gave unprecedented visibility to the project, and importantly BYAA and its partners.
		<p align="center">Proposal Writing Training (WACSI)</p>	<p>In addition to the basics of proposal writing, this training included sessions on partnership engagement and resources mobilization which provided new skills that BYAA drew on as it implemented its RLC collaboration project. This training was foundational and will be relevant as BYAA continues to expand its funding base.</p>
		<p align="center">BYAA Entrepreneurs’ Exhibition (Collaboration Project)</p>	<p>In order to demonstrate BYAA’s value for individual alumni and encourage their participation, the association hosted a booth for two days at Benin’s largest international event, the Independence Fair. 25 MWF and RLC alumni exhibited and 11 alumni companies were represented. The fair raised the visibility of BYAA and its members; over 300 new contacts were collected. In the future, the association hopes to launch the BYAA Entrepreneurs Exhibition as a standalone event.</p>
		<p align="center">BYAA Gala Networking Event (Collaboration Project)</p>	<p>In order to respond to feedback from its members that the association needed to provide more opportunities for socializing, BYAA held a networking gala. The first every Benin YALI Awards were presented to alumni</p>
		<p align="center">Partnership with National Youth Council</p>	<p>With coaching and mentoring from WACSI, BYAA established a formal partnership with the National Youth Council. This strategic partnership will is expected to improve the public image of the association and its members.</p>
		Outcome Result	

Summary of Outcomes and Performance Solutions: LEAD Rwanda

OPI Vision	Prioritized Outcomes	Performance Solution	Impact
<p align="center">Create 100 accountable and change driven leaders in Rwanda.</p>	<p align="center">Outcome 1: Increased levels of engagement and participation by LEAD members in association activities</p>	<p align="center">Development of an Alumni Feedback Survey (VSO Coaching)</p>	<p>VSO supported LEAD in the development of a feedback survey. The survey was aimed at gathering feedback from the 78 members of LEAD on their levels of participation in their activities and to understand how best they would want to be engaged. The survey managed to get feedback from 42 Fellows from the targeted 75 a 56% response rate. 54% of the respondents represented the RLC community with 46% being MWF alumni. This was a great improvement from earlier attempts by the LEAD executive committee to get such feedback especially from the RLC community which reported a higher response rate as compared to the MWF community. Generally, LEAD observed increased participation throughout the OPI pilot, especially in the selection and prioritization of outcomes and the identification of performance solutions.</p>
		<p align="center">Entrepreneurship Training of Trainers (Collaboration Project)</p>	<p>The call for MWF and RLC Alumni to participate to be trained as trainers for the entrepreneurship training provided an excellent opportunity for alumni to participate. The record number of applicants for these roles has been attributed to the adoption of an HR manual, an output related to Outcome 2, that has made the decision making processes of the association more transparent. As a result, alumni seem more willing to participating.</p>
	<p align="center">Outcome 2: Increased ability by alumni to manage LEAD operations</p>	<p align="center">Finance and Procurement Training (VSO)</p>	<p>Prior to the OPI pilot, LEAD did not have any financial or procurement policies. The fact that there was no standard for spending and accounting for the association's funds represented a serious gap negatively affecting the effectiveness of its activities and its credibility with alumni. During the two-day training, LEAD learned industry standards related to financial management and procurement. As part of the training, VSO helped LEAD develop separate procurement and financial policies. Though they have not yet been formally adopted, they were used in the planning and implementation of LEAD's Collaboration Project, for the first time. LEAD has already seen increased efficiency and transparency as it pursues Outcome 2.</p>
		<p align="center">Human Resource Development and Management (VSO)</p>	<p>VSO conducted an in-depth training on human resource management and motivating teams. LEAD and VSO selected this training to address the low level of involvement and interest of alumni in association activities. The training introduced LEAD to 21st century human resource management styles and supported them to identify ways and means to motivate their teams. Further, VSO supported LEAD to develop a detailed human resource manual which was used in the implementation of the association's collaboration project (see above).</p>

		Strategic Planning Training (VSO)	As LEAD learned from its members and applied their feedback to the OPI process, a major theme was the need to strengthen the association and help it become something more than a collection of alumni implementing isolated projects. To address this performance gap, VSO provided a training to help LEAD identify its central goal and core thematic areas of focus and to develop a detailed plan on how best to achieve this goal. The training enabled the team to reflect on the organization vision, mission and core values. Further, the team was taken through the proposal development process in detail.
	Outcome 3: Diversifying income sources across the association	Fundraising and Resource Mobilization/Business Development Training (VSO)	This training built on the prior training on strategic planning and gave LEAD the skills to lead high-quality innovative programs; and share learning and adaptations with stakeholders and prospective partners as a critical element to developing winning proposals and mobilizing resources. VSO further supported LEAD in the process of conducting mapping for prospective donors in the country and worldwide working in the same thematic areas as proposed by LEAD.
		Partnership Development Training	<p>Through this training VSO strengthened LEAD's understanding of the association's value proposition and the value of partnerships in their work. The training enabled LEAD to develop a partnership engagement strategy which detailed the process of engaging new partners and the assessments required to be conducted for such engagements to be successful. VSO further supported LEAD in identifying some of the key partners in their sphere whom they needed to enter into formal partnership with them as informed by their thematic focus. Some of the partners identified included GIZ, AISEC, VSO Rwanda amongst others.</p> <p>These partnership development skills were applied during the implementation of the collaboration project through which LEAD developed partnerships with four universities.</p>
		Organizational Communication Training	During the OPI process, VSO helped LEAD identify communication as one of the major performance gaps facing the association. VSO facilitated virtual discussions with a technical team of three Fellows who were tasked with developing a communication strategy for the association. The training aimed at enabling LEAD to define how they engage internally and externally with other stakeholders by providing timely and relevant information, demonstrate the success of their work and help foster understanding of what they do. The strategy is still in the process of being completed.
Outcome 1 Result			Partially Achieved: Though the Feedback Survey only generated responses from 42 of the century's 75 alumni who were targeted, this still represents an important achievement. The survey engaged 56% of the alumni.

<p style="text-align: center;">Outcome 2 Result</p>	<p>Achieved: With VSO's support, LEAD has developed a finance policy, a procurement policy, and an HR policy, as well as a 3-year strategic plan. Though these documents need to be finalized and formally adopted by the association, they have already contributed considerably to LEAD's performance improvement in terms of its internal operations and credibility with its members.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Outcome 3 Result</p>	<p>Not Achieved: the ambitious target of \$50,000 in new funds was not achieved and probably not realistic within the timeframe of the OPI Pilot; however, as summarized above, LEAD's OPI process has laid a strong foundation for pursuing new funding sources in the future.</p>
<p>The successful implementation of its Collaboration Project (the LEADers Project) which included a ToT for 15 alumni who conducted a series of entrepreneurship trainings at universities across Rwanda played a major role in the success of LEAD's OPI process. The project drew on the performance improvement generated by their outcomes and allowed LEAD to put their performance solutions into action. LEAD was able to strengthen their association as a whole while equipping 120 young leaders with vital entrepreneurship skills in the process..</p>	

Summary of Outcomes and Performance Solutions: YALI Alumni Comoros

OPI Vision	Prioritized Outcomes	Performance Solution	Impact
<p align="center">Promote a culture of change and ensure the proactive participation of youth and women through entrepreneurship.</p>	<p align="center">Outcome 1: Empower women and youth entrepreneurs on all three islands of Comoros</p>	<p align="center">Virtual Training on Gender Equality</p>	<p>The virtual training on gender equality was directly tied to YALI-Comoros’ selected outcome to increase the involvement of women in the association. Contrasting views dominated the conversations, with female members sharing practical examples of the real struggles they faced in leadership positions, how females are perceived by society, and how females have to continuously seek validation. Conversations during this training shed light on what the association was doing well in this area, as well as, the major barriers that women face in Comoros and how the association can address them as it designs future programming. Though the association’s work is not complete in this area, by improving gender equality within the association, it is now better prepared to help women entrepreneurs overcome the obstacles they face.</p>
	<p align="center">Outcome 2: Women-led enterprises created, supported, and financed</p>	<p align="center">Youth Doing Business Training and Pitch Competition (Collaboration Project) – Outcome 1 and 2</p>	<p>For their RLC Collaboration Project, YALI Alumni Comoros, whose members include both MWF and RLC alumni, implemented a 2 day training and pitch competition for 35 women and youth on the Island of Grande Comore with participants from the islands of Anjouan (3) and Moheli (1). During training, participants developed their business ideas and were given the opportunity to pitch. Three winners were selected (1 male and 2 female), and in pursuit of their prioritized outcome, the association will work with the winners to incubate their enterprises.</p>
		<p align="center">Training on the Project Life Cycle (Trust)</p>	<p>In order to ensure the success of the collaboration project, the Trust provided the association with training on how to manage a project from beginning to end. Key concepts imparted included alternative funding sources and M&E concepts and strategies. These new skills were instrumental to the success of the collaboration project and will help the association sustain the new enterprises that have been created.</p>

	Outcome 3: Formal partnership agreements with local and international partners	Training on Partnership Building (Trust)	The Trust provided an in depth training on building partnerships to benefit the association’s activities and members. As an output of the training, the association produced a draft outreach plan that identified new partners, evaluated the status of the current partnerships, and detailed the role of individual alumni in partnership building. The YALI Alumni Comoros has gained one new partnership as a result of the training.
		Virtual Trainings on Human Rights and Peace Building (Trust)	By learning more about how human rights and conflict affect Comoros at the community, national, and regional levels, members were able to think about potential areas of programming and partnership that the association should pursue in order to advance the causes of peace and human rights. Members reported that the trainings made them more aware of their own government’s limitations in these areas, and they believe there is much the association can do to advance the human rights of people with disabilities in the country, as well as, advocating for their government to lead in regional peace building efforts. The training helped the association identify new value propositions that will attract new partnerships that are relevant to the its overall vision.
Outcome 1 Result			Achieved: Women were trained on entrepreneurship, and the association is better able to support female and youth entrepreneurs in the future.
Outcome 2 Result			Achieved: The process is ongoing, through collaboration grant, the association has supported and financed three entrepreneurs.
Outcome 3 Result			Partially Achieved: The association set a target of 12 formal partnerships to be established during the OPI process, but only 1 partnership was actually created. It was concluded that the OPI Pilot was not long enough to allow for additional partnership.

Q22 Highlight: Mandela Washington Fellowship Summit and DC Site Visits



OPI Alumni Association Representatives, RAB members, RLC participants, and Implementing Partner staff meet with Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield of the Albright Stonebridge Group.

On the margins of 2019 Mandela Washington Fellowship Summit, IREX hosted three finalist alumni associations. 2017 Fellow and RAB member Maureen Jessica Gaba representing the Benin YALI Alumni Association, 2015 Fellow Jean Mone Ahmed representing YALI Alumni Comoros, and 2015 Fellow Jean Paulin Mutatsineza representing LEAD Rwanda shared their OPI experience with Ashoka, the Albright Stonebridge Group, members organizations of the Open Gov Hub and IREX staff. These organizations were selected because their missions and areas of expertise aligned with the OPI goals of the associations. The meetings provided an

opportunity for the associations to learn new approaches and techniques that they could apply in their own contexts, as well as, a chance for the associations to share the change they are leading in their countries and to establish strong connections with DC organizations and introduce new partners to the potential of MWF alumni associations and YALI more broadly. The meetings were extremely successful with multiple organizations expressing an interest in collaborating with the alumni associations in the future.

During the Summit, the alumni association members shared a table at the Partnership Expo. This was an opportunity for the associations to share their work with 2019 Fellows, encourage them to start alumni associations in their countries, and promote cross border collaboration between associations.



OPI Alumni Associations present their work and network at the YALI Summit's Partnership Expo.

Q22 Highlight: OPI Learning Retrospective

On Friday, July 26, IREX's Center for Applied Learning and Impact facilitated a day long Learning Retrospective for the OPI Fellows, IREX staff, and IREX's regional implementing partner staff who were in Washington, D.C. The Retrospective allowed each stakeholder group to reflect on critical moments in the implementation of the OPI pilot and gave IREX an invaluable opportunity to understand how to better support the development of YALI Alumni Associations. Key insights from the Retrospective are below.

- Though all three YALI Alumni Associations had no knowledge or understanding of OPI when they received the Call for Expressions of Interest email, they initially decided to apply for - what they understood to be - a traditional capacity building opportunity to strengthen their association and the chance to receive funding to implement a project in their country.
- The competitive aspect of the February 2019 OPI workshop in Nairobi, Kenya motivated the three Alumni Associations to remain engaged in the three-day workshop, but each association experienced a shift from a competitive mindset to a learning mindset during the workshop and began to focus more heavily on absorbing the content so they would be able to apply what they learned to their association.
- Working in person with IREX and its partners during the OPI workshop was critical to mastering the concepts of OPI and being able to apply them during implementation.
- Upon returning home after the February 2019 OPI workshop, the alumni association representatives struggled to share what they learned and gain buy-in on next steps from their association members. Ultimately, members across all three finalist alumni associations came to understand the benefit of the OPI process, especially given the grant opportunity. Associations recommended that IREX should provide more resources to associations to train their members on OPI.
- The potential funding related to the RLC Collaboration Projects was a strong motivation for the alumni associations. It also proved an important mechanism for aligning performance solutions and putting them into action.

- Implementing partners shared that, in any future iterations, the OPI process should be further tailored and adapted to the needs of the YALI Alumni Associations.
- The YALI Alumni Associations formed valuable working relationships with IREX and staff from the regional implementing partners. As the OPI process concludes, there is strong interest across all three YALI Alumni Associations to maintain and strengthen these relationships.

Implementing Partner Recommendations for Scaling the OPI Pilot

In their final reports for IREX, each implementing partner indicated that they believe there is great potential for scaling the OPI pilot to reach more alumni associations and promote the sustainability and impact of the MWF Network. Below is a summary of recommendations for engaging alumni associations in OPI initiatives in the future.

- The OPI process with YALI Alumni Associations has been a worthwhile process that has provided capacity strengthening support to these important youth engagement platforms. This is a process that needs to be supported and scaled up to other YALI Alumni Associations on the continent.
- Consider supporting a comprehensive capacity strengthening program for YALI Alumni Associations on the Continent through a coordinated mechanism that involves the YALI Regional Leadership Centers and American Embassies.
- Direct a significant amount of support for cultivating YALI Alumni Associations as an in-country Youth Development Strategy within the framework of securing long-term partnerships with members of the YALI Community.
- MWF Implementing Partners find ways to continue to support the associations who participated in the OPI pilot, as well as, explore the possibility of developing and resourcing a coordinated continental program to facilitate the OPI process for other YALI Alumni Associations.

Lessons Learned

- It is clear from the results of the OPI process and the feedback of alumni associations and partners that providing OPI to Alumni Associations is a credible and effective way of engaging and strengthening the MWF Network.
- Implementation of the OPI Pilot in Comoros faced numerous challenges related to culture and politics (celebration of Ramadan and Presidential elections). Though these challenges were overcome, in the future, before beginning an OPI process, more should be done to understand the context of the association, and the social, economic and cultural aspects of the country where it is being implemented.
- Each finalist association was given the opportunity to host members in practicums. This served two purposes: 1) giving 2018 Fellows exposure to the OPI pilot and the opportunity to implement a project and 2) provide the associations with remunerated staff to manage and facilitate the OPI process. Feedback from each of the associations was that this was critical to helping the associations complete their OPI workplans within the time frame of the OPI Pilot. There is a concern that associations will struggle to maintain their momentum now that they no longer have

support from the MWF practicum program. Future iterations of OPI should consider funding an association staff person to lead and manage the OPI process.

- Though each of the Finalist Associations made significant progress during the OPI pilot, performance improvement is a continuing process and each association has considerable work ahead. During the Pilot, the weekly mentoring and coaching sessions with implementing partners were essential to keeping associations motivated and confident to complete their OPI workplans. The OPI Pilot would be more sustainable if continuous mentoring and coaching could be provided to the finalist associations.
- Due to the set end date of the MWF project, the OPI Pilot was only five months. Though unavoidable, this short timeframe limited the progress that association could make during the Pilot.
- A key element of OPI is monitoring and evaluation. Through its partners IREX prepared the associations to develop indicators to measure their performance improvement. Indicators were developed and calculated satisfactorily, and the progress made by each association is evident; however, though the constraints of the Pilot did not allow for it, the evaluation of the pilot would have benefited if IREX could have given more time to helping the partners and the alumni associations develop more precise and coordinated indicators.

See [Attachment 5](#) for the OPI Training materials.

See [Attachment 6](#) for the list of trainings provided by implementing partners.

1. Structured Networking Opportunities within the MWF Community

Mandela Washington Fellowship Summit



At the 2018 Mandela Washington Fellowship Summit, 2017 RAB members and other Fellowship alumni gave closing remarks for the 2018 Fellows.

During each of the six Summits that occurred during this award, IREX helped facilitate USAID's participation in a number of ways. First and foremost IREX organized a session yearly for the Fellows on the follow-on opportunities they would have access to, the importance of the Leadership Development Plan, and the immediate task of electing the Regional Advisory Boards (with the exception of the Summit just held for the 2019 Fellows given that USAID-funded follow-on would not be available to the 2019 cohort). Additionally, IREX helped set up and staff the USAID standing booth throughout the Summit, helped set up logistics for USAID-focused meet-ups, and helped facilitate communication between USAID and State Department around Summit events.

Additionally, IREX facilitated a contingent of RAB members to attend the Summit. Their role was to start making linkages across cohorts, talk about their experiences with the follow-on activities, encourage Fellows to nominate themselves for the RAB at both the Next Steps session and during the partnership expo, and answer questions about their experience post-fellowship. In the final year of the program, IREX also had representatives from alumni associations at the Summit to promote that aspect of network building.

Regional Conferences, Continental Conference, Regional Convenings



At the 2015 West Africa Regional Conference, 2014 Fellow Mfonobong Ekpo from Nigeria, facilitated the Forum on the Future of Africa with the Future Africa Project, Ashesi University, the West Africa Civil Society Institute, and McKinsey & Company.

Throughout the years, Regional and Continental Conferences and Convenings provided structured networking opportunities within the Fellowship community and the themes of the conferences consistently addressed collaboration, networking, and alignment to continental and global themes such as the Sustainable Development Goals and sub-themes of good governance, improving education, job creation and skills development and addressing countering violent extremism (CVE). The Conferences also gave US Government officials an opportunity to reinforce the platforms which remained available to the Fellows as alumni.

Conference Process

In the first year, IREX had full control of the conferences' programs. They provided the Fellows with a platform to discuss topical issues affecting their region and identify avenues for collaboration. The theme of collaboration was realized through pitch competitions, Lightning Talks and expos.

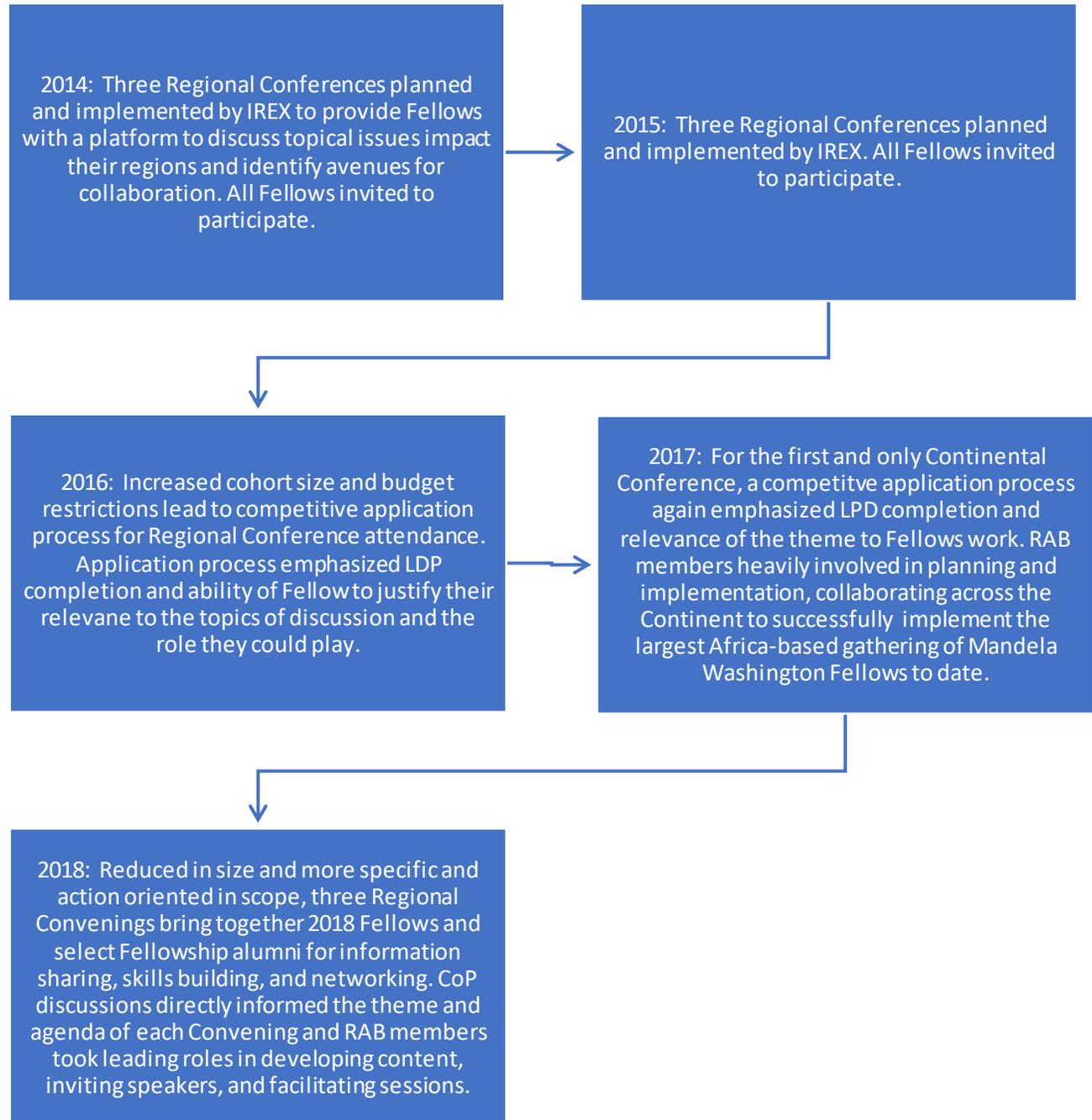
Over the years, the Regional Advisory Boards had greater input such that by the final year's Regional Convenings, they drove the content and application process, and IREX and its implementing partners provided oversight and managed the logistics and administration of the events. Another change over the years was that in the first two years of the Conferences (2015 and 2016) all Fellows were invited, but when the Fellow cohort grew to 1000, budget limitations meant that an application process had to be introduced which IREX managed. The application process emphasized the LDP and the Fellow's ability to justify their relevance to the topics being discussed and what role they could play.

To build out the Conference content, IREX facilitated a Conference planning session, generally at the second meeting of the RAB's tenure. Using the RAB toolkit and facilitating sessions that identified thematic areas for the Conferences, including the CoPs, IREX would guide the RAB to determine the topic areas and the kinds of sessions that they would entail whether they would reflect as Lightning Talks, Workshops, panel discussions, Pitch competitions or topics for the opening or closing speakers.

Conference outcomes also morphed over the years. IREX worked with the RABs to make the conferences and convenings more action-oriented. This happened iteratively over time as the RABs took the lead on CoPs and the conference and convening themes became more focused and related to the virtual CoP discussions that were held in the months before the gathering. The 2018 Convenings were the culmination of this process whereby each convening had a tangible outcome in the form of toolkits (see [Attachment 7](#) for the Toolkits that came out of the 2018 Regional Convenings) or a set of collaboratively developed concrete recommendations Fellows could implement at home. At the Convening focused on good governance, Fellows publicly made commitments about ways they could immediately and specifically promote good governance in their communities, workplaces, and countries.

See [Attachment 7](#) for the 2018 Regional Convening Reports.

Through the Years: Continental and Regional Conferences and Convenings



Through the Years: Fellow Participation in Regional Conferences					
	Year 1 (2015)	Year 2 (2016)	Year 3 (2017)	Year 4 (2018)	Year 5 (2019)
East Africa	145	151	94	393	70
Southern Africa	121	131	100		63
West Africa	116	114	130		65
Total	382	396	324	393	198

Lessons Learned

- The creation of intentional networking and collaboration opportunities within the Conference agenda proved productive and enabled the Fellows to be engaged during the full event.
- “Flexi-time” and educational/cultural tours relevant to the theme of the Conference provided Fellows with an opportunity to see the city in a structured way, thus discouraging them from leaving the formal Conference to explore the city. For example, during the 2015 Regional Conference in South Africa, Fellows attended a dinner with African Leadership Academy students. In 2019, during the East Africa Regional Convening, Fellows visited the Genocide Memorial in Kigali, Rwanda.
- RAB members were empowered by the opportunity to take the lead in defining content, assessing applications, and identifying speaker and moderators. Increased RAB involvement in Conference planning resulted in a dynamic, engaging Fellow-driven events.
- The Conferences re-energized Fellows as they completed their first year home since the U.S. based component of the Fellowship.

2. Access and Introduction to External Networks that Support Fellows' Individual Goals

Staff Networking and Partnership Outreach

Throughout the five years of the program, IREX sought to first develop, then maintain, partnerships with local and international corporations, non-profit organizations, and multilateral institutions, with the purpose of expanding and enriching Fellows' leadership development, knowledge base, and networking opportunities when they returned home. These partnerships were instrumental in enabling IREX to fulfill its programmatic obligations to provide Fellows with professional practicums and mentorships, and to assist Fellows to identify opportunities to speak at high-level events through the Speaker Travel Grant program. In addition, IREX sought to co-sponsor initiatives with partners to provide Fellows with additional opportunities that are mutually beneficial and provide shared value to Fellows, partners, and IREX. IREX sought partners as sponsors of the Regional Conferences.

Starting in Year 1, IREX aggressively sought international and sub-Saharan Africa based partners by conducting presentations and networking to educate potential institutions on the value of the Fellowship on the Continent. These initial networking and outreach opportunities proved successful as, in year 1, Microsoft hosted 15 professional practicums, the Congressional Black Caucus identified nine mentors, the Nigerian Leadership Initiative (NLI) hosted a co-sponsored event, and the Africa Leadership Academy (ALA) and the Association of Black Securities and Investment Professionals (ABSIP) co-sponsored dinners during the 2016 Southern African Regional Conference.

In Year 2 and Year 3, the IREX Regional Managers conducted outreach trips to Senegal, Ethiopia, Zambia, Mozambique, Botswana, and Nigeria which resulted in practicum opportunities. For example, the East Africa Regional Manager attended the Corporate Council on Africa's Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where she met several potential partners, including Amatheon Agri, who later hosted two practicums in their Uganda office. Additionally, IREX facilitated the participation of five Fellows attending the Islamic Development Bank Group (IDBG)'s Youth Development Summit in May 2017 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and five Fellows in African Philanthropy Forum in Kigali, Rwanda in October 2017.

In Year 3, an increased cohort size of 1,000 Fellows created an intensified need to identify a diverse group of partners to offer opportunities to Fellows. Unfortunately, as a lead partner, Microsoft only offered mentorships, not practicums. However, IREX's Partnership Manager pursued and finalized a partnership with Channels TV, a Nigeria based broadcast company with over 20 million viewers across the Continent. In year 3, IREX also facilitated the participation of 21 Fellows in the School of Data Summer Camp in September 2017.

In Year 4, IREX staff and implementing partners traveled to Ethiopia and Nigeria to source additional practicum opportunities and focused on identifying sponsorship partners for the Continental Conference. Partners such as Satguru and 2015 Fellow Steve Zita from DRC contributed to the 2017 Continental Conference.

Over the years, IREX distributed certificates to mentors and letters of acknowledgement to practicum hosts and, the fifth and final year of the program focused on partnership maintenance and close-out.

A full overview of Staff Networking and Outreach can be found in [Attachment 8](#).

Lessons Learned

- Partners, large and small, need to be acknowledged for their contribution to the program. It encourages them to return in following years.
- Creating opportunities for partners to be involved in the conferences, such as the mentor breakfast hosted at the 2015 Southern Africa Regional Conference, motivates and inspires them.
- Implementing partners successfully identified partners within the non-profit field, but additional efforts were needed to target the private sector.
- There was greater interest from not for profit organizations to be partners for practicums as they recognized the value of having Fellows contributing their skills and expertise to the institution without the organization having to financially contribute. On the other hand, it took longer and with less success to get private sector partners to partner for practicums because large institutions generally had their own internal internship programs which it was difficult to absorb the Fellows into for various regions.
- In negotiating with partners, IREX frequently had to explain the larger structure of the YALI program and the relationship with the Regional Leadership Centers, as the RLCs in some cases were approaching the same potential partners, such as Standard Chartered, for partnership opportunities which often caused confusion.

Networking and Continued Learning Opportunities



IREX originally conceived of “co-sponsorships” for the first two cohorts as a way IREX could assist Fellows to access external networks more broadly beyond the individual opportunities like Speaker Travel Grants or practicums by identifying co-sponsorship opportunities that related to Fellows’ interests. These events were aimed at integrating Fellows into broader initiatives on the continent that fostered creative problem solving and provided space for Fellows with common interests to connect and contribute their expertise. Through co-sponsorships, IREX pursued partnership opportunities to showcase the work of Mandela Washington Fellows, and introduce them to industry experts who could nurture their ideas and leadership development. From the 2016 cohort onwards, the name of these activities changes to Continued Networking and Learning Activities (CNLs)

Methods and Approaches Used Overtime

Initially, IREX supported the following types of CNL activities:

- **Learning Activities** – Support for pre-planned events by supplementing an existing budget to send Fellows, or livestream an event, to facilitate continued learning virtually among a larger group of Fellows;

- **Innovation Activities** – Support for cutting-edge events, a series and/or activity that are co-implemented or co-designed with leading organizations on the African continent that can generate opportunities for Fellows and/or showcase their plans to help bolster their work; and,
- **Expert Activities** – Support for the work of Fellows who are trailblazers in their field through support for sector specific events and activities that focus on building resilient industries in Africa.



Year 1: Local media coverage of Microsoft Networking event in Mauritius. 2014 Fellow Aarthi Burthony from Mauritius is pictured in the center of the top picture.

Co-sponsorships took many forms, such as supporting Fellow attendance at a relevant event, helping organize a training or workshop to enhance Fellows’ skills, or full partnership to host an event. However, IREX learned that the staff resources needed for the outreach and negotiations to create or facilitate meaningful engagements was too great for the benefits it was reaping for Fellows. Therefore, in Year 3, IREX changed the name of these activities to Continued Networking and Learning events (CNLEs), and its approach to be less rigid as to what kinds of events or opportunities could be CNLEs, as well IREX was not able to allocate budget to “co-

sponsor” events beyond using STGs, for appropriate events to help fund Fellow travel to participate. However, whenever possible, IREX sought cost contributions from partners to support Fellow participation.

Over the course of Year 1 and Year 2, through September 2016, IREX facilitated a total of 21 co-sponsored activities for the 2014 and 2015 Fellows. IREX worked with partners such as Microsoft, the Nigeria Leadership Initiative, Oracle, Proctor & Gambol, the Association of Black Securities and Investment Professionals, the African Leadership Academy, Pyxera Global, Women in Tech Network, Youth Bridge, and the Nelson Mandela Centre for Memory, Teach for All, AU-ECOSOCC, African Leadership Academy, African Philanthropy Forum, and the Africa Political Summit to develop events and opportunities for Fellows, focused on topics as diverse as conservation, women in technology, the Mandela legacy, public speaking and professional development, Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals, and youth employment. These events and opportunities were a combination of trainings, networking opportunities, panel discussions, and discussion-oriented workshops. Partners contributed almost \$40,000 in cash and in-kind contributions, as well as diverse platforms for Fellows to share their ideas and expertise with networks of people, collaborate, and collect advice. Fellows had opportunities to address philanthropists in Africa, learn about technological advances in their field,



Year 1: Nigeria Leadership Initiative - The Christopher Kolade Symposium aimed at enriching the discourse on the best ways to ensure effective leadership in Nigeria.

network with a range of professionals, become engaged in multilateral efforts to address development challenges, address those helping to shape the political narrative in Africa and globally, and discuss challenges and solutions to education issues across the continent with other Fellows and outside practitioners.

For the 2016 cohort, IREX facilitated 30 CNLs with five different partners. IREX worked with partners such as Oracle, Unleash, the Southern Africa Trust, and the Islamic Development Bank to connect Fellows with interesting events and opportunities focused on topics as diverse as youth participation in politics, biogas as a source of renewable energy, African philanthropy, and design thinking. These events and opportunities were a combination of trainings, networking opportunities, panel discussions, discussion-oriented workshops, and webinars. Partners contributed almost \$25,000 in cash and in-kind donations. For example, in Quarter 13, IREX partnered with the Islamic Development Bank Group (IDBG) to facilitate five Fellows' participation at the Youth Development Summit in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. All Fellow costs were covered by the IDBG. The Fellows participated in the *Working Session of the Youth Summit for the Preparation of the Communique*:



Year 3: 2016 Fellow Abdul Karim Kabia from Sierra Leone speaks at the Working Session of the Youth Summit for the Preparation of the Communique at the Youth Development Summit in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

and the *Governors' Forum on Empowerment of Youth*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAbrdZbF2Ug>. Feedback from IDBG was that the Fellows were “exceptional and insightful.”

IREX also facilitated a number of webinars for 2016 and 2017 Fellows. In September 2017, IREX facilitated and moderated a webinar entitled “Reintegration: Tips and Tricks for Fellowship Success” for the 2017 Fellows who had recently returned to their home countries. Although Fellows had a positive experience during the U.S. portion of the Fellowship, on returning home, they expressed feeling overwhelmed and frustrated that the pace of change does not always move as fast as they would like. Thus, some of them lost the momentum, inspiration, energy, and traction that they gained while in the U.S. In response to this, the webinar focused on reintegrating into their home community and solutions to the challenges Fellows may face. Four Regional Advisory Board members presented on re-integration challenges from the perspective of family, political office, their community, and businesses. The discussion focused on the LDP’s relevance, the need for peer-to-peer mentorship, and the struggle of balancing their current employment with their startup ventures.

Over the course of Year 4, from October 2017 – September 2018, IREX facilitated a total of 35 CNLs for the 2017 Fellows. Though aimed at the 2017 cohort, all Fellowship alumni were allowed and encouraged to participate. IREX worked with partners such as Econet, Oracle, Accountability Lab, and WACSI to connect Fellows with interesting events and opportunities focused on topics as diverse as youth participation in politics, transparency in governance, and women’s leadership. These events and opportunities were a combination of trainings, networking opportunities, panel discussions, discussion-oriented workshops, and webinars.

One in-person example of a CNL for 2017 Fellows was a group mentoring session with Dr. Judy Dlamini of the Mbekani Group held with all 2017 RAB members during their all-RAB in-person meeting in November

Regional Advisory Board members pose with Dr. Judy Dlamini during the first in-person meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa.

2017, IREX facilitated. Dr. Dlamini is a leading businesswoman in Southern Africa and recently wrote a book on leadership called *Equal but Different*. The book focuses on creating more democratic leadership spaces

for women to succeed, and where men can be supportive. Her insights on responsible leadership in Africa, and the role of women and men in promoting equality in the workplace were invaluable for the Fellows. She donated autographed copies of her book to all of the 2017 RAB members.



IREX facilitated a number of webinars for 2017 and 2018 Fellows. In March, 2018 IREX facilitated a virtual discussion with Accountability Lab led by the Lab’s Country Directors from Nigeria, Liberia, and Mali. Odeh Friday (Nigeria), Lawrence Yealue (Liberia), and 2015 Mandela Washington Fellow Moussa Kondo (Mali) spoke on Accountability Lab’s work in their countries. At the end of the conversation, the Lab took questions from Fellows from across the Continent who attended. Following the conclusion of the webinar, several Fellows reached out directly to Accountability Lab to learn more about how they can build a new generation of active citizens and responsible leaders across Africa. Accountability Lab has been a longtime partner of the Mandela Washington Fellowship and they hosted five Fellows for practicums.

Year 5: Fellows and Oracle representatives at a networking session in November 2018.

In the final year of the program, IREX facilitated 8 CNLS for Fellows. IREX partnered with Oracle, WACSI, YALI – Pwani (a YALI alumni association subset in coastal Kenya), Eldo-Hub, LakeHub, and VSO Kenya to provide in-person and virtual CNLs in the form of mentoring circles, networking events, in-person trainings and webinars on topics such as sustaining SMEs, board governance, resource mobilization for enterprises, and the Blue Economy– the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs. Fellows who attended the Regional Convenings had the opportunity to sign up for an in-person training (with a cap of 20 Fellows per training) relevant to the convening topic held just after each convening concluded. In West Africa, WACSI provided a training on communicating impact and

fundraising. In Southern Africa, IREX provided a train-the-trainers style training on IREX’s Youth Essential Skills curriculum. In East Africa, IREX provided a training on data for decision-making.



Year 5: Fellows who attended the 2019 Regional Convenings had the opportunity to sign up for an in-person training on a topic relevant to each Convening. WACSI (West Africa) and IREX (East Africa and Southern Africa) facilitated the trainings.

Lessons Learned

- Outreach and negotiations to co-sponsor events is time consuming and required IREX to also have adequate budget to use to put towards event sponsorship, which we did not see as an efficient and effective use of funds for the return in investment, thus we shifted focus from truly co-sponsoring specific events, to finding opportunities with partners like networking events with Oracle, or group mentoring and networking sessions with Econet – and virtual events that could benefit a larger number of Fellows.
- Being flexible as to the methods and topics of CNLs opened a up a range of possibilities to find additional ways to enrich Fellows’ follow-on experience.

- In-person events were best when planned out well in advance so fellows had time to make arrangements to participate. When there was not adequate time, there were instances where a number of Fellows would RSVP to an in-person event, only not to show up due to work or family commitments.
- Ideally, it would have been best to plan a calendar of events for each quarter. However, this was difficult given that it was dependent of partner interest, their availability, and Fellows' availability.
- Enabling all Fellows, not just the most current cohort, to access Oba increased the opportunities of alumni to participate in certain activities.

See **Attachment 9** for a full list of Continued Networking and Learning Events.

See **Attachment 10** for the agendas of each Post Convening Training.

Speaker Travel Grants

Speaker Travel Grants (STGs) are IREX-facilitated opportunities for Fellows to share their topical expertise at external, high level events. The Speaker Travel Grant program is one of the ways that the Mandela Washington Fellowship enabled Fellows to access external and international networks to amplify their voice, support their continued networking, and showcase their innovations and achievements. Over the course of five years, IREX and USAID awarded 169 Speaker Travel Grants were awarded to Fellows all over the Continent.



Over the years, the Speaker Travel Grant program sent Mandela Washington Fellows across the world to amplify their voices, broaden their networks, and provide them with an opportunity to showcase their innovations. In Year 4, IREX used PowerBI to visualize travel for the Speaker Travel Grant program.

Methods and Approaches Used Overtime

Speaker Travel Grants were available to Fellows on a rolling basis initially, and then in Year 2 applications had to be submitted two months prior to the proposed event, and the STG selection committee reviewed applications on a monthly basis. All approved applications were submitted to the AOR for concurrence before final funding decisions were made. Fellows could apply for a grant to support their travel to a conference or high-level event where they were presenting a paper, participating on a panel, or providing a key note address. Applications were reviewed based on criteria such as the relevancy of the event and audience for increasing the Fellow’s network, the importance for promoting the Mandela Washington Fellowship, and the expected impact participation in the event would have for the Fellow’s professional goals. In Year 4, when funding for the program decreased, IREX prioritized funding opportunities and events held in Africa, which was also consistent with a larger focus on cross-continental networking.



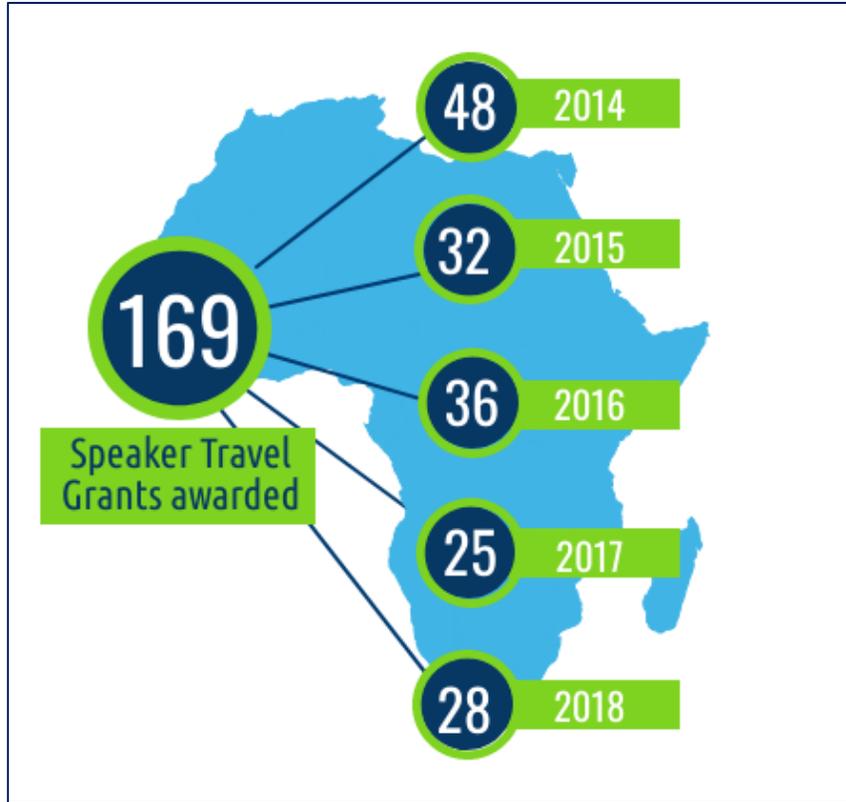
IREX also strategically identified high-level events and created opportunities for Fellows that generated greater impact both in terms of the professional development of individual Fellows as well as the global prestige and prominence of the Mandela Washington Fellowship. IREX worked with its regional implementing partners to identify conferences and events that aligned with continent-wide and regional development priorities, such as education, and partnered with event organizers to secure speaking roles for Fellows and negotiated cost contributions. IREX then matched Fellows to these events based on interest and experience.



2017 Fellow Bright Irem from Nigeria traveled to Boston, Massachusetts for the 2017 Connected Health Conference on a Speaker Travel Grant.

At the conclusion of their travel, Fellows who received STGs were required to complete a final report. These reports helped IREX measure the impact of STGs, and collected data on event attendance, audience size, and the number and types of professional contacts that were direct outcomes of the conference. Qualitative data was also requested, including information on the Fellows’ presentation and how the STG program helped them advance towards the goals listed in their LDPs. IREX also used the final reports as a tool for strengthening its other activities as the reports

asked Fellows to provide contact information for potential practicum hosts and mentors whom they encountered during their STG experience. Starting in 2016, to ensure that the Speaker Travel Grant program benefited as many Fellows as possible, STG recipients were required to share their STG experience directly with the larger MWF network through a Shared Knowledge Activity, which initially was hosting a webinar. From 2017, IREX offered exciting new ways for Fellows to share their STG experience. For example, they could choose to engage with MWF CoPs to lead



online discussions related to the topics addressed during their STG experience, record an interview with an IREX staff member, record a video, or write a blog post. In this way, the individual leadership development and networking that resulted from a Fellow’s STG was directly shared with other Fellows and encouraged the development of the larger MWF network.

To see the STG Final Report Template for Fellows please see [Attachment 11](#).

A full list of all STGs can be found in [Attachment 12](#).

Speaker Travel Grants: Success Stories

As a result of her IREX-facilitated Speaker Travel Grant, 2016 Fellow Carlyne Ekyarisiime, a Business & Entrepreneurship Fellow from Uganda, connected with UNESCO and collaborated with them on a project that encourages cyber safety for girls while increasing the number of women and girls creating and accessing content online. Carlyne attended the 2017 eLearning Africa Conference from September 27-29 in Port Louis, Mauritius. While making the keynote speech, Carlyne spoke



Carlyne Ekyarisiime, the 2017 East Africa Regional Conference Pitch Winner with the dummy check of \$1,000 from Tatu City.

to an audience of young people and policy makers on the gender gap in science, technology, engineering, and math and the importance of implementing innovative solutions for a brighter and better Africa.

Carlyne is the founder of Apps & Girls, an organization that seeks to bridge the tech gender gap by providing quality coding training and entrepreneurship skills to girls in secondary schools via coding clubs. One of the beneficiaries of these clubs, 15 year old Doreen Michael said, “It has been a year since I joined the program and I have learned a lot including leadership, technology, coding, and entrepreneurship. I have participated at hackathons, boot camps, and competitions sponsored by the U.S. Embassy and other organizations here in Tanzania. I have also gained exposure to attend conferences around the world and in the U.S. and met other young tech enthusiasts. I attribute my newfound confidence and the skills I have gained to my mentor Carlyne Ekyarisiime, who continues to mold me as I follow in her footsteps.” The Mandela Washington Fellowship was an “amazing experience” for Carlyne because of the knowledge, experience, and networks she has gained. Since the Fellowship, she engaged in collaboration with Google, Dangote, and the Tony Elumelu Foundation.



2018 Fellows Adaku Ufere, Aziz Bala-Gaye, and Benedicte Joan pose on the sidelines of the 2019 African Development Bank Civil Society Forum in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.

As a result of his IREX-facilitated Speaker Travel Grant to the 2019 African Development Bank (AfDB) Civil Society Forum in Cote d'Ivoire, 2018 Fellow Aziz Bala-Gaye, a Public Management Fellow from The Gambia, established valuable contacts within the AfDB and is currently in communication with officials of AfDB to effectively conclude the Senegambia Bridge corridor to ease the flow of goods and people. Aziz is a Senior Economist working at the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration, and Employment, where he works on policy formulation and implementation for medium, small, and micro-enterprise (MSME) promotion and employment in particular.

The forum, themed "Engaging Civil Society to Accelerate Regional Integration for Africa's Economic Prosperity," was an opportunity for Aziz to better understand AfDB's role in the West African regional integration process, and some of the available opportunities for the Gambian private sector. It was also an opportunity to network with other Forum participants coordinating the programs and other initiatives of the bank. Further, Aziz enjoyed the perspective of other civil society actors who work more closely with grassroots beneficiaries to implement the policy and protocols that he writes.

During his panel session, Aziz discussed different tools initiated by the ECOWAS Commission to promote the West African region as a common market. He also discussed the challenges faced in policy implementation, shared his experiences managing trade issues, and emphasized the importance of networking with people who, in one way or another, complement his work.

At the Forum, Aziz liaised with senior AfDB officials to propose policy formulation plans to incorporate entrepreneurship for the youth in a stimulus incentive as an employment creation mechanism. He continues to give talks to departmental heads within the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Regional Integration on the challenges and opportunities to moving forward with regional integration in order to have a meaningful and positive impact on human, democratic consolidation, and development.

Lessons Learned

- IREX was able to provide opportunities for groups of Fellows to attend high level events by proactively reaching out to event organizers to negotiate speaking roles and Fellow panels to enhance the promotion of the program and amplify the Fellows' voices.

- Providing multiple ways for fellows to share their expertise or learning from their STG experience enriched the network and strengthened connections.

3. Practical Learning Opportunities

Practical learning opportunities encompassed a range of interventions aimed at enabling Fellows to apply new skills, learn new skills and knowledge, and gain practical experience in a range of environments and in collaboration with host institutions, as well as other Fellows in the network.

Professional Practicums



2015 Fellow Simon Ndirangu from Kenya worked with KYUSA in Uganda through his professional practicum to design and implement fundraising activities within the organization.



2014 Harriet Adzofu from Ghana completed a 6-month professional practicum with the Guidance, Counselling and Youth Development Centre for Africa in Malawi.

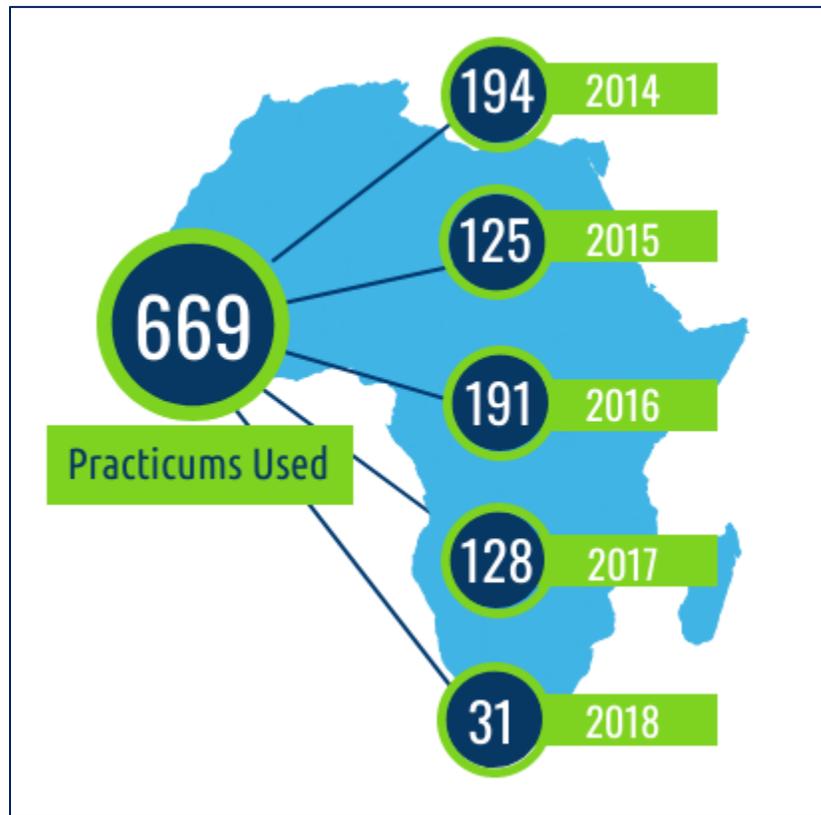
Since 2014, IREX has worked with a variety of organizations from the private, public, and non-profit sectors to host Fellows for Africa-based professional practicums. Overtime, especially early in the program, IREX conducted outreach to organizations both from headquarters as well as from IREX’s regional offices alongside its implementing partner networks.

Methods and Approaches Used Overtime

Through the Years: Practicum Tools Developed and Adapted
Practicum Toolkits for Host
Practicum Toolkit for Fellows
Practicum Agreement with Standard Terms and Conditions
Stipend and Relocation Structure
<i>The Practicum Tools can be found in Attachment 13.</i>

Practicums (called internships in Year 1, are structured professional experiences that provide Fellows with real-world experience at a host organization where they enhanced their skills and honed their leadership qualities. when they returned from their U.S.-based Fellowship experience.

Over the five cohorts of Fellows who participated in USAID-funded follow-on activities, practicums had the following aspects, some of which changed over time due to both Fellow and partner feedback, as well as budget realities. Practicums could be either in-person or virtual depending on the host and Fellow needs. Most practicums were full-time, however, when negotiated by the Fellow, part-time placements were also a possibility. Until Year 3, practicums tended to be six months long, however, IREX received mixed feedback on length. From the host viewpoint, six months could seem too short



to accomplish something meaningful or for the effort it took to orient a Fellow to the organization and project or program. On the flip side, Fellows often provided feedback that six months was too long to be away from their businesses or places of employment, especially after taking the six weeks off to be in the United States for the Fellowship. Starting in Year 4 due to budget constraints, and in Year 5 a collapsed timeline for implementation, IREX decreased the length of a practicum and increased the flexibility of how a placement was structured. Particularly for Years 4 and 5, practicums could be as short as a week, in the case of a job shadow experience or short-term consultancy or be as long as two months for a more traditional practicum, or longer if the host covered stipends past the two-month limit. While we know that hosts often preferred longer placements, by Year 4, IREX had a solid roster of host organizations that returned year after year to host Fellows and understood the value, even for a three month or less timeframe. Further, in the final two years of the program, IREX began intentionally seeking placements from alumni from earlier cohorts. For example, in the final year, 2017 Civic Leadership Fellow Bakary Fatty from The Gambia hosted 2018 Civic Leadership Fellow Teslima Jallow from The Gambia at his organization, the Commission on Political Debates.

In Year 3, due to an increased cohort size (500 Fellows to 1000 Fellows) but lack of an increased budget, practicums became limited and competitive opportunities. For the 2016 cohort, IREX introduced an application whereby Fellows expressed specific goals for their placement and the skills they wanted to gain had to be directly tied to their LDPs. It is also important to note that placements for cohorts 2014-

2017 were highly customized to fit Fellows' interests. In Year 5, however, the placement process for 2018 Fellows was supply-based, meaning that we secured placements from a cadre of hosts, and then advertised those placements and asked fellows to apply directly for specific opportunities. This model was used in the final year mainly due to a collapsed timeline for Fellows to be placed and complete their practicums due to program close-out.

A full list of all Practicums can be found in [Attachment 14](#).

Lessons Learned

Some trends that we identified and then applied adaptive management principles to adjust include the following:

- Seeking highly customized placements to fit Fellows' sector and skill areas was time consuming and required several discussions between hosts and Fellows to come to agreement on a scope. In the early years of the program, IREX would allow a Fellow to decline a placement, even after negotiating a scope, and then seek out additional placements for the Fellow to consider. When in Year 3 the interventions became limited and competitive, IREX also made a commitment to improve the communications and process for placements to ensure that Fellows were offered placements that were related to their articulated goals; and if a Fellow declined the placement after agreeing on a scope, they would not be provided with another placement option. IREX developed an application that enabled Fellows to clearly articulate their goals in relation to their LDPs, as well as the skills needed to reach those goals for the practicum so that IREX could find a placement that related to building the needed skills. IREX also worked more closely with each Fellow at the beginning of the placement process to set expectations, understand time or other constraints that may need to be considered when identifying a potential host.
- In May 2014 Microsoft and USAID signed an MOU indicating that Microsoft would support up to 100 internships per year in 16 sub-Saharan African countries. Microsoft provided over 80 internships to the 2014 cohort. However, after Year 1, Microsoft pulled back on that commitment due to internal issues and agreed to fulfill 100 total placements, which it did over the following two years. Microsoft was one of the few partners who was funding their placements fully and their change in commitment was a factor in how many practicum opportunities the program could fund over the life of the program. IREX and its implementing partners were successful in securing some funded placements or negotiated with hosts to cover local transport or some portion of their monthly stipend.
- When in Year 3 the cohort size doubled, and then in Year 4 the program budget decreased, IREX could not fund Fellows to relocate for practicums except in special circumstances. This limited our ability to find niche placements for Fellows from smaller countries where we had a very limited network of partners.
- The concept of an internship or practicum was not well known in some countries across the Continent which made finding substantive placements in those countries more difficult.

- For the 2014 and 2015 cohorts, Fellows merely had to indicate interest in a practicum and IREX would seek a placement. When an application process was introduced in Year 3 with the 2016 cohort (1,000 Fellows) IREX began to see a decline in the practicum interest that continued throughout the rest of the program. This decline in interest also spurred IREX to identify ways to make the program more flexible and responsive to Fellow needs such as offering shorter placements, job shadowing, and more consultancy type projects that were very focused and time sensitive. IREX also heeded feedback that Fellows had a greater desire to collaborate with each other by introducing a new intervention in Year 4 aimed at skills development and sharing – the Collaboration Fund Grant (CFG).

Practicums: Success Stories

As a result of her IREX facilitated practicum with Totohealth Tanzania, 2015 Fellow Hyasintha Ntuyeko, a Business & Entrepreneurship Fellow from Tanzania, developed research, communication, and management skills that she is still using to strengthen her organization four years later. A telecom engineer by training, Hyasintha is Founder and Managing Director of Kasole Secrets, which develops organically made sanitary pads for women. Totohealth uses mobile technology to help reduce maternal and child mortality and detect development abnormalities in the early stages. Given the focus on maternal health, the practicum was a perfect fit for Hyasintha.



Hyasintha taking Grade 8 students through a design session of Kasole Secret Glory pads in the outskirts of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

During the practicum, Hyasintha visited expectant women in health facilities and conducted focus group discussions to better understand the challenges they were facing and explore various myths around maternal health and healthcare facilities. Using the data she collected, Hyasintha played a key role in the design of two new Totohealth products: the clean delivery pack and the Totopack. Throughout the design process, Hyasintha worked with an array of stakeholders, strengthening her partnership development and negotiation skills. These skills were further strengthened throughout her practicum as she managed and tracked the performance of various interventions and worked closely with key partners to advance Totohealth’s mission. Further, she came to appreciate her own management skills, as she had never worked under a supervisor until her practicum. Finally, Hyasintha honed her program and grant management skills and learned about the social enterprise model of providing health products at an affordable price to low income communities.

She continues to use the skills she developed at her practicum in her daily activities at Kasole Secrets. For example, the new sanitary napkin products that she released last year were born of the same design process used at Totohealth. Due to the communication skills she strengthened at Totohealth, Hyasintha developed and integrated a new communications mechanism – the Team Accountability Plan (TAP) – which helps her team stay focused and mitigate challenges as they arise. The experience of engaging directly with stakeholders has also proved beneficial to her own work. Through the networks she developed during her practicum, Kasole Secrets has managed to significantly expand and grow the business and impact beyond Tanzania as Kasole Secrets pads are now available on Amazon – in the U.S. and South Africa as well. Kasole Secrets has since received two grants from the U.S. Embassy in Tanzania.



2017 Fellow Amani Katana from Kenya with participants after a facilitation session with the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs, a project his company, YEPI, collaborated with the U.S. Embassy to facilitate.

As a result of his IREX facilitated practicum with Adam Smith International, 2017 Fellow Amani Katana, a Business & Entrepreneurship Fellow from Kenya, received hands on experience that has enabled him to increase the visibility of his organization, the Youth Empowerment Program Initiative (YEPI). YEPI is a youth-led organization working to address unemployment, poverty, and violent extremism in the coast region of Kenya. Adam Smith International is a global company that delivers impact, value, and lasting change through economic growth and government reform. During the practicum, Amani learned about low-cost, high-impact programming, organizational development, how to mobilize resources for

organizations with sustainability issues, and how to position a small organization for the global stage. At Adam Smith International, Mr. Katana also learned how to harness the power of branding through social media. These new insights have helped his organization, YEPI, gain global visibility. Because of this new visibility, YEPI has held events that were cosponsored by Managers Without Borders and Kenya's Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission.

After his practicum, using his newly strengthened skills, Amani initiated a startup challenge where young entrepreneurs would have an opportunity to pitch their ideas to funders. The challenge brought additional visibility to YEPI and Amani was named among the Top 100 Most Positively Inspiring African Youth. Additionally, he received the "I Change Nation Golden Rule Award" and, most recently, he emerged the First Runner Up in the National Environmental Conservation Champion Award in Kenya.

Collaboration Fund Grants

Methods and Approaches Used Overtime

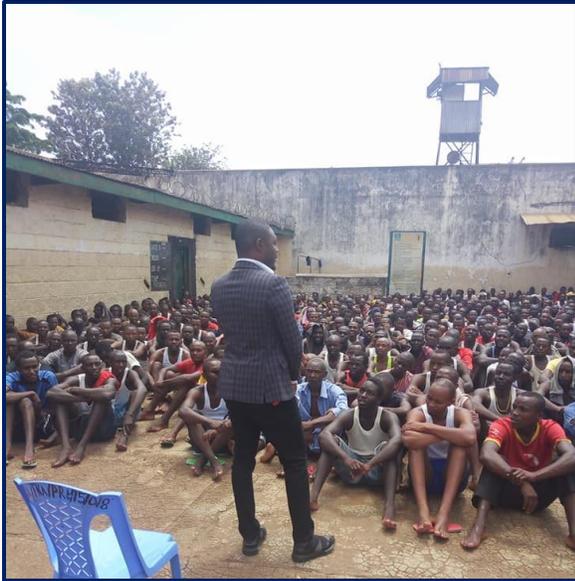
The Collaboration Fund Grant (CFG) was a small grant intending to facilitate deeper collaborative engagement between Fellows within the current cohort and Fellows from the current and/or past cohorts. It enabled a Fellow to travel within Africa to another Fellow/Alumni for up to two weeks to collaborate on a project, business, or learning.

IREX piloted the CFG with the 2017 cohort. The grant was intended to directly address feedback IREX received from Fellows that they wanted more opportunities to collaborate and draw



On a Collaboration Fund Grant, 2017 Fellows XX and XX trained traditional birth attendants and community health volunteers on methods to reduce maternal and child mortality in Kenya.

on expertise from within the Fellow network. We also saw through program evaluation data that cross-border, especially cross-regional, connections between Fellows often was limited to who Fellows met at their U.S. institutes, but that other opportunities to connect, especially in person, to work together were desired but often were not accessible because of the resources needed to do that. To address this, IREX piloted CFGs by inviting 2017 Fellows to apply for grants to support their travel to another Fellows' site either in another country or in some cases the same country but where the distances were difficult to overcome financially, to collaborate on a project, share learning, or transfer skills.



On a Collaboration Fund Grant, 2017 Fellow Harrison Emefiena Gwamnishu from Nigeria traveled to Kenya to collaborate with Iddi Mustafa Makorani on a project that aimed to reduce recidivism rates in Kenyan prisons.

In November 2017, 2017 Fellows were invited to apply for these grants, which covered up to two weeks of travel to another Fellow’s business/project. The Fellows overwhelmingly responded to that call with 93 applications received. For the pilot round, IREX selected 12 grantees in collaboration with USAID. Given the response and the quality of applications, IREX granted another 12 CFGs for a total of 24 grants in its pilot year. Fellows participating in CFGs were asked to share their experience at the Continental Conference held in Johannesburg, South Africa in June 2018.

In the final year of the program, IREX increased the number of CFGs available given its popularity with Fellows, the positive impact the projects made in the local communities, and the way the intervention supported strengthening the network of Fellows and skills-sharing. Based on Fellow feedback from the pilot,

IREX made several changes to the grant program including, enabling grant funds to be used to support the project (supplies, venue, etc.) in the form of a stipend for the grantee in addition to travel and providing a small stipend for the Fellow collaborator in addition to the Fellow grantee. In the end, Fellows showed more interest in CFGs than practicums, so with our limited resources in the final year of the program, we prioritized providing more grants than practicums.

Collaboration Fund Grants: Success Stories

As a result of their IREX-facilitated Collaboration Fund Grant, 2017 Fellows Oluwafemi Kochoni, a Business & Entrepreneurship Fellow from Benin, and Isaac Quaidoo, a Business & Entrepreneurship Fellow from Ghana are building a network of beekeeping businesses across sub-Saharan Africa. In May 2018, on a CFG, Oluwafemi traveled from Benin to Ghana to attend workshops, conduct field visits, and hold community dialogues on beekeeping. As a result of this collaboration, Oluwafemi learned about value addition and the importance of building partnerships with other beekeeping companies. The pair presented their project at the 2018 Continental Conference, an experience they say greatly added to their project. Following their presentation at the Conference, they received a grant from the US Embassy in Benin to



Oluwafemi’s team training community members.

conduct a beekeeping training program in Oluwafemi's rural community. The training, a continuation of the duo's CFG project, focused on women, training 20 families on beekeeping start up kits.

Oluwafemi and Isaac's original CFG project was additionally bolstered by the presence of American professional Bob Wolff, an Iowa-based beekeeper, who was in Ghana on a State Department-funded Reciprocal Exchange Grant at the time. Bob helped Oluwafemi and Isaac to design the training curriculum and hives. Now, Bob is supporting them to establish a Continent-wide network of Fellows in Benin, Ghana, Uganda, and South Africa who are within the beekeeping sector.

Both Isaac and Oluwafemi are enthusiastic about the next steps of their collaboration. Oluwafemi intends to set up a value-added bee product market platform for beekeepers from his community and across northern Benin. And, Isaac will be travelling to Benin in March 2019 for them to continue the work they have started. They envision building a network of beekeeping businesses across Africa.

Engaging youth in video game development to tell the African story



2017 Fellow and Collaboration Fund Grant awardee Eyrām Tawia from Ghana leads a STEAM workshop for youth in Zimbabwe.

2017 Fellows Chenai Tzorayi of Zimbabwe, who co-runs Nduna Girls, and Eyrām Tawia of Ghana, co-founder of Leti Arts, held a STEAMAfrica (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) Game Development workshop in Zimbabwe. The workshop exposed 47 youth to ICT careers, emphasized the importance of team work in game creation, and took participants through each stage of the design process, from concept creation to the technical skills needed to bring a game to life. Chenai and Eyrām continuously stressed the importance of telling the African story

through technology by incorporating African heroes into the world of video games. Through their work, Chenai and Eyrām hope to change the gaming industry in Africa by bringing more youth into the field. The workshop received local media coverage, including [Tech Talk radio](#) and [Techzim](#). For more on the workshop, check out this radio interview and this article by Techzim.

All Collaboration Fund Grants can be found in [Attachment 15](#).

Lessons Learned

- Cross-border learning and collaborative opportunities provide a very tangible appreciation of development challenges across the Continent.
- Fellows experienced and learned from the challenges of project management and implementation, while having an enriching experience that created network linkages that can continue to be leveraged.
- Despite our best efforts about being transparent about how much funding would be available for each CFG, Fellows still had expectations that funds would cover the entire project as opposed to be a collaboration between IREX/USAID and the collaborating Fellows as partners in funding the initiative rather than IREX/USAID funding the entire project.

4. Tailored Leadership Development

Mentoring

Through the Years: Mentorship Tools Developed and Adapted
Mentor Toolkit
Mentee Toolkit
Peer Mentorship Toolkit
<i>The Mentorship Tools can be found in Attachment 16.</i>

Methods and Approaches Used Overtime

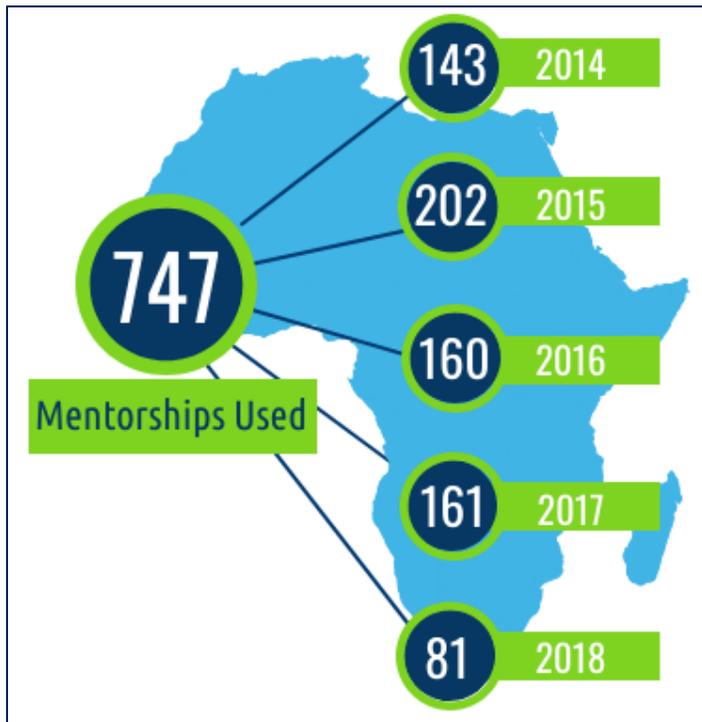
IREX introduced the mentoring program as an opportunity for Fellows to be matched with a professional for monthly mentoring sessions based on Fellow interests and professional development needs. Mentoring provided tailored leadership development and an opportunity for the Fellow to focus on issues or areas of development based on their specific needs and circumstances. Fellows had varied motivations for requesting a mentor and IREX used Fellows' feedback to create tailored mentorship matches. Some sought mentors of a specific gender or wanted industry-specific guidance, while others sought professional or leadership support or advice on creating a work-life balance, and others were seeking advice on aspects of expanding or starting initiatives. Once a Fellow was matched and both mentor and mentee agreed to work together, each was provided with an IREX developed mentor or mentee toolkit as well as a mentoring agreement for both parties to review and sign. The toolkits IREX developed were a set of documents that assisted with structuring each meeting and was based on best practices for mentoring, compiled into an easy-to-read kit. The toolkit was meant to be used in parts and as a guide, where mentors and mentees were able to pull what was relevant to their situation and use it to create rich interactions.

The commitment both mentor and mentee made to each other was to meet either virtually or in person for a minimum of once a month for six months and then they were free to continue working with each other beyond the formal arrangement, however IREX monitored the relationship for six months only. Like with practicums, in Year 3 when the cohort doubled in size to 1000 Fellows, IREX introduced an application process for mentorships, tied to LDP goals, and mentorships became limited and competitive. Key institutional partners for mentorships included PricewaterhouseCoopers, which provided nine mentors, and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, which also provided nine peer mentors. Other mentor institutions included Microsoft, VSO, USAID, Technobrain, Standard Chartered Bank, Pyxera Global, Open Society Foundation, Oracle, Ecobank and MasterCard Foundation.



2018 Fellow Benedicte Joan from DRC with her mentor, Margaret Jackson of Rainbow Consult

IREX sought to pair Fellows with peers from other Fellowship programs where possible. This was the case with the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation. IREX also made calls for Fellows who were interested in being paired with an RLC alumni for peer mentorship and passed that information on to the RLCs. Like with traditional mentorships, IREX developed a Peer Mentorship toolkit to support these relationships. In Years 4 and 5, IREX also intentionally sought alumni who wanted to mentor or be peer mentors with other Fellows from that year's cohort. Fellow feedback was that they wanted more opportunities to connect with other Fellows and wanted to capitalize more on the expertise and experience within the Fellows network.



In 2017, IREX piloted mentoring circles, which gave multiple Fellows the opportunity to receive advice and guidance from a professional in their field in a group setting, thus benefitting from the mentor and the feedback from their peers. Mentoring circles also offered another opportunity for Fellows to network. Some partners such as Oracle hosted events for Fellows whereby a senior executive would meet with a small group of Fellows, provide some group mentoring, ask Fellows to pitch on their work, and then have a networking session with additional Oracle staff.

IREX also developed different ways to more effectively engage mentors, particularly after receiving feedback through the

mentorship exit surveys that program mentors were interested in engaging with each other and sharing. IREX sent periodic newsletters to program partners such as mentors and practicum hosts to feature ways they were impacting Fellows and provide resources on topics of interest. IREX also organized a webinar featuring a dedicated mentor who wanted to share best practices for mentoring that he hoped would help others get the most out of their mentoring relationships. And, at the end of each cohort year, starting in year three, IREX distributed mentor acknowledgement certificates.

Mentorship Innovation Highlight | In February 2018, IREX facilitated a webinar focused on the benefits of building mentoring relationships featuring an all-star Mandela Washington Fellowship mentor Philip Waweru. The virtual discussion was attended by 20 individuals, including Fellows and mentors. Philip discussed the various kinds of mentoring that exists, the challenges associated with mentoring, and the numerous ways in which he has personally benefited from mentoring Mandela Washington Fellows. Phillip has



mentored two Fellows, Eric Amunga and Maureen Changawa. His organization, the National Organization for Peer Educators (NOPE), has hosted four Fellows for practicums. "I believe in being genuinely committed to the mentee's goals," said Phillip. "This way, I am able to identify where they want to go and I am able to guide them through how to navigate their different challenges."



Fellows, IREX staff, and All star mentor Arthur Gwagwa at the mentoring session

Mentorship Innovation Highlight | On October 11th, 2018, IREX facilitated a mentoring circle with All Star mentor Arthur Gwagwa in Nairobi, Kenya. Arthur, who partnered with the Fellowship for the past three years, is a Senior Research Fellow at Strathmore University in Kenya. His work spans research, policy, and practice in internet policy and governance, as well as cybersecurity, freedom of expression, and privacy. He met with four 2018 Fellows and all four Fellows found the experience insightful and useful for their respective professions.

The success of the session led to Arthur create a panelist opportunity at the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on December 13th, 2018. 2018 Fellow Juliet Odhiambo from Kenya, who attended the event on a Speaker Travel Grant, spoke on “Minimizing algorithmic bias and algorithmic discrimination in the digital economy.”

Mentorships: Success Stories

As a result of her IREX-facilitated mentorship, 2018 Public Management Fellow Moussa Minda Virginie from Cameroon became more engaged with her local community and established partnerships with organizations working to educate women and youth to curb gender-based violence (GBV) in Cameroon. Virginie was matched with Sahr Abraham Grass-Sessay, a leading African policy and programming expert. During the mentorship period,



2018 Fellow Moussa Minda Virginie during a school tour in Maroua, Cameroon to sensitize primary school pupils on their role in curbing GBV.

Virginie received guidance from Sahr Abraham on Organizational Management and being an authentic leader. Sehr also proved instrumental in assisting Virginie with expanding her knowledge base and strengthening her organization by referring her to various individuals and organizations working in the GBV space. She was motivated by

her mentor to push herself out of her comfort zone to build relationships with other organizations. At the beginning of the mentorship period, Virginie wanted to learn how to advocate and mobilize young women for change in Cameroon. Now that the formal mentorship period has ended, Virginie has made progress with establishing a “generation hope center,” whose vision will be a center of pedagogical and psychological help to GBV victims in Cameroon. She hopes that the center will involve young people to fight against violence. Resource Mobilization skills she gained from the mentorship have been instrumental in guiding Virginie to come up with community activities that she has been able to mobilize school fees for the GBV victims still in school. This has in turn engaged her community to change their perception of protection and preservation of the environment for fight against climate change through education.

Throughout the formal mentorship period, Virginie also strengthened her business skills, work ethic, interpersonal skills, and communication skills. Recently, Virginie received several offers to finalize partnerships with local youth education organizations that her mentor had proposed to her. Beyond this, the mentorship has impacted Virginie’s life positively, encouraging her to become more active in her community.



2016 Fellow Dr. Obinna Ebirim from Nigeria with his mentor, Neima Nora Candy.

As a result of his IREX-facilitated virtual mentorship, 2016 Public Management Fellow Dr. Obinna Ebirim from Nigeria won a grant from the US Mission in Nigeria to integrate community reading rooms and clubs into his Impact Driven Young Leaders Initiative (IDYL), an initiative that seeks to promote and implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in a manner that will maximize local and community impact. Dr. Obinna was matched with Neima Nora Candy, a Health Manager for the Liberian Red Cross Society. At their only face-to-face meeting during the mentorship period, Neima shared her idea of IDYL developing community reading rooms and clubs like the ones she had successfully implemented in Liberia. Dr. Obinna found the idea extremely relevant to SDG 4, “ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning,” and the work IDYL does. With Neima’s guidance, Dr. Obinna developed a concept note and a grant proposal, which he submitted to the US Mission in Nigeria. Ultimately, Dr. Obinna was awarded a grant for over

\$7,000 to fund the project. He noted that by the end of the project, IDYL will be well positioned to receive other funding opportunities, having successfully managed a grant from the US Mission.

As a result of her IREX facilitated mentorship, Aurelie Yapi, a 2016 Fellow from Côte d'Ivoire, was hired for a short-term consultancy with the World Bank. Before her mentorship, Aurelie was working at a small investment company and facing numerous challenges to her professional growth and development. She decided to search for other job opportunities within English-speaking financial development institutions but struggled to find viable openings. Her mentor, Ben Andoh, Group Head of Internal Control for Ecobank Transnational Incorporated, provided invaluable career coaching and support. Ben ultimately encouraged her to apply to numerous young professional programs initiated by international banks and financial international development institutions. In the end, she achieved success with the Young Professionals Program at the World Bank Group, where she started working in June 2017.



2016 Fellow Aurelie Yapi from Cote d'Ivoire

A list containing all Mentorships can be found in [Attachment 17](#).

Lessons Learned

- When IREX introduced an application process and required applicants to articulate the goals they were working toward and how that related to their LDP, IREX was better able to match Fellows to the right mentor.
- IREX encouraged Fellows and their mentors to set expectations for the mentorship and identify how they would be accountable to each other. By starting off the mentorship in this way, it enabled the relationship to focus on the mentorship support rather than the logistics for meeting.
- Just like Fellows had diverse reason for wanting to be mentored, mentors had different reasons why they chose to be a mentor and what they hoped to gain from the experience, including connecting to other mentors and benefitting from shared learning on mentorships.
- Creating opportunities where star mentors could engage with the broader Fellow community such as speaking at the Conferences encouraged their commitment.

Leadership Development Plans



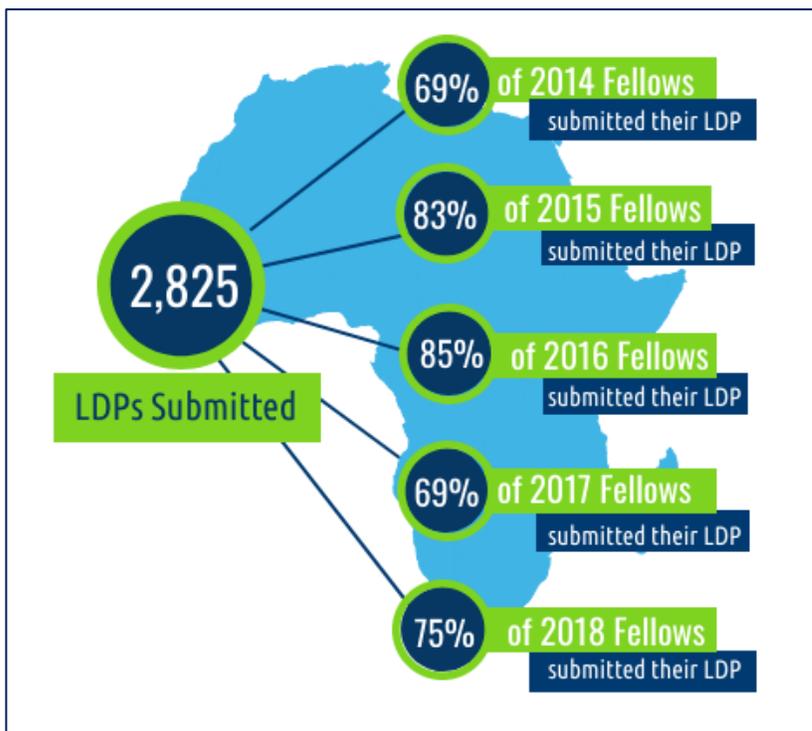
“[The Leadership Development Plan] enabled me to look back and view my personal and professional growth [and] has helped me see how achievable my goals are, contrary to before using the LDP, where goals seemed large, unclear, and unattainable. The LDP helped me visualize the future I wanted to create for myself and my community and this aided me in zeroing down the details of a pathway to achieving my desired goals.”

2017 Mandela Washington Fellow, Cathy Kerubo Ogeto, Kenya

The Leadership Development Plan (LDP), which was initially called the Individual Leadership Plan, was developed by IREX as a tested tool that supported continued professional growth as a leader and helped guide Fellows to create positive change in their home community, country, region, and in Africa. The tool draws on two leadership paradigms - Servant Leadership and the Social Change Model of Leadership – and the principles of Ubuntu, which was central to Nelson Mandela’s concept of leadership. IREX required Fellows to complete an LDP and submit it to IREX on a designated platform for peer review to be eligible to participate in any of the USAID-funded follow-on activities. The LDPs served as leadership guides for the Fellows and were used by Fellows and IREX to inform discussions with mentors and to develop goals for their practicums. Fellows were encouraged, but not required to review each other’s LDPs and provide constructive feedback. Fellows were also encouraged to revisit their LDPs often to benchmark their progress and update them to reflect new realities. Given the relative simplicity of tool, time and again Fellows mentioned how the LDP played a critical role in their successes.

Methods and Approaches Used Overtime

For the 2014 cohort, the LDP was first introduced to the Fellows during the Presidential Summit in Washington, DC. Fellows were required to complete their Leadership Development Plans to access the follow-on professional development activities available to



them through the program. The LDP was designed as a practical, user-friendly document that links the principles of servant leadership to each of the Mandela Washington Fellow's personal goals, goals for their community, and vision of themselves as change-makers in their field. The LDP template employed guided questions and provided space for completing a summary of goals, choices for self-identifying positive leadership skills, and finally a reflective portion to which Fellows were asked to return a year after initial completion to compare the plan with actual accomplishments. Fellows were instructed to post their LDPs on a closed Moodle website, and encouraged to comment and provide substantive feedback on their colleagues' plans.

Based on feedback from Fellows and leadership experts, and prior to distribution to the 2015 cohort, the LDP was revised to better meet the needs of Fellows. From the 2015 cohort onwards, the LDP was first distributed in hard copy to Fellows during Public Affairs Section (PAS)-led pre-departure orientations, and Fellows had the opportunity to complete a first draft at their host university institutes in June and July. Once they returned home following the Summit, IREX deployed electronic versions of the LDP to Fellows and encouraged them to complete them and post them for peer feedback. For the 2016 cohort onwards, IREX used a different platform for submitting and posting LDPs. The new platform, OBA, provided a range of additional functionality to enable peer feedback and sharing information such as through webinars that could be hosted through the platform. Fellows were provided with a link to request and create an account on Oba and were asked to submit a draft of their LDPs, to be eligible for the USAID-funded programs by mid-October. The deadline aimed to encourage Fellows not to lose momentum once returning home, and also served to encourage thinking and planning for follow-on activities like mentorships and practicums.

The Leadership Development Plan can be found in [Attachment 18](#).

Lessons Learned

- The LDP was a powerful tool that helped Fellows reflect and plan in a meaningful way. By writing down goals and what they needed to reach their goals, they were able to check themselves as they made decisions about what to prioritize, put resources into, or opportunities to pursue based on what they had planned out for the year and onwards.
- Requiring applications for other interventions to reflect and be in line with their goals articulated in their LDPs helped Fellows remain focused on their priorities.
- The LDP is a tool Fellows can use within their workplaces or organizations, and programming to help others focus on their leadership development and professional goals.

C. Administrative Updates

Interagency Coordination

IREX supported interagency coordination on the Mandela Washington Fellowship on multiple levels. Given the high profile nature of the program, the funding streams from multiple agencies to implement the initiative, and the involvement of the White House in the early years of the program, IREX worked directly with USAID to employ several approaches to keeping information about the program flowing to all concerned within the U.S. government.

Regional Conferences

At the Regional Conferences from 2014-2016, IREX coordinated a session dedicated to exposing the Fellows to the various opportunities available to them, both through the U.S. Government and through U.S. Government partners, after their year of USAID-sponsored professional development came to a close. While the panelists varied between regions and years, during these sessions, Fellows learned how, as MWF alumni, they can both continue to be active members of the YALI community and also access various forms of support via USAID, the U.S. Department of State, the YALI Network, the Department of Agriculture, and from Years 1-3 with Career Core for coaching.

Planning Meetings

Following each Regional Conference and the Continental Conference, IREX convened a one-day planning meeting bringing together key USG officials from regional and bilateral USAID missions, U.S. Embassy staff from the respective regions, and USAID and State Department officials who attended the conferences. The aim of these meetings was to debrief on the conferences, provide an overview of programming past and future, and open the floor to discuss communications and other relevant issues to try and improve information sharing and coordination amongst all U.S. Government stakeholders.

Mandela Washington Fellowship Summit

As mentioned previously, IREX facilitated follow-on programming sessions during the annual Summit in Washington, D.C. This required IREX to liaison across agencies and offices to bring together a “Next Steps” session that not only discussed the importance of the LDP and the USAID-funded follow-on opportunities, but also provided information about other opportunities within the U.S. Government for support. The panels were usually comprised of representatives from USAID, the U.S. Department of State including the Alumni Affairs Office and Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP), and USADF.

Communications

IREX used a variety of communication methods to foster interagency coordination around the Fellowship. On a bi-weekly basis, IREX compiled an update on progress towards indicator targets, success and impact stories, and other newsworthy and event-related highlights, and sent this to appropriate staff at USAID, State Department, USADF, and the National Security Council (until the end of 2016 only). IREX staff also participated in monthly partnership coordination calls with the USAID Partnerships Specialist and outreach staff from each of the RLCs. When these calls were first initiated, State Department and USADF

staff also participated to coordinate outreach to the numerous private partners involved with YALI. IREX also used social media, including Facebook and Twitter, to inform Fellows about YALI Network initiatives.

Local Implementing Partners



The Southern Africa Trust with members of YALI Alumni Comoros in Moroni, Comoros in May 2019.



Members of LEAD Rwanda pose with staff from VSO Kenya in Kigali, Rwanda.

Over the five years implementing the Mandela Washington Fellowship, IREX partnered with local organizations that had strong regional networks in each of the three regions of sub-Saharan Africa and a commitment to youth leadership and inclusive development. IREX launched a request for Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for local implementing partners soon after the award started in May 2014 which closed on June 13, 2014. The request focused on five countries – three regional office sites: Ghana, Kenya and South Africa plus two additional sites to support linguistic diversity; Senegal for francophone Africa and Mozambique for lusophone Africa. IREX received 70 EOIs and made its final decisions in collaboration with USAID based on site visits, reference checks, and due diligence analysis. Ultimately, IREX selected three local implementing partners, and after discussions with USAID put a hold on linguistic partners as the submissions from Senegal and Mozambique were limited and the three selected local implementing partners met the needs of francophone and lusophone Fellows through their regional networks. IREX signed agreements finalizing the partnerships with all three local partners during Quarters 3 and 4 of the first program year.

In West Africa, IREX partnered with the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI)³ and co-located with them in Accra, Ghana. In East Africa, IREX partnered with Voluntary Services International (VSO)⁴ and co-located with them in Nairobi, Kenya. Initially, the partnership was developed with the local VSO subsidiary, VSO Jitolee. However, in 2016-2017, VSO restructured itself internationally and VSO Jitolee was absorbed into VSO International and IREX continued its partnership without interruption. In Southern Africa, IREX initially partnered with the Afrika Leadership Development Institute (LEADAfrika) for the first year of implementation and co-located with them in Pretoria, however the organization did not have the capacity for the work and IREX in consultation with USAID decided not to renew their subaward and instead, IREX sought a new partner for southern Africa and in September 2016, signed a subaward with The Southern Africa Trust (the Trust)⁵. IREX co-located with the Trust for the first year of the partnership. However, when the Trust bought its own premises and moved in late 2017, the location was not convenient for IREX staff and the decision was made not to co-locate and IREX rented a small office in Rosebank.

The partnerships with VSO, WACSI, and the Trust were similar in nature. Aside from locating together (except in southern Africa as described above), implementing partners seconded two full-time staff members to IREX to support implementation. These two staff members, along with support from an executive liaison from each organization provided a range of support mainly in the following areas: outreach to potential practicum hosts and mentors, negotiating placements for Fellows, logistical support for interventions such as STGs, CFGs, practicums, and conferences, as well as monitoring interventions. Implementing partner staff also provided their expertise to support the RAB and in the final year, technical support to alumni associations. IREX strove to incorporate staff from implementing partners into a single implementation team per region. In the early years, partner staff supported program intervention differently depending on the region. However, in Years 3 and 4, IREX worked to harmonize implementing partner staff roles across the regions and placed greater responsibility for implementing distinct pieces of

³ WACSI began operations in 2007 with a mission to strengthen the institutional and operational capacity of civil society in West Africa. WACSI designs and delivers professional training, mentoring, and coaching to strengthen the knowledge and skills that civil society organizations need to enhance their professionalism and efficiency, and to contribute meaningfully to important policy discussions. Through running an excellent in-house internship program for talented West Africans, WACSI developed an expert understanding of the essential components of a successful internship experience, which, coupled with WACSI's extensive regional network of partner organizations, have been invaluable to IREX as it placed Fellows with practicum hosts and mentors on the continent.

⁴ VSO International has over 50 years of experience working in Kenya (the majority as a locally registered entity called VSO-Jitolee) to fight poverty and champion the inclusion of society's disadvantaged members through the promotion of volunteerism. The organization works at the local, national, regional, and pan-African levels in the areas of education, health, and secure livelihoods. VSO routinely recruits and places international youth volunteers and fellows with host organizations. Not only has VSO experience and expertise served as an excellent resource for advancing the Fellows' practical learning, but it has been an ideal partner to foster an even deeper commitment to volunteerism and community service among Mandela Washington Fellows.

⁵ Established in 2005 to respond to high levels of poverty and inequality, the Southern Africa Trust (the Trust) has as its primary mission to widen and deepen regional integration so that policies can work for the poor. It does this by navigating the ever changing and challenging socio-economic and political environments globally, as well as regionally, with a particular focus on Southern Africa through grant making and policy dialogue-brokering functions anchored on the benefits of regional integration for the poor and marginalized. The Trust brings together the public, private and civil society sectors for evidence-based advocacy, dialogue and capability enhancement of key stakeholders in the whole value chain of the policy process, including conception, formulation and adoption.

the program into partner subawards. For example, whereas in the first years of the program IREX staff worked closely with partner staff on outreach and placement negotiations, in the final years of the program, implementing partners were responsible for delivering on practicum and mentorship placements from outreach to finalization. IREX also encouraged its partners to find mutually beneficial ways to involve Fellows in their work, or include them in relevant events, which each did to varying degrees through involving Fellows in policy forums, multilateral meetings, and other sector specific events with their partners.

Some examples of how our implementing partners have leveraged their networks to benefit the Mandela Washington Fellowship are recounted below:

WACSI

- In Year 1, WACSI invited six Fellows to speak at its regional consultative meetings themed, *National Multi-Sectoral Meetings on Drug Policy Reform in West Africa*, which were held in Ghana, Benin, and Senegal.
- In May 2018, WACSI invited three Fellows from the Civic Leadership and Public Management tracks to participate in the African Development Bank's (AFDB) first-ever joint forum with civil society entitled "Accelerating Africa's Industrialization: A Panacea for Youth Unemployment." The forum, which took place in Ajidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, attracted over 250 participants from civil society, academia, government institutions, and regional organizations across Africa. Nana Asantewa Afadzinu, the Executive Director of WACSI, moderated the session with the Fellows, including 2015 Fellow Sefora Kodjo, 2017 Fellow Yao Job Yao, both of Côte d'Ivoire; and Aude Romeo Tapsoba, a 2016 Fellow from Burkina Faso. The panel also included Dr Benjamin Olagboye, a Senior Democracy and Governance Specialist at USAID. The platform offered the Fellows extensive visibility and positioned them as experts. One of the key recommendations made by joint civil society groups was the need for AFDB to support and promote inclusive youth development and minority groups in governance across Africa.
- WACSI funded the participation of six Mandela Washington Fellows to attend a continental learning event held in Accra, Ghana. *Shared Learning Convening on Alternative Funding Models*, held in partnership with the Innovation for Change (I4C) Hub Afrique, took place on November 26 – 28, 2018. Israel Djonabaye, a 2018 Fellow from Chad, Olakunle Joel Adewale, a 2015 Fellow from Nigeria and Emefa Kpegba, a 2016 Fellow from Togo, took part in a roundtable discussion during the event. The Fellows shared their resource mobilization and social enterprise business models with an audience that included participants from diverse sectors including agri-business, customer service, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)
- WACSI hosted ten Fellows for virtual practicums on the TechSoup initiative during the 2018 cohort year.
- WACSI also organized a post-convening training on Proposal Writing and Communicating Impact for 20 selected Mandela Washington Fellows from 14 countries from June 14-15, 2019

VSO

- VSO International obtained sponsors for the EA Regional Conference 2017 pitch competition and the partner reception from Satguru, IBIZ Afrika, Carlson Wagon-lit, M-KOPA Solar, General Electric (GE) Africa, and Nairobi Garage, totaling \$12,100.
- VSO used their organizational network to provide both mentorship and practicum placements with other VSO country offices and staff.
- VSO used their network connections to bring a partner to add to a group mentoring session recently, who provided capacity building in resource mobilization.

Southern Africa Trust

- Sponsored, Vwanganji Bowa, a 2016 Zambian Fellow to participate in the Global Summit for Community Philanthropy which took place on 1 – 2 December 2016 in Johannesburg.
- The Trust's previous Chief Executive, Bhekinkosi Moyo, facilitated an online discussion on African Philanthropy with Fellows across the region in 2017.
- The Trust facilitated an STG opportunity for Situmbeko Wambulawae, a 2016 Fellow from Zambia, to participate in the Southern Africa Trust/Mail and Guardian Drivers of Change Summit on March 2, 2017.
- Invited Fellows to attend events such as the launch of the Gender Links' Gender Perspective on South Africa Local Government Elections Report 2016; the 2nd Regional Widows Forum in the Mining Sector, hosted by the Southern African Miners Association and its affiliate Botswana Labour Migrants Association; the SADC Protocol@Work Summit and Awards 2016 – 2017 hosted by Gender Links in collaboration with the Capricorn District Municipality in Limpopo province, South Africa; the Southern Africa Trust, and the Graça Machel Trust, co-convened a Working Group and Policy Dialogue to discuss key matters relating to the Kenya Supreme Court's decision on the presidential results and implications for governance and elections in Africa;
- The Trust facilitated a funding opportunity for Adele Boadzo, a 2016 Energy Fellow from South Africa through the Ukhamba Giving Circle. Adele raised R 131,500 (approx. \$9,500) during the event towards her community-based solar projects. She is the founder of Hope Rises Solar, an organization that empowers women to distribute and install solar technologies to transform their communities.

In the final year of the program, IREX involved its implementing partners in the co-creation of the activities and support for alumni association performance improvement beyond the support they provided for mentorships, practicums, and logistical support for all interventions. Partner staff helped design and facilitate sessions for the OPI workshop held in February 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya with the six semi-finalist associations. Once the finalists were selected, each partner worked closely with the association in its region to provide mentoring and direct technical assistance based on the performance improvements that each association selected to focus their efforts. Partner staff communicated regularly with association leadership, traveled to their sites to provide in-person trainings, and acted as an accountability partner to

keep the associations on track to meet their performance goals and implement a project for which they received grant funding, as part of the intervention supporting alumni associations. Partner staff also participated in an in-person learning retrospective in Washington, D.C. in July, along with alumni association representatives to distill learning from the process. Please see page xx for more information on the OPI work with alumni associations.

When the program began in 2014, in conjunction with USAID and the White House, IREX planned to build the capacity of our implementing partners to take over field implementation of the program by Year 3, and phase out the IREX Regional Managers. Early on all realized that the complexities of the program, and its high-profile nature, would make it difficult to phase out IREX's field presence. Instead, IREX incrementally gave more implementation responsibility to its partners over time and slowly phased out its Regional Managers at the end of Year 3 in Ghana and Year 4 in Kenya, with IREX field oversight maintained by the Deputy Chief of Party, who was located in South Africa. Years 1 – 3, IREX had budget allocations available for capacity building support for our implementing partners. IREX encouraged the partners to use the allocation for either trainings for staff related to managing and implementing USG awards, or technical assistance and support for organizational priorities. WACSI utilized both avenues and trained staff in USG Rules and Regulations, Financial Management, and Managing Sub-Awards. Additionally, IREX staff provided training and support in the areas of M&E and private sector partnership outreach. Before VSO Jitolee was absorbed into VSO International, staff attended trainings related to managing USG awards and funds. However, once it became VSO International, USAID did not approve further capacity support. The Trust became a partner towards the end of our ability to budget funds towards capacity support, however select team members were still able to attend the USAID financial management training and monitoring and evaluation training as part of the capacity development efforts.

Lessons Learned

IREX should have started these implementing partner relationships by clearly establishing the shared values and goals by which each organization approached the work;

- Without establishing shared values and goals from the outset, it took longer to establish the trust needed to give our partners more flexibility around implementation;
- Though each partner brought unique strengths, IREX should have established consistent staff roles across partners thus negating the need to streamline the partner role in Years 3 and 4;
- Co-locating and seconding partner staff to IREX were great ways to build an efficient and cohesive team in each region
- Co-creating, as we did on OPI, was valuable for the learning process, and enabled the partners to bring more of their expertise into the process from an early point and establish a direct and valuable working relationship with the alumni association in their region.

Staffing

During the course of the first year of the program, the IREX Mandela Washington Fellowship team increased its capacity both in D.C. as well as in the regional offices to fully staff the program. In Ghana, South Africa, and Kenya, all three Regional Managers were hired and most local staff were in place by May, 2015. Regional offices consisted of one IREX Regional Manager, an IREX Program Coordinator, an IREX Finance and Operations Manager, and two seconded partner staff co-locating with each implementing partner (this set up changed in South Africa over time with IREX having its own small office in lieu of co-location from late 2016).

In Washington, D.C., Nicole Mechem assumed the position of Chief of Party supported by a team of staff including a Partnerships Manager, a Senior Program Officer, a Communications Manager, a Program Officer, an M&E Officer, and two Program Coordinators/Associates. The staffing structure for the program remained fairly static in Washington, D.C. throughout the program with a few notable changes over the years. In 2016, a Deputy Chief of Party was named and in the final two years of the program, the staffing started to shrink as funding for the program decreased. In 2017, we phased out the Communications Manager. In 2018, we phased out the Partnerships Manager.

The field staffing structure also changed over time. As funding for program started to decrease in 2017, IREX phased out the Regional Manager position in Ghana and promoted our field Program Coordinator to lead the work in West Africa along with WACSI, while asking WACSI to more independently manage aspects of program implementation. In 2018, IREX phased out the East Africa Regional Manager, also in response to decreasing budget and given the strength of our local partner to more independently implement aspects of the program such as practicum and mentorship placements.

Around the same time as the Regional Managers were phased out in 2018, Cheryl Schoenberg assumed the position of Chief of Party, and the remaining Regional manager, Marcia Small based in South Africa, assumed the position of Deputy Chief of Party with oversight of all three IREX regional hubs.

In 2019, as the program neared to closing, IREX closed its Ghana and South Africa field offices in July and its Kenya office at the close of the award in early September.

Though IREX and its implementing partners had some staff turnover throughout the program, most notably a change in East Africa Regional Manager in Year 3, the majority of staff, particularly in the field, remained with the program throughout its implementation enabling institutional and programmatic continuity, as well as promoting a culture of adaptive management based on doing, reflecting, learning, and adjusting.

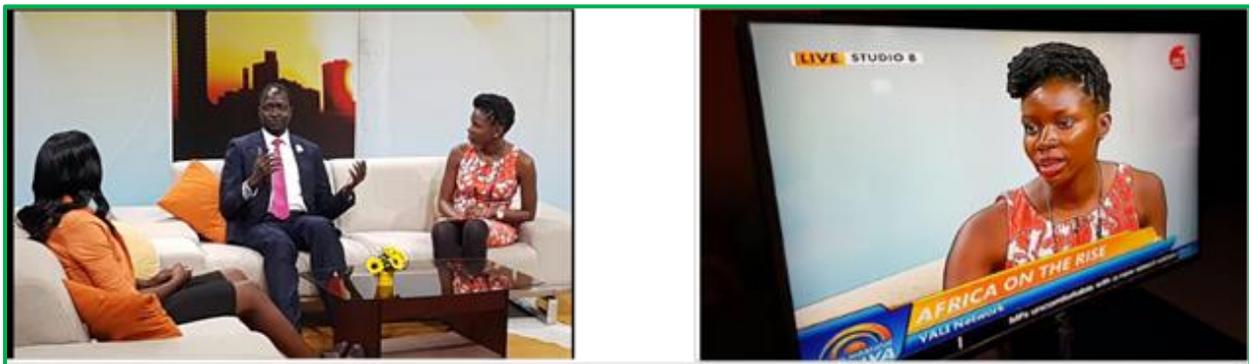
D. Communications

Understanding the significant role that communication and outreach played in making the Fellowship relatable and ensuring long-term sustainability, over the years, IREX pursued a cohesive communication and outreach strategy that employs a variety of tools to maximize Fellowship impact and reach the widest possible global audience. Since 2014, IREX has placed a major emphasis on Fellowship program communications to promote the Fellows and amplify their voices, connect Fellows to opportunities, and report on both the progress and impact of program activities well as the impact of the Fellowship as a whole. While IREX provided regular communications through bi-weekly updates, quarterly reporting, and other reports detailing findings from monitoring and evaluation activities and summaries of major events, we also worked in collaboration with the YALI ECA team at IREX to co-manage outward facing social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Regional and Continental Conference Communications

IREX made a concerted effort to amplify the Mandela Washington Fellowship and the Fellows around key events such as the Regional and Continental Conferences and used various platforms such as video, published articles, and social media to do so. In advance of regional or continental conferences, IREX communications efforts focused on preparation, coordination, outreach, and amplification efforts around the event.

As part of the Conference outreach strategy in Year 1, for example, IREX, USAID, and the U.S. Department of State issued joint press releases to amplify Conference outcomes and engaged with press. In Kenya, Fellows were invited to speak on Good Morning Kenya ahead of the 2015 East Africa Regional Conference as part of a segment on, “Africa on the Rise.”



2015 Fellows on Good Morning Kenya discussing the Fellowship and the work of young African leaders.



In Year 3, we partnered with Channels TV, who provided coverage of each Regional Conference in 2017, as well the 2017 Leadership Summit. Channels Television is an independent 24-hour news and media television channel based in Lagos, Nigeria with an audience of over 20 million viewers. See links to the Channels TV coverage below:

- East Africa: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rV2RQANprQ0&feature=youtu.be>
- West Africa: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YAdGyrnykk>
- Southern Africa: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZidNthl7cw&t=239s>

Channels Television has continued to cover subsequent Summits, and their full playlist of Mandela Washington Fellowship coverage can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLl6lvhbhEqwyrn0xld7yhaG-5F1Z9HBAD>

In addition to facilitating Fellow engagement with mainstream media and efforts to increase reach via social media, the program communications strategy in Year 1 through Year 4 focused on leveraging interview footage with Fellows collected during the Regional Conferences into compelling stories of change. These videos help showcase the work of Fellows while underscoring the importance of how USAID-supported interventions, specifically professional practicums, mentorships, LDPs, and Speaker Travel Grants are great platforms for Fellows to enrich their work. These videos have also been used to encourage the Fellows to participate in USAID-sponsored interventions. A full list of the Stories of Change can be found in the Monitoring and Evaluation section of this report. Below is a table demonstrating the “reach” (number of unique Twitter users that tweeted about the search term) and “impressions” (number of Twitter accounts on whose stream the search term appeared) for **#MWFCon15**, **#MWFFCon16**, **#MWFCon17**, and **#MWFCon18** at each Conference.

Through the Years: Conference Social Media Reach*		
Region	Reach	Impressions
2015 Regional Conferences		
East	932,000 accounts	19 million
Southern	435,000 accounts	6.4 million
West	450,000 accounts	5.1 million
2016 Regional Conferences		
East	919,000 accounts	7.5 million
Southern	1.2 million accounts	10.2 million
West	1.5 million accounts	10.2 million
2017 Regional Conferences		
East	2.1 million	15.8 million
Southern	855,000	17.7 million
West	668,000	5.8 million
2018 Continental Conference		
Continental	1.8 million	14.7 million

*social media reach was not tracked for the 2019 Regional Conferences.

In addition to the Stories of Change, IREX also created impact videos to highlight a Fellow's work around an issue and promote their success and the impact of the Fellowship on their success to a wide audience. In some cases, IREX both created an impact video and published a corresponding story to promote the wider aims of the program. The article and video below accompanies an article you can read [here](#) which highlight the work of a Fellow who combats violent extremism using art therapy.

- **Article:** <https://www.irex.org/success-story/engaging-youth-counter-violent-extremism-nigeria>
- **Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=In6XH8yaubQ&feature=youtu.be>

To view photos from the Conferences and other events over the years, click below:

- Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/washingtonfellowship/albums>

To view videos from the Conferences over the years, check out the playlists below:

2015 Regional Conferences:

- 2015 West Africa Regional Conference Playlist:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFsllmfpA9w&list=PLERqipzq3rRAK4YY7pfCsKE1OtvCBIpV>
- 2015 Southern Africa Regional Conference Playlist:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1uqAacoAvQ&list=PLERqipzq3rTwYJ5HB8z8mxRlg6-FpLz2>
- 2015 East Africa Regional Conference Playlist:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkwfATLsl7Y&list=PLERqipzq3rRH3UANEPZR-YnPFKsFegdf>

2016 Regional Conferences:

- 2016 West Africa Regional Conference Playlist:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDVgOEgEKgU&list=PLERqipzq3rQ66qx30eq_hQT0Mv_qOTi
- 2016 East Africa Regional Conference Playlist:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vHECec1da6o&list=PLERqipzq3rTCipUX4fAipi3vY0WpVOG6>
- 2016 Southern Africa Regional Conference Playlist: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9n7I9-3deW0&list=PLERqipzq3rQByklmhoswmg_B2DrZBdV5

2017 Regional Conferences:

- 2017 West Africa Regional Conference Playlist:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pzn8xQEAE&list=PLERqipzq3rT-A25Yd1ZQbtc96e_fkjy
- 2017 East Africa Regional Conference Playlist:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9BVstIOcno&list=PLERqipzq3rRKMbeWLMrtN8lmdOefGjx>
- 2017 Southern Africa Regional Conference Playlist:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVmOFomi07E&list=PLERqipzq3rTBldcjeilBlnuDSVObafUS>

2018 Continental Conference:

- 2018 Continental Conference Playlist: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3CP9f4kGNk&list=PLERqipzq3rSsqbt6rsMpxwTktzY4m1n>

Promoting the Fellowship in the Media

IREX also promoted Fellows, their work, and the impact of the program on their lives and communities by developing pieces for blogs such as USAID's *Transforming Lives*. In August 2016, for example, IREX submitted a piece detailing the partnership formed by two Fellows from Liberia from different cohorts who combined their strengths to form a project that both aims to alleviate the solid waste problem in Monrovia and create jobs for young people. The article can be viewed [here](#).



Fellows James Mulbah, left, and Fombah Kanneh at the Green Center, Liberia's first waste segregation and recycling center.

In 2016, IREX has also leveraged RAB members attending a debrief and planning session in Washington, D.C. prior to the Presidential Summit to create a RAB video highlighting the importance of the RAB and the benefits and impact of being a RAB member. This video (updated from the one initially developed with the 2014 RAB) was used to encourage Fellows to nominate themselves for the RAB competition.

- 2015 RAB video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHyiiSE_sX8

As part of its revamped partnership development strategy, in May 2016 IREX launched a monthly newsletter that is distributed to MWF partners and supporters around the world. This newsletter reached nearly 2,500 people every month and highlighted the work that Fellows on the continent achieved with the support of the Fellowship's highly esteemed partners. The partner monthly served as one of IREX's touch points for both communicating the impact that Fellowship partners have on the program and also nurtured its relationships with supporters worldwide.

Fellows in the Media

Many of the stories and accomplishments of Fellows were also captured by external media outlets, who published stories on Fellows' successes throughout the years. Check out the articles featured below for a sample of what the Washington Post, Brookings, CNN, and the New York Times have been saying about the Fellowship since 2014:



2016 Fellow Nice Leng'ete received media coverage from TIME Magazine and the New York Times, among other publications, for her work combatting FGM in Kenya.

- 2014: [A dynamic African woman lives up to Michelle Obama’s call to give girls the chance to go to school](#) (*The Washington Post*, December 12, 2014)
- 2015: [Akos Radio](#) (USAID, 2015)
- 2016: [Africa Shouldn’t Freak Out About Trump](#) (Foreign Policy, December 22, 2016)
- 2017: [Special Report: YALI Eastern Regional Conference](#) (Channels TV, June 19, 2017)
- 2018: [She Ran From the Cut, and Helped Thousands of Other Girls Escape, Too](#) (*New York Times*, January 13, 2018)
- [Smart power: Investing in youth leadership and development](#) (Brookings Education, August 17, 2018)
- 2019: [Life in fragile states: a young girl’s journey](#) (Brookings, March 19, 2019)

E. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is a key component of program implementation as it allows for results-based management, decision-making, accountability, and learning throughout program implementation. IREX’s M&E strategy included the creation and use of effective and timely systems to provide information to USAID, program staff, and partners that assisted them in measuring progress, identifying potential opportunities and obstacles at an early stage and, based on the results, made programmatic adjustments. IREX applied a mixed methods approach to ensure that project performance and impact are captured accurately and comprehensively.

This section provides a summary of the M&E approach and key evaluation activities implemented over the course of the program; an analysis of trends in data we have tracked over time related to the program goal to build the skills of young African Leaders to improve the accountability and transparency of government, start and grow businesses, and serve their communities; and a description of progress we achieved against relevant indicators for the 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 cohorts.

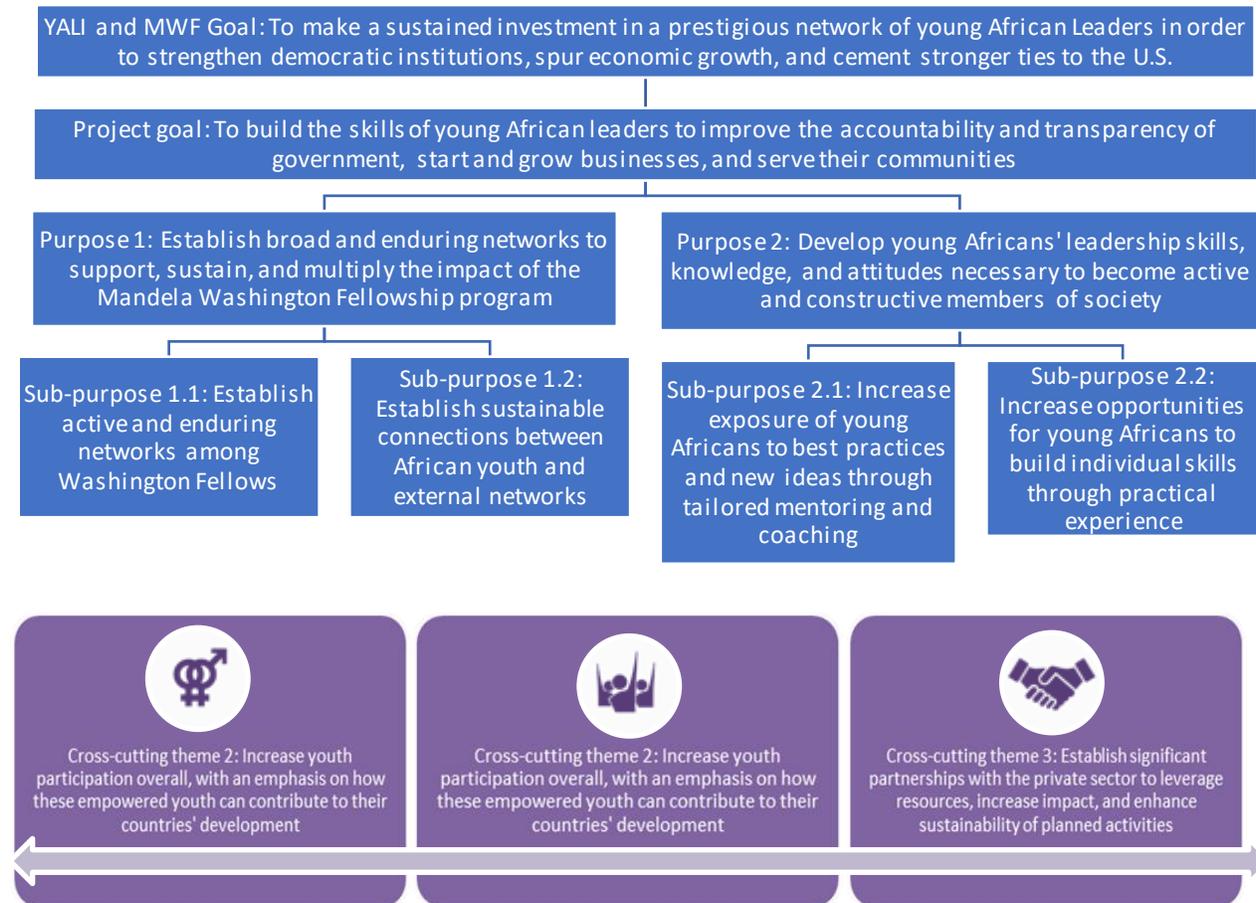
Methods and Approaches Used Overtime

Throughout the program, IREX continuously employed rigorous M&E activities while exploring new ways to communicate findings from these activities over time. Building on the Participatory Video process that amplified Fellow voice and was implemented from 2014 - 2018, we explored and adopted other methods to close the feedback loop between our key stakeholders, including USAID and the Fellows themselves. Many of our reports moved to accessible, interactive PowerBI presentations that allowed the user to dig into the data presented (see the 2018 Baseline and Continental Conference Satisfaction reports for examples) We also transitioned many of our reports to include infographics and visuals that communicate breadth and the results of our programming in a digestible way.

The results framework, monitoring and evaluation plan and logical framework matrix presented here describe how the program collected and reported useful, timely information for results-based management, decision-making, accountability, and mutual learning experiences throughout program implementation.

Goals and Objectives

The program objective for USAID’s Mandela Washington Fellowship program was to build the skills of young African leaders to improve the accountability and transparency of government, start and grow businesses, and serve their communities. In support of USAID’s program objective, the Mandela Washington Fellowship goal, and the YALI goal (stated below) we articulated the following two Program Purposes, each with corresponding Sub-Program Purposes reflective of the four-fold strategy designed to achieve the Program Purposes, and three cross-cutting themes.



Monitoring and Evaluation Approach

Given the challenge of collecting timely information for decision-making across multiple countries and in coordination with multiple local and international stakeholders, our team used technology where appropriate and maximized opportunities for data collection and joint review of findings in coordination with RABs at the conferences and RAB meetings. Furthermore, based on internal lessons learned in M&E for MWF and similar global programs, we applied a mixed methods approach to ensure that project performance and impact were captured accurately and comprehensively. To ensure gender-inclusive programming, we incorporated gender-sensitive and gender-disaggregated indicators where relevant as well as designed data collection procedures that considered the needs, priorities, and opinions of both women and men and of historically disenfranchised populations.

The M&E strategy included the creation and use of systems that were practical, effective and timely to provide information to USAID⁶, program staff, and partners that assisted them in measuring progress, identifying potential opportunities and obstacles at an early stage and, based on the results, making programmatic adjustments. The foundation of the quality control monitoring system was the annual PMEPE which, was approved by USAID annually, to: 1) provide a system of data collection and ensure data efficacy for meeting indicator targets; 2) measure progress and make programmatic adjustments to respond to constantly changing needs; 3) enable quality reporting on progress achieved against targets and best practices and lessons learned in implementation; and 4) provide guidance to the program management team for program planning. All Mandela Washington Fellowship implementing partners understood how their activities contributed to program goals and were held accountable for meeting performance standards.

The following data collection tools were used throughout the program:

- Baseline assessment of Fellows (in coordination with the U.S. Department of State) from 2014-2018
- Socially Responsible Leadership Scales (SRLS) Leadership assessment survey at the end of the follow-on year for the 2014 and 2015 cohorts. This survey was discontinued after the 2015 cohort because it was not deemed to be a good measure of leadership outcomes for the USAID-funded follow-on activities because outcomes were already high after the U.S.-based portion of the program and the increase in measurement was not significant
- Annual survey of Fellows from 2014-2018 cohorts. (However, for the 2018 cohort, the survey was administered in July 2019 instead of October 2019 due to program close-out)
- Professional practicum exit survey for Fellows from all cohorts
- Professional practicum exit survey for practicum hosts from all cohorts
- Mentor exit survey for Fellows from all cohorts
- Mentor exit survey for Mentors from all cohorts
- Most Significant Change Participatory Evaluation using Video from 2014-2017 cohorts.
- Focus groups – these were used ad hoc throughout the program based on staff travel. However, focus groups were held with Fellows by RAB members at each Regional Convening in 2019
- Program records maintained in Salesforce
- Social network analysis in 2016-2018
- Third party Final Impact Evaluation – conducted from January – June 2019 by Development Works Changemakers

Collected was validated through triangulation, with implementing partners and M&E staff making routine inquiries with mentors and practicum sponsors. The GCSS team of IREX and Counterpart International ensured that monitoring and evaluation efforts met LWA reporting requirements. Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) were updated annually after approval of each work plan. When possible, we coordinated with DoS, as appropriate to reduce redundancy in data collection. Streamlining data collection is a best practice for boosting survey response rates.

⁶ In compliance with this award, IREX will provide information to USAID and Counterpart through data entry in TraiNet and Counterpart's KM portal, which will in turn feed into USAID's Development Data Library.

The program also trained and supported M&E Committee members of the three RABs to conduct evaluation activities throughout the program. These trainings contributed to program monitoring and evaluation while building the capacity of RAB members to conduct M&E activities on their own.

Baseline Assessment

A baseline survey was administered in early June from the incoming cohort to gather valuable background information on the Fellows that was used to inform program design and to gauge program impact over time. Data collected through the baseline survey, was combined with data collected at the end of the U.S.-based portion of the program and data collected using the retrospective pre-test method described below to establish baseline values informing the following four thematic areas: 1) knowledge of and attitudes in regards to democratic governance; 2) level of participation in policy and decision-making processes, oversight of public institutions, and other democratic initiatives; and 3) level of identification with community challenges and their contributions to addressing those challenges through, for example, advocacy, community-based projects, etc.; 4) amount of businesses owned by Fellows. The baseline also collected information on civic engagement for indicator “% change in civic knowledge, skills, and leadership” when the SRLS Leadership Assessment was discontinued.

Measurement of Program Impact

Given the diversity of fellowship recipients and the spread of Fellows across the continent of Africa, measuring impact of Fellows on institutions and economic growth at a national level was impractical. Instead, measurement of program impact relied mainly on self-reported data collected from project beneficiaries and project partners and focused on the following evaluation questions which are similar to what was used at the end-of-project evaluation:

- 1) How have the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of Fellows in regards to democratic governance been impacted by the program?
- 2) How has the program impacted private sector (both U.S. and Africa-based) contributions to the development of a skilled workforce and the overall economic growth of participating countries?
- 3) How has the program impacted the economic productivity of Fellows through business ventures and other entrepreneurial activities?
- 4) How has the program impacted Fellow identification with and contributions to addressing community challenges?
- 5) How has the program impacted Fellow identification with gender equality and inclusiveness?

The program found that participation in the MWF program and other similar programs leads to a deeper understanding for participants of their own skills and abilities as well as the meaning of certain concepts such as leadership and civic engagement. This shift in understanding causes participants to respond to some traditional pre- and post-surveys using different metrics, which introduces bias when comparing results across time. To account for this, the team moved away from traditional pre- and post-tests for collection of data against several indicators pertaining to civic engagement and leadership as well as

professional and academic skills. Instead, we gathered baseline data retrospectively at the same time as final data collection. This form of data collection is called a retrospective pre-test (RPT).

Activity Monitoring and Evaluation

Feedback was continuously solicited on all aspects of program administration (professional practicum matching process, mentor matching, and networking events for Fellows, etc.), during regular check-ins by the program and implementing partners, during the conferences and convenings, and through the Mandela Washington Fellowship Regional Advisory Boards. Additionally, input on the specific needs and interests of Fellows was gathered and shared with program staff, USAID, and other key stakeholders to inform decision-making and support improvements to the program.

Project Purpose 1: Establish broad and enduring networks to support, sustain, and multiply the impact of Mandela Washington Fellows programming.

An **annual survey of Fellows** was administered one year following re-entry into their home countries (with the exception of the 2018 cohort who received the annual survey in July 2019). M&E staff and implementing partners had regular correspondence with Fellows through check-ins via email and phone calls to monitor the formation of new networks, their strength, and their impact on Mandela Washington Fellows' programming. The survey collected data on the strength of network connections, which were measured by the number of connections sustained with business, civil society, and government leaders over the life of the program. Fellow **participation in events** as presenters was also tracked as an important indicator of new professional development and networking opportunities that were created as a result of program activities. The IREX team tracked the support leveraged by Fellows as an indicator of the **multiplication of program impacts**. To calculate this number, we tracked both private sector funds and in-kind contributions in support of program activities as well as support provided directly to Fellows. As another indicator of the multiplication of program impacts, the program tracked linkages of Mandela Washington Fellows with the RLCs, including mentoring, and connections via online and in-person networks.

To better understand the dynamics of the burgeoning MWF network, IREX piloted a **Social Network Analysis** at the end of Year 3 through a survey to members of the 2014 and 2015 RAB, exploring their frequency and reasons for interaction amongst themselves as well as their collaboration within and between cohorts. The program continued to build on this pilot with the 2016 RAB as well as returning to RAB members from previous cohort years. In addition, a full network analysis was piloted on the 2017 cohort baseline survey. Findings were compared with a follow-up on the 2017 cohort Annual Survey to explore changes over time to network interactions across regions and cohorts.

See **Attachment 19** for the 2014-2017 SNA Report.

Project Purpose 2: Develop young African leadership skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to become active and constructive members of society.

The program used an annual survey of Fellows, monitoring of Leadership Development Plans, surveys of practicum hosts and mentors, and a leadership assessment (included on the annual survey) of Fellows to

measure outputs and outcomes of activities that aimed to improve leadership skills, knowledge, and attitudes.

IREX and our implementing partners monitored completion of **Leadership Development Plans (LDPs)** as well as discussions around the use of the LDPs for leadership development and networking in Fellows' home countries. Data collected through the annual survey as well as mentorship and practicum surveys were used to understand how fellows are applying what they learned from the program and are "giving back" to their communities. Data from surveys was triangulated through information gathered from mentors and practicum hosts.

Mentor and Professional Practicum surveys for Fellows also incorporated questions regarding the quality of mentoring and the quality of practicum experiences. To understand mentor and professional practicum host experiences and triangulate data from Fellow surveys, the program designed and carried out a survey of mentors and a survey of professional practicum hosts on their experiences. Feedback from practicum hosts was also collected by program M&E staff and field staff through regular email and phone correspondence. All feedback collected was documented, reviewed for patterns or themes, and concisely summarized in various communication materials by the M&E team throughout the program.

Lastly, the team assessed leadership efficacy of **Fellows** to measure knowledge of, attitudes about, and skill for practicing leadership and leadership competencies. As done since Year 3 the program used a tailored leadership efficacy scale that was specific to the context of Mandela Washington Fellows each year, and combined this with the Baseline and Annual surveys to reduce survey fatigue based on feedback from 2014 and 2015 cohorts, who received a separate SRLS Leadership Assessment.

Participatory Evaluation Using Video

In 2014 we piloted and then continued to use participatory video (PV) and the Most Significant Change technique⁷ (MSC) to understand the impact of MWF activities in building the skills of young African leaders to improve the accountability and transparency of government, start and grow businesses, and serve their communities. Use of a participatory evaluation technique engaged Fellows in evaluation, encouraged networking and teambuilding, and allowed for collection of data from the perspectives of beneficiaries. The team used PV and MSC during the Continental Conference for 2017 Fellows and the Regional Conferences for cohorts 2014-2016 to engage Fellows in a conversation about the impacts of MWF activities both in the participants' home countries, including the LDP, practicums, mentorships, STGs, and CNLs. IREX pre-selected RAB Members (usually M&E Committee members) to lead the process. These Fellows were trained and supported by expert trainers to facilitate story circles of 10-12 Fellows per circle. Staff and the Fellow facilitators led story circles to bring out stories from Fellow participants, to choose the most significant story, and then to film that story. Staff and the Fellow facilitators would also lead a selection-screening event where all Fellows attending the Conference were invited to watch the stories filmed and provide their feedback regarding their opinion of the story of most significant change. Fellow facilitators also took part in participatory analysis led by IREX to unpack the learning in all the stories

⁷ PV/MSC was not used in 2019 with the 2018 cohort because of the reduced program timeline due to close out and the data collected from the final impact evaluation.

collected as well as the video stories. The team worked with the Fellow facilitators to storyboard a short video report that presented the PV&MSC results in Fellows’ own words. Stories captured on video at the Conference were compiled into an impact film that can be shared with the public. To deepen understanding about program impacts across cohorts, the process included a meta-analysis of the previous cohorts’ PV and MSC evaluations to identify trends and areas for program improvement.

Participatory Video & Most Significant Change (PV & MSC) Links			
	All filmed Stories of Change	Impact Video	Video Reports
2014	https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLERqpi p z q 3 r R n G B f v R m 8 - Q K l f s f 8 5 X u u G	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T c s J l m 1 L F R A	<p>Southern Africa: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oTL_jk3vf9o&list=PLERqpi p z q 3 r S 2 8 W _ e - A Y N x p 5 I W _ 5 Y R H M X & i n d e x = 2</p> <p>West Africa: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=- a 9 _ Z 4 j Y m J l & l i s t = P L E R q p i p z q 3 r S 2 8 W _ e - A Y N x p 5 I W _ 5 Y R H M X & i n d e x = 3</p> <p>East Africa: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= q b L e u _ E i 4 V 8 & l i s t = P L E R q p i p z q 3 r S 2 8 W _ e - A Y N x p 5 I W _ 5 Y R H M X & i n d e x = 1</p>
2015	https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLERqpi p z q 3 r T j V b l 3 z 8 u 5 9 _ i P G U r g k N V q	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A R I 7 L o T a - f M & f e a t u r e = y o u t u . b e & l i s t = P L E R q p i p z q 3 r Q K T Y 6 d C y x X 7 U v F m r 4 9 L E u c	<p>Southern Africa: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= 4 X K u M 6 l v v x 0 & l i s t = P L E R q p i p z q 3 r Q K T Y 6 d C y x X 7 U v F m r 4 9 L E u c & i n d e x = 1</p> <p>West Africa: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= W G p S u d I n F z k & l i s t = P L E R q p i p z q 3 r Q K T Y 6 d C y x X 7 U v F m r 4 9 L E u c & i n d e x = 2</p> <p>East Africa: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= N J I n X a Z m Q i 8 & l i s t = P L E R q p i p z q 3 r Q K T Y 6 d C y x X 7 U v F m r 4 9 L E u c & i n d e x = 3</p>
2016	https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLERqpi p z q 3 r S F F I R S Y 2 o 9 J u 1 Q a t j G 7 G g C	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y r w A F k C V M T w & f e a t u r e = y o u t u . b e	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l m U J - g 2 O k n s & f e a t u r e = y o u t u . b e
2017	https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLE R q p i p z q 3 r S B f 7 6 v 2 b O k g h - z n x c o l o W 7	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4WAqqGLetPM&index=11&list=PLERqpi p z q 3 r R A 2 f R M o t i i S B n _ Z 8 Q t 6 P B 4 & t = 0 s	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C1Mtjyx6qyA&index=10&list=PLE R q p i p z q 3 r R A 2 f R M o t i i S B n _ Z 8 Q t 6 P B 4 & t = 0 s

Analysis, Reporting, and Learning

In line with USAID, Counterpart and IREX are committed to a relentless focus on results through rigorous monitoring and results-based management to inform all program decisions. The team was also invested in learning from program successes and challenges through monitoring and utilization of evaluation results and had a quarterly practice of holding learning meetings to dive deeper into data and results. Program M&E staff and Regional Managers based in Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa were responsible for regularly collecting feedback from local partners and Fellows, analyzing input for themes and patterns, and sharing analyses with program staff, USAID, and the Mandela Washington Fellowship Regional Advisory Boards through targeted communication materials. Besides required quarterly progress reports, information briefs and updates were shared on a more frequent basis to support ongoing decision-making. All analyses included a focus on the levels of access to program benefits by women, youth with disabilities, and other marginalized groups and their impact across all program tracks.

Final Impact Evaluation

IREX commissioned a third party to conduct a participatory evaluation of the program, focusing on a blend of outcomes (for more recent cohorts) as well as impacts (for earlier cohorts) resulting from the program. IREX was heavily involved as a stakeholder in this evaluation, and methods included illustrative participatory activities such as data collection through interviews, focus groups, observation as possible, and analysis and interpretation of findings. IREX developed evaluation questions to guide the process with input from other stakeholders such as USAID, the Department of State, IREX's implementing partners, as well as Fellows themselves. The evaluation took place during January – June 2019 and was conducted by Development Works Changemakers. IREX considered the following broad evaluation questions in consultation USAID:

1. What is the impact of follow-on activities on male and female Fellows' skills; knowledge; and attitudes necessary to become active and constructive members of society; compared to those men and women who did not participate in the follow-on activities?
2. How has the program impacted practices of male and female Fellows in supporting democratic governance through improving the accountability and transparency of government in Africa?
3. Has the program helped male and female Fellows to start new businesses? To what extent has participation in the program helped Fellow-led businesses expand and become more productive?
4. How has the program impacted on male/female Fellows' identification with, and participation in community challenges/social responsibility?
5. To what extent is the network for Mandela Washington Fellowship male and female alumni who collaborate on issues of democratic governance, economic productivity and civic engagement a self-sustaining network? How have USAID-funded follow-on activities contributed to this?

In addition, the following cross-cutting themes were considered: empowerment of women and other marginalized youth, including the disabled and LGBTQI, to address inequalities and development challenges; increase of youth participation overall, with an emphasis on how these empowered youth can

contribute to their countries' development; and the establishment of significant partnerships with the private sector to leverage resources, increase impact, and enhance sustainability of planned activities.

Summary of Key Final Evaluation Findings

- Grounding skills and knowledge: The Africa-based follow-on activities enabled Fellows to solidify the knowledge and skills gained in the US, to ground and root the US-based learning, and helped Fellows to put this new knowledge into practice mostly in an African context. It is important to note however that on a quantitative level, there were not significantly different outcomes for Fellows who did or did not participate in follow-on activities.
- Those who undertook follow-on activities were able to gain more knowledge in their sectors of work or new areas they wished to explore.
- Practicums, and mentorships, conferences/learning events and collaborations gave Fellows extra embodied and contextualized knowledge about the sectors they work in, their specific development context, African realities in general, and the opportunities open to them.
- Africa-based activities gave Fellows a chance to live their new attitudes, and shift toward positive social change, and to solidify them in their home contexts.
- Quite a number of entrepreneurs who participated in follow-on activities shifted their focus to social issues through having worked with mentors, practicum hosts or collaborators, or positioned their businesses differently in response to new continental opportunities.
- Examples from interviews and survey data show that the follow-on activities certainly added skills, knowledge, connections and new impetus to the community involvement of many Fellows who participated.

Final Evaluation Methodology and Approach⁸

The evaluation adopted a mixed-method approach, gathering both quantitative and qualitative data from a large sample of Fellows who participated and did not participate in Africa-based follow-on activities. Quantitative data was gathered through an online survey from 1292 Fellows, 35 percent of the total Fellow population. Qualitative data was gathered through one-on-one interviews, either face-to-face or via Skype, with Fellows and program staff and partners, or through focus group discussions with Fellows, during country visits to six African countries. In this way a wide range of stakeholders was included in the evaluation. Quantitative and qualitative data was cleaned, transcribed, analyzed and incorporated into the findings of the evaluation. Both quantitative and qualitative data was also gathered from secondary sources, including literature on leadership in Africa, and a range of sources provided by IREX on the Africa-

⁸ The Evaluation Methodology and Approach, Conclusions, and Recommendations are directly from the Executive Summary of the Final Evaluation Report.

based follow-on activities. The findings of the internal monitoring data are broadly in line with the findings made in this evaluation.

Final Evaluation Conclusions

This evaluation found that the aims and methods of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, including the Africa-based follow-on activities, are highly relevant and in line with literature and best practice on youth leadership development in Africa.

The Fellowship has done much to inculcate an ethos of values-based servant and transformational leadership in the large majority of Fellows who have participated. The values-based Social Change Model of leadership adopted by the program is highly relevant in fostering individual, group and community values within young people, so that they can become true leaders in their own sectors, communities, and focusing on the age group 25 - 35 allowed post-graduates and early-mid career professionals to solidify their leadership roles within their own careers and sectors at a crucial time when they are progressing, becoming more respected and influential in their workplaces and communities, and more active in society. The Africa-based follow-on activities enabled Fellows to solidify the knowledge and skills gained in the US, to ground and root the US-based learning, and helped Fellows to put this new knowledge into practice.

One of the key findings is that all Fellows, regardless of follow-on activity participation, report very high gains from participation in the Mandela Washington Fellowship program. The program has strengthened significantly many of the values that the Social Change Model (SCM) of leadership focuses on, especially consciousness of self, congruence commitment, collaboration, and also, common purpose and citizenship (not only of home countries but also of Africa in general). Fellows report a shift in their knowledge and attitude towards leadership, and many of those who have participated in specific follow-ons had experiences which really embedded some skills, knowledge and practices, and helped them in their careers and other endeavors in a number of ways. Longer term, this practical experience may help them in ways which are not yet apparent.

The evaluation has also found that the Africa-based follow-on activities were largely highly accessible to all Fellows, although there were some activities which Fellows with disabilities, or located in certain countries or rural districts struggled to participate to the same extent of most other Fellows. Although women were slightly more constrained by family responsibilities than men, most felt that the activities were highly accessible and beneficial to them. The program was also largely effective in placing Fellows with appropriate mentors and practicum host organizations which, along with Collaboration Fund Grants (CFGs), Regional Conferences and Speaker Travel Grants (STGs), were seen by participating Fellows as highly valuable to their career development and contribution to society.

Networking and communication were cited by both Fellows who participated in follow-ons. Interestingly, more Fellows who had participated in follow-on activities cited innovative thinking as a key skill than those who did not participate. Follow-on activities allowed the Fellows who participated a grounded practical expression and an outlet for many of the more theoretical skills they learnt on their U.S.-based leadership institutes. Mentorships, and practicums, as well as CNLEvents and CFGs embedded teamwork, leadership,

collaboration and networking skills, and rooted them in an African context. Attendance at Regional and Continental Conferences or speaking at others through STGs also strengthened their networking, communication and collaboration skills.

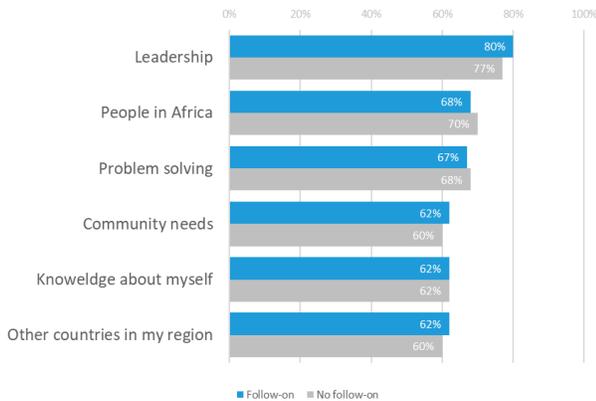
Fellows across the board also gained new knowledge, specifically about leadership. Those who undertook follow-on activities were able to gain more knowledge in their sectors of work or new areas they wished to explore, having had their interest piqued and eyes opened in some way in the US. Fellows who participated in mentorships and practicums in particular gained new knowledge and experience of grant writing, project management and networking which helped them to make their civic and business endeavors a success, or to branch out into areas they had previously not explored. Practicums, and mentorships, conferences/learning events and collaborations gave Fellows extra embodied and contextualized knowledge about the sectors they work in, their specific development context, African realities in general, and the opportunities open to them. Many branched out into community work and other career paths as a result. The follow-on activities added value for how servant and transformational leadership work in practice.

While it is difficult to distinguish attitude shifts and gains between those who did and did not participate in follow-on activities, Africa-based activities gave Fellows a chance to live these new attitudes, and to solidify them in their home contexts. It is, however, interesting to note that more Fellows who had done follow-on activities reported shifts in their attitudes towards gender roles, rights and sexuality than those who did not participate in follow-on activities. It is also noted that many Fellows made the marginalized the focus of their work. For example, activities such as practicums taught urban Fellows the value of working with rural marginalized communities on their own terms (not as victims), and others learned through working with people to be more effective as agents of change.

Change in leadership skills, knowledge, attitudes

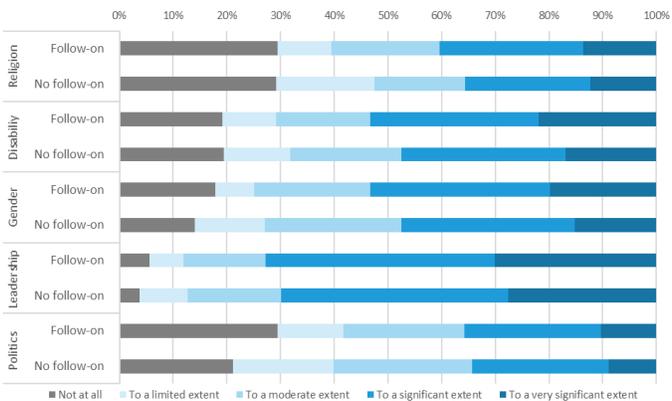
Fellows said **the program increased skills and knowledge** to a significant or very significant extent.

Follow-on participants learned the most about **Leadership, people in Africa, and problem solving**.



More Fellows experienced changed attitudes around **leadership, gender, and disability** to a significant or very significant extent.

More Follow-on participants reported significant or very significant changes in attitudes compared to those who didn't participate in follow-on programs.



All Fellows demonstrated gains on changing governance practices and fighting for democracy, and while some Fellows working in government have limited influence at this stage due to their youth and the nature of their positions, they are trying to influence government practices from within. Follow-on activities introduced Fellows working in civil society to new networks and innovations, and ways of affecting policy debates and adoption. Some Fellows are even running for office in order to change things more directly.

In terms of business and career growth, there is no strong evidence that participation in follow-on activities assisted Fellows in ways not also enjoyed by other Fellows. What is more tangible as an impact is the fact that quite a number of entrepreneurs who participated in follow-on activities shifted their focus to social issues through having worked with mentors, practicum hosts or collaborators, or positioned their businesses differently in response to new continental opportunities.

All Fellows, regardless of participation in follow-ons, continued to report high community participation after returning home, and slightly more of those who did follow-on activities were involved in sectors besides their own, which suggests follow-ons boosted the impact of getting Fellows to reach out beyond their primary areas of work and interest, to get involved in previously unexplored spheres. Networking is a major skill which all Fellows felt was enhanced through their Fellowship experience, and almost all Fellows are still participating to varying degrees in the Fellowship networks, most notably their US college networks, their cohort networks and their country networks.

The program was also highly successful in pulling in private sector partners to enhance its effectiveness and sustainability. The Fellowship program as a whole has undoubtedly had a positive impact in increasing youth participation, including of groups normally marginalized by gender, disability or sexuality, in the developmental challenges of their home countries on the African continent. Africa-based follow-on activities have been an important aspect contributing to this success.

Final Evaluation Recommendations

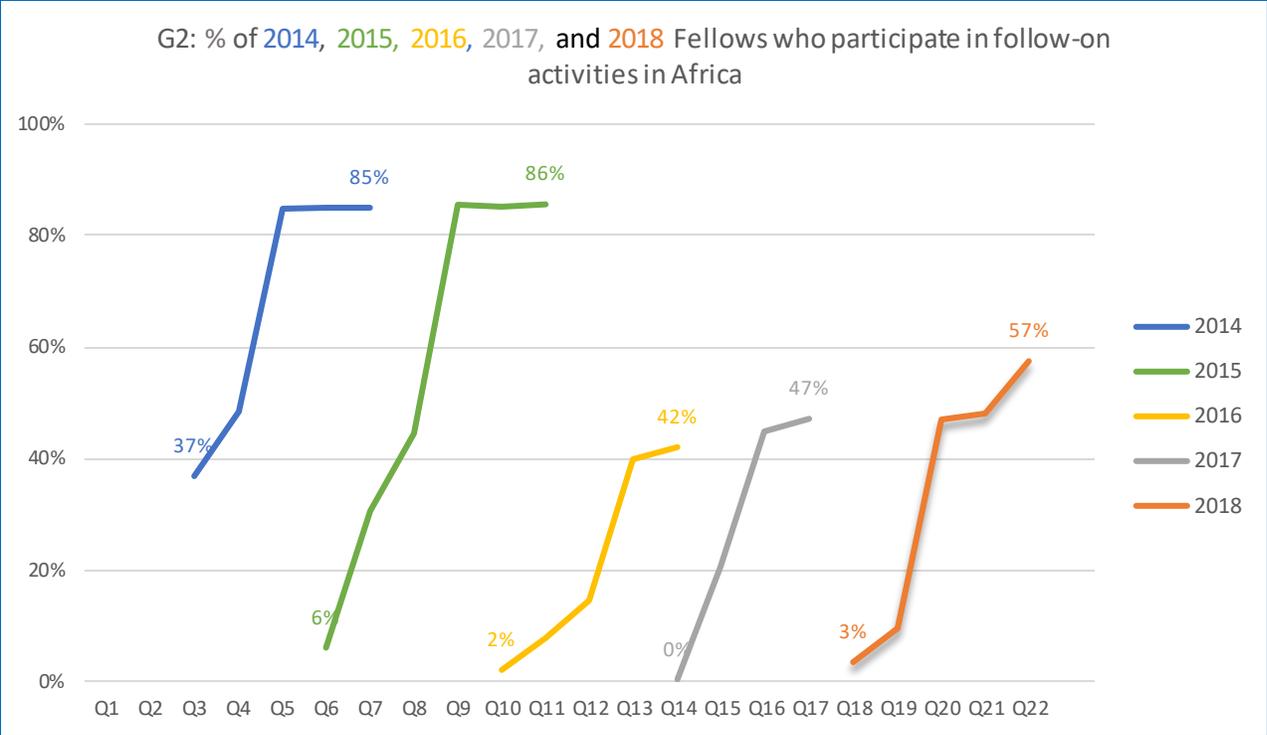
Based on the findings, recommendations have been made in five areas in order to build on the key successes of the program and to enhance its effectiveness going into the future. The first relates to learning and improvement, with the recommendation that tracking studies should be implemented to determine the medium and emerging longer-term impacts of the program. The second recommendation concerns follow-on activities and suggests that these should be rationalized and designed to capitalize on the potential of Mandela Washington Fellowship alumni to become hosts/service providers/collaborators on follow-on activities in future. For example, Fellows can become mentors and practicum hosts for younger MWFs. The third recommendation is that Leadership Development Plans should be streamlined and integrated holistically in the program, more purposefully connecting the US and Africa-based activities and aligning more strongly with the Regional Leadership Centers. The fourth recommendation is that conscious efforts to include Fellows marginalized (by factors such as, but not limited to, gender, sexual orientation and disability) should be maintained and that follow-on activities should be strengthened to assist Fellows to critically and effectively engage with issues of marginalization in their country contexts through follow-on activities and their work in their respective sectors. Lastly, it is recommended that networking needs to be maintained and strengthened, including through conferences and alumni associations, to enhance the benefits of the program.

The full Final Impact Evaluation Report can be found in [Attachment 20](#).

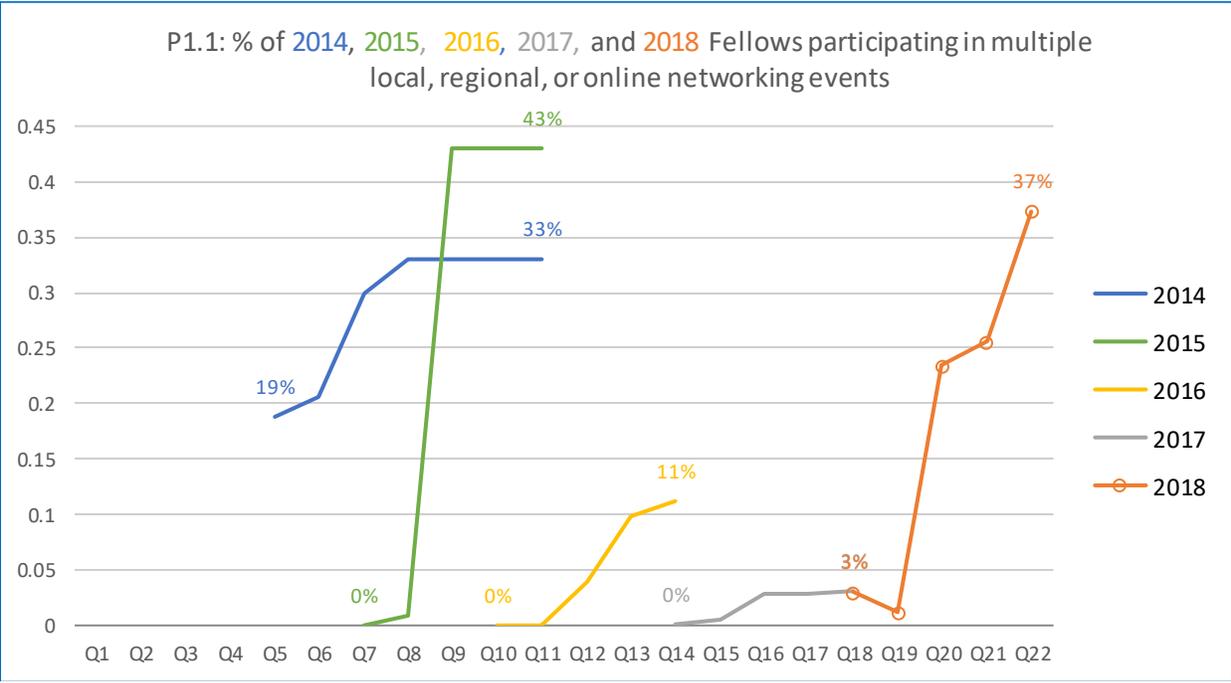
Progress against Indicators

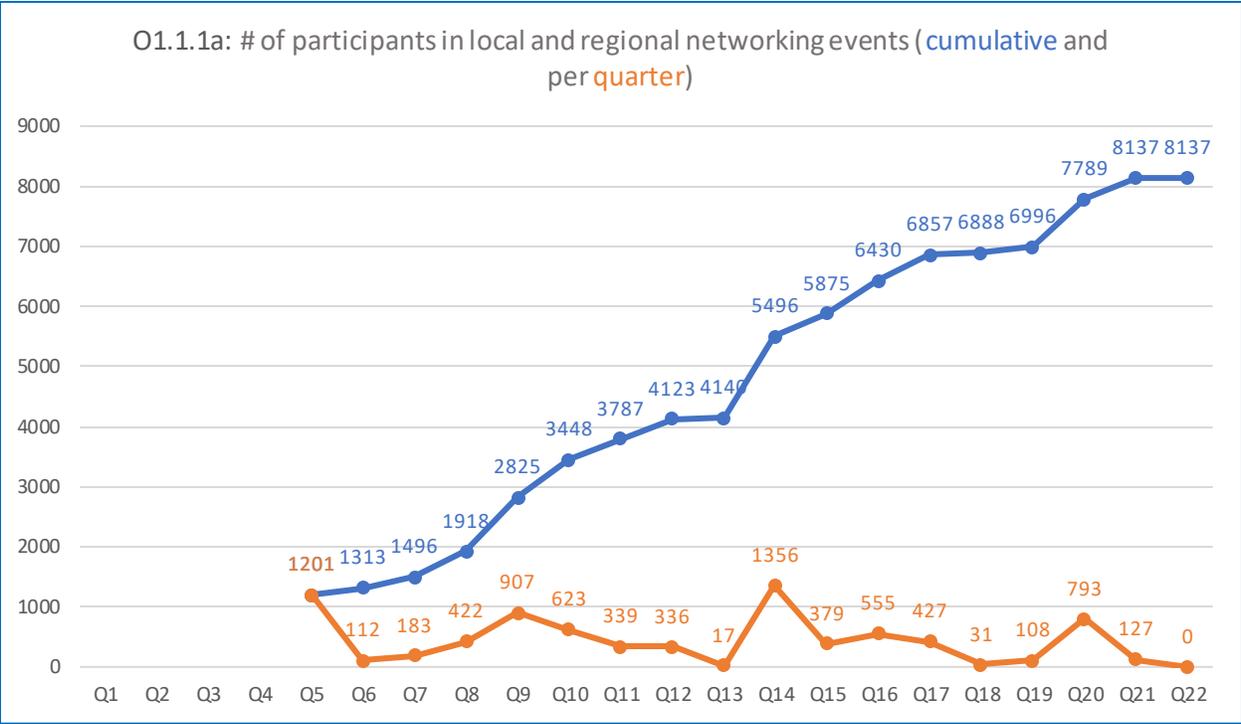
The following charts provide visuals of indicators relating to the program goals, purposes, sub-purposes, and outputs. Where possible, the charts focus on outcome indicators not reported in other parts of this report. A full accounting of progress made in all indicators can be found in the cumulative indicator matrix attachment.

To better understand the program's reach, we tracked what percentage of each cohort participated in programming in their follow-on year. A total of 2198 Fellows or 59.5% of the all Fellows participated in follow-on activities over the course of the program. The general trends of data show that the first two years, when the cohort size was 500 per year and opportunities more resourced and uncompetitive, a majority of Fellows participated in follow-on activities, while we saw a significant decrease in percentage of Fellows participating in both 2016 and 2017 cohort years when the size of the cohort doubled to 1000 and opportunities became limited and competitive. Numbers in 2018 showed a slight increase to show more than half of all Fellows participated in at least one follow-on activity, which remains consistent with the trend given the size of the cohort reducing to 700.



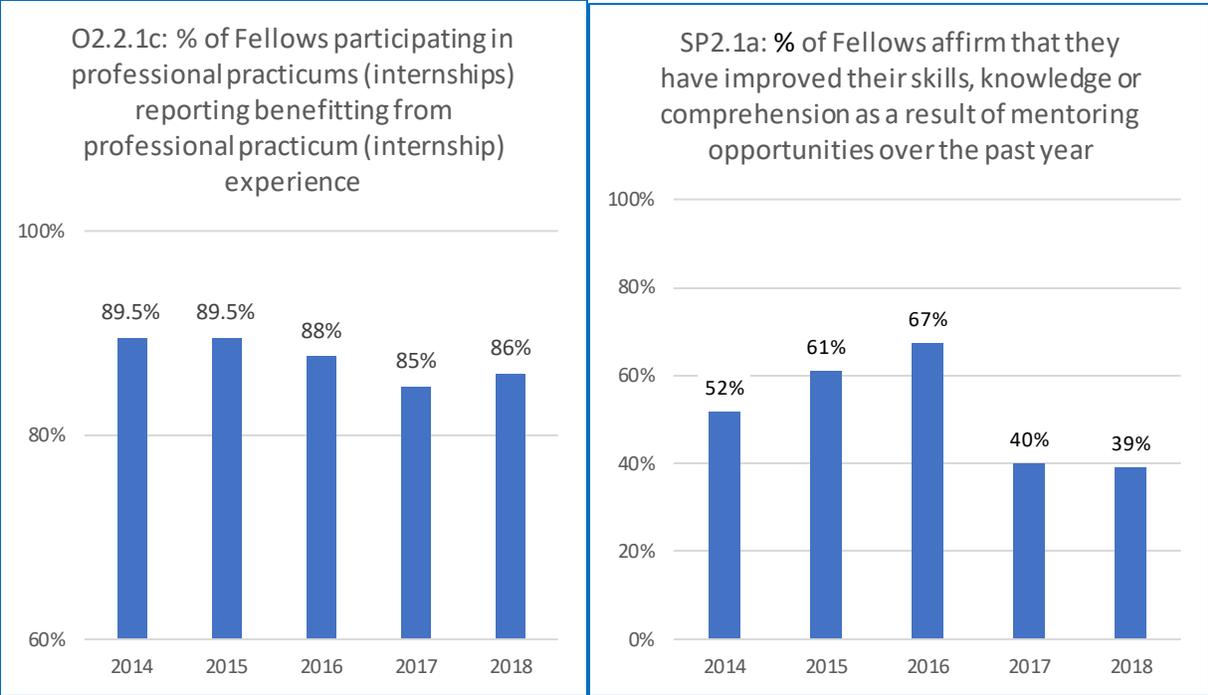
Reversing the trend seen with the 2017 cohort, the 2018 cohort participated in multiple local, regional, or online networking events facilitated by IREX to a much greater degree. This is because over the past year, IREX placed a greater emphasis on collaborative activities such as an expansion of collaboration grants, and mentoring circles, as well as avenues such as participation in RAB initiatives, alumni association projects supported by the program, or participation in events hosted by program partners.





Practicums continue to be a highlight of the Fellowship experience appreciated by Fellows who participated in them. Stories of Change from the PVMSC process have often highlighted the role a practicum has played in introducing Fellows to new skills, and this is also reflected in the high percentage of Fellows who complete their practicum exit survey agreeing that they benefitted from the experience. However, the same trend does not hold for mentorships, which usually have more mixed results.

Feedback from the surveys indicates that Fellows sometimes feel their mentor is not a good match or that the mentor does not provide the guidance they were looking for. Because this intervention is highly relational and often personality-driven, this presented a challenge for the program team. The charts below illustrate these trends, but note that many 2017 and 2018 Fellows not respond to the mentorship exit survey.



The cumulative Indicator Progress Matrix can be found in [Attachment 21](#) however, what follows is a final capstone bringing together cumulative data and impact pulled from the analysis and findings from the breadth of our M&E tools including baseline and annual surveys, intervention exit surveys, and Fellow grant reports. You will find that the findings of the Final Impact Evaluation are consistent with program M&E data and findings.

[Accountability and transparency of government](#)

One of the program’s objectives was to contribute to increasing the accountability and transparency of government in Africa. Although the 2014 pilot Annual Survey did not include questions that could help gather data, these questions were added in later surveys. Since then, the data has provided evidence that the Fellows had the tools to focus on accountability and transparency after participating in the program. While there are only a small percentage of Fellows who are elected officials, many Fellows were able to advocate for important governance issues through IREX-facilitated events and in their local communities.



"...The guys from Twitter were like [there are] ...a lot of ways to give news to social media to hold government to account. So we started digging deeper into that and that's how...we restructured Open Parliament and ... It's very much social media based, holds government to account... So, over the last...three years we've done Open Parliament in Zimbabwe, we've launched open Parliament in Somalia, and we will launch Open Parliament in Zambia soon."

Farai Chizengani, Zimbabwe, 2015 Mandela Washington Fellow

For instance, Farai Chizengani, a 2015 Fellow from Zimbabwe, received a Speaker Travel Grant in 2016 to travel to the U.S. to attend a conference on human rights and technology. Here, he was inspired to restructure the "Open Parliament" network, a forum that now uses social media to disseminate news to Zimbabwean youth to learn about local politics and keep their elected officials accountable.

Collected data from the 2016-2018 cohorts showed an average of 74% of Fellows who agreed or strongly agreed that they have the skills to improve government accountability. While 84% of Fellows agreed or strongly agreed that they have the skills to increase government transparency since before they began the program.



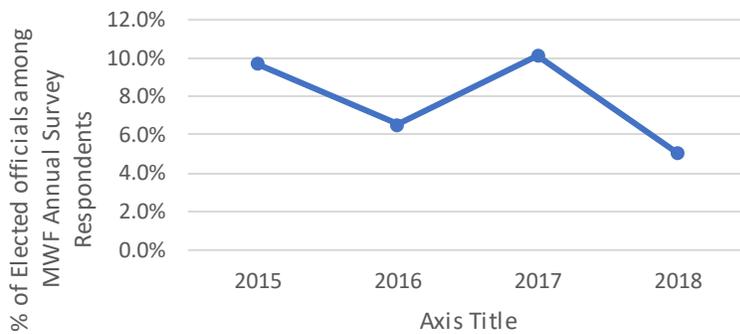
According to our baseline surveys from the 2015-2018 cohorts, an average of 7.5% of the total number of Fellows were elected by citizens in their country or community to serve as a public official for a government entity. This data shows that public officials were a small representation of the whole, but a steady percentage of each cohort each year.



“We want to help this younger generation of Malians come together and collectively push for the change they want to see. It is a collaborative process, through which we all learn, share, adapt, and continue to push for new ways of doing things. That is very powerful.”

Kondo Moussa, Mali, Mandela Washington Fellow 2015

Elected Officials pre-YALI (2015-2018)



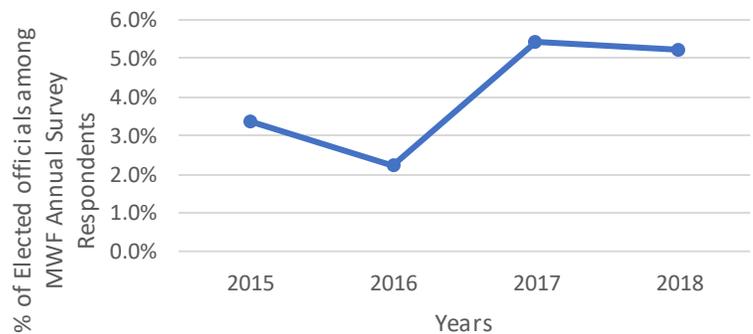
Kondo Moussa, a 2015 Fellow from Mali, was inspired by the time he spent at his IREX-facilitated practicum at the Accountability Lab in Liberia, leading him to expand its work to his home country of Mali. Impressed by the innovative way the Accountability Lab educates young people about their rights, he championed Mali’s first “Integrity Idol.” An annual competition that

began in 2016, Integrity Idol seeks to celebrate and honor honest government officials across the country by giving them national recognition. Moussa also helped initiate the Accountability Incubator in Mali Accountability Lab’s flagship program for young civil society leaders to build sustainable and effective tools for fostering accountability, participation, and social impact.

On average, in the year after participating in the Mandela Washington Fellowship, 4.1% of Fellows were elected into a public office.⁹ In addition to being elected into public office, other Fellows have been appointed into high level ministerial positions in their countries:

- 2016 Fellow and East Africa RAB Chair from Sudan was

Elected Officials Post-YALI (2015 - 2018)



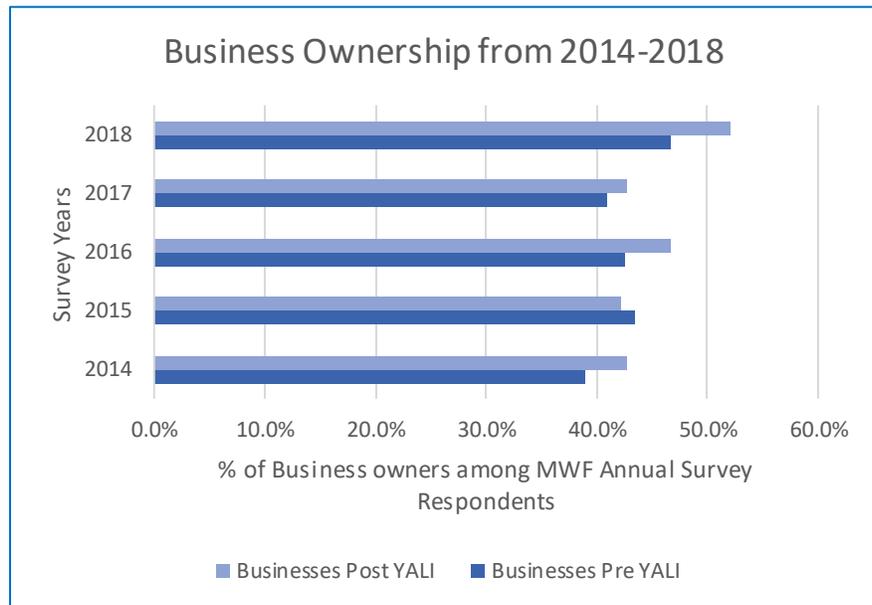
⁹ Because the question reported in the survey only looked at those elected in the immediate year after the Fellowship, and not current elected officials, the number of total Fellows who are public officials could be higher.

named the Sudanese Minister of Youth and Sport in early September 2019 in the Transitional Cabinet of Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, during the 2019 Sudanese transition to democracy .

- 2017 Fellow and West Africa RAB member Pedro Lopes from Cabo Verde was appointed Secretary of State for Innovation and Technical Training in January 2018.
- 2015 Fellow Aurelie Adam Soule from Benin was appointed Minister of Digital Economy and Communications in October 2017.

Start and grow businesses

The program also aimed to support economic growth by supporting Fellows’ businesses. Data collected from the 2014-2018 cohorts indicated that prior to attending the program, 42.5% of the participants had a business, while in the year after returning to their home countries an average of 45.3% of the participants reported to have owned businesses.

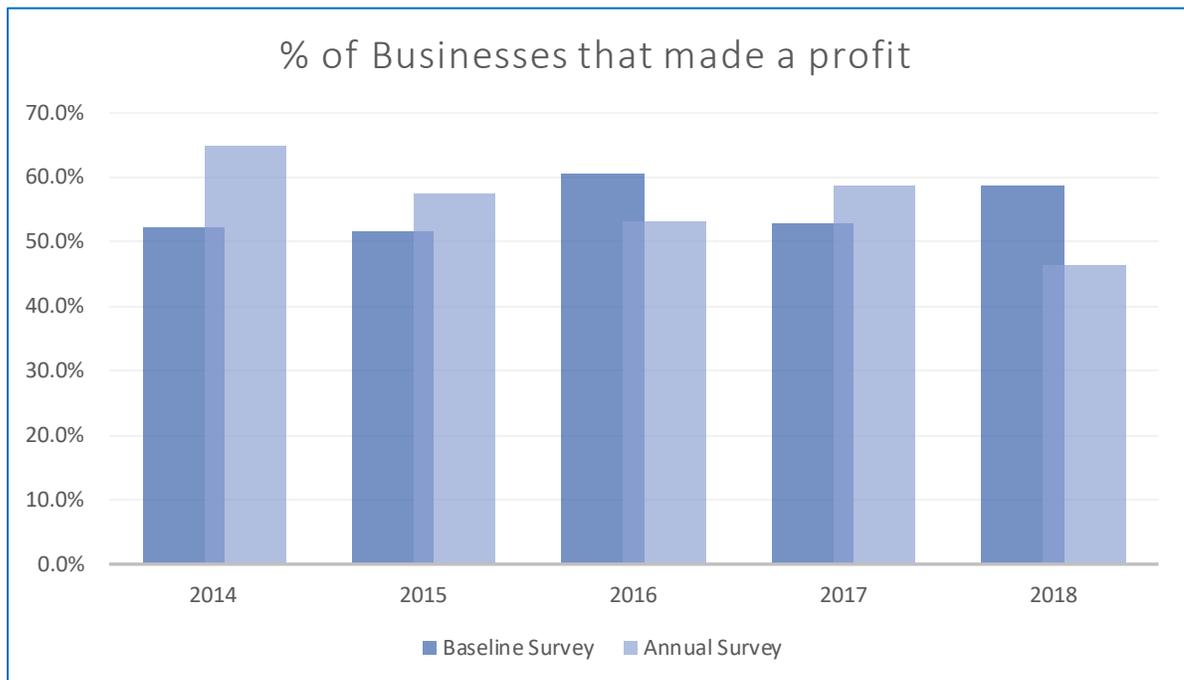


Chibuzor Azubuiké, a 2017 Civic Leadership Fellow from Nigeria, serves as an example of a business leader who started her own social enterprise in the year after the Fellowship. As a result of connections made during her IREX-facilitated practicum, Chibuzor applied and pitched at a competition and won start-up capital worth 300,000 Naira (833 USD) to start her business to produce a nutritious hibiscus drink, locally known as “zobo”. The proceeds from her juice business directly fund the operations of her foundation, the Haske Water Aid and Empowerment Foundation, a water supply project that serves vulnerable populations.



“I was so excited, and this boosted my confidence in my product. We also got orders for drinks all over Nigeria and they were delivered in perfect condition. I am grateful for the opportunity to do a practicum.”

Chibuzor Azubuiké, Nigeria, 2017 Civic Leadership Fellow



Another trend within the data that is important to highlight is that of fellows who owned businesses, an average of 55.5% of these Fellows’ businesses made profits before their participation in the Fellowship, as compared to an average of 56.1% of Fellows who made profits in the year after participating in the Fellowship. Additionally:



The aggregate data collected from 2014-2018 indicated that, on average, a total of **72.1%** of Fellows indicated that the **revenue of their business had increased in the last year**, with about **a quarter** of these numbers reporting that their **revenue had increased by more than half**.



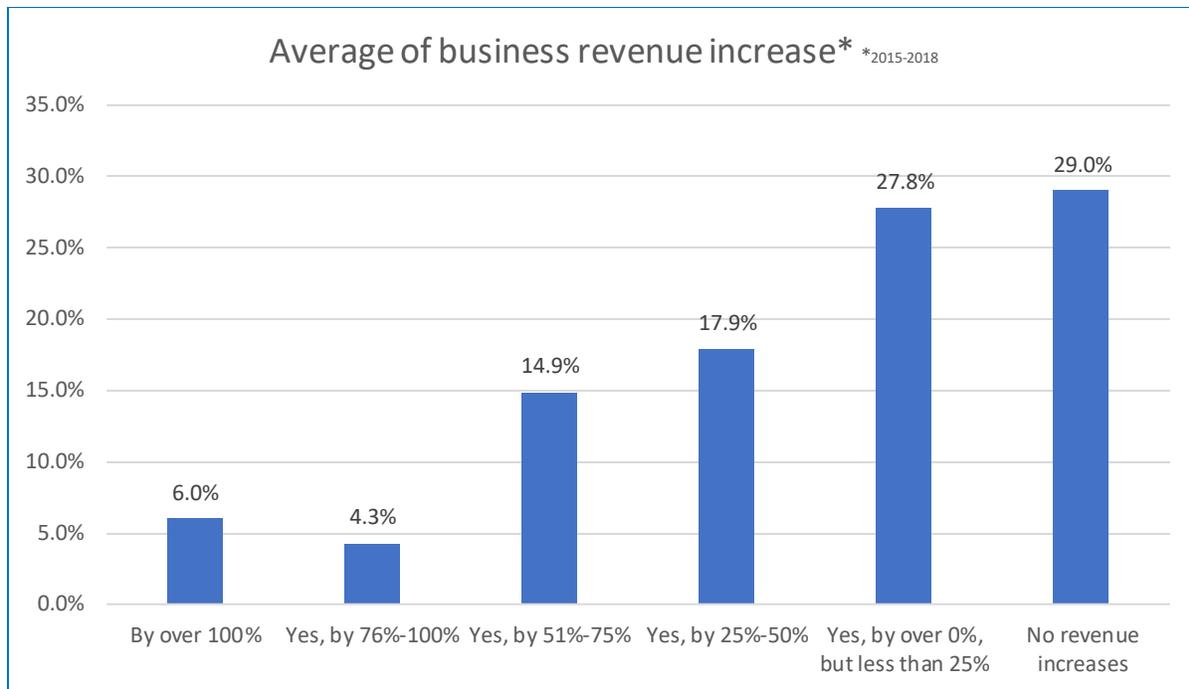
Based on aggregate data collected from the 2015 – 2018 Annual Surveys, Fellows who reported an **increase in business revenue a year after returning home** reported a **\$71,751 average increase in business revenue**



Based on all Fellows who answered the question on the Annual Surveys from 2015 – 2018, **41.8%** of all Fellows reported having **international business partners and/or clients**.



2018 Cohort Fast Fact: Of the 250 2018 Fellows who responded to the question on the 2018 Annual Survey, **22%** of 2018 Fellows **started their business after the Fellowship**.

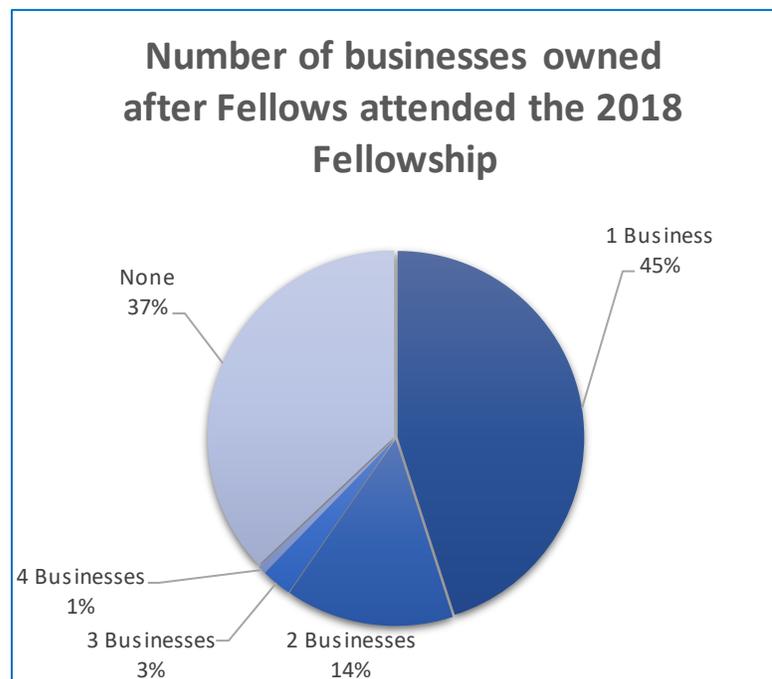


Based on USAID interest in knowing more about Fellow-owned businesses, IREX commissioned a research project to look more closely at the nature of the businesses and qualitatively at how the USAID-funded follow-on activities impacted Fellows' businesses. It is interesting to note that this research, carried out by 2014 Civic Engagement Fellow from Guinea Sekou Mansare, who had participated in many of the follow-on interventions (but is not a business owner himself), is consistent with the findings of the Final Impact Evaluation, that Fellows who participated in follow-on activities deeply rooted the skills learned during the Fellowship and used them to start or expand social ventures over purely for-profit businesses. The major findings from that report are included below and the full report can be found in [Attachment 23](#):

- **What is the most common characteristic of Fellows' businesses?** The participants are not primarily or necessarily generating money through their businesses, but rather they are facing risks and difficulties to come up with a new approach to find solutions to the problems in their communities, thus improving the quality of life (Martin & Osberg, 2007).
- **What are the categories of the impact of participants' businesses?** Through the businesses of participants, the production of local farmers is maximized through training and market value chain creation, women and children have access to healthy food, women and girls are introduced to STEM-related skills, the burden for commercial transactions has eased, especially for uneducated traders, and the standards of education are being improved. This is not necessarily representative of the breadth of Fellow enterprises, but represent the kinds of impacts the Fellows who participated in this research, achieve.

- What is the outstanding impact of the YALI Africa-based practicum on Fellows businesses?** The YALI Africa-based practicum is “a culmination of learnings and experiences” (Habizam, 2019). Upon completing the Fellowship in the US the participants of this study were not equipped enough to meet their business dream goals, which is related the reason they applied for the YALI Africa-based internshippracticum. The YALI Africa-based interventions, specifically the internshippracticum, allowed them to consolidate all their previous learning into tangible skills. Consequently, when the participant returns in their home or completed their internshippracticum, they were able to start generating or improve the benefit of their businesses.
- What is the outstanding impact of the YALI mentorship on Fellows businesses?** On the one hand, the mentorship helped improved the personal and interpersonal skills of participants, which eventually trickles down to their business. The participant Kassam, for example, explained how the mentorship helped her find a balance between her job, family, and social life, which then helped her to be more effective at work. On the other hand, the mentorship helped improve Fellows’ businesses through discussions on goal setting and best practices. The participant Erassam, for example, described how his mentor influenced him to build an organizational culture in which the staff is always on time and communicate effectively.

2018 Cohort Highlight



Non-Profit Leaders and their Beneficiaries

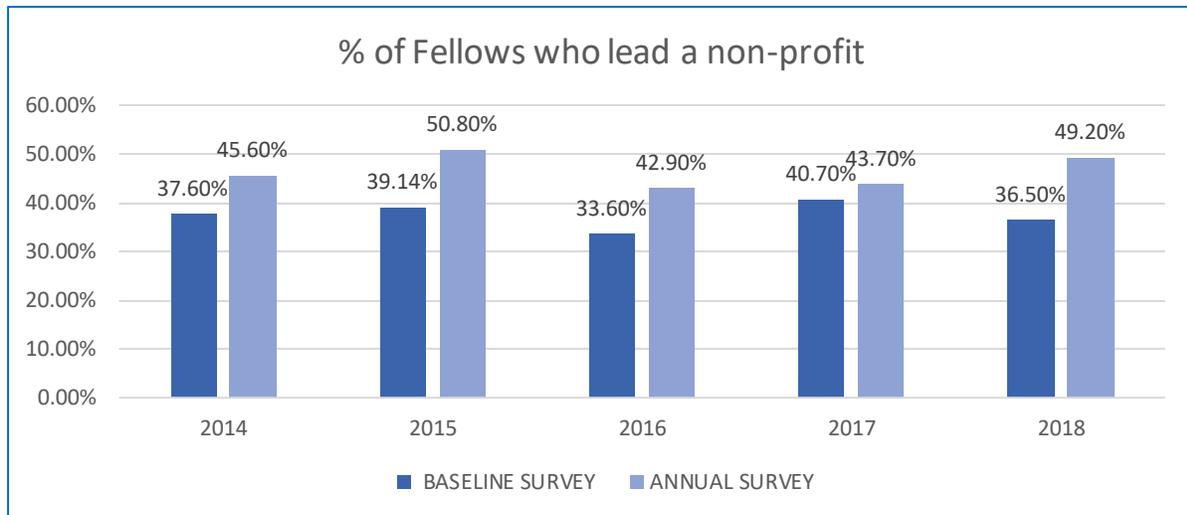
Based on survey data, Fellow-led non-profits:



Benefited an average number of **73,336** people yearly.



Employed an average of **24.7** people.



Data throughout the course of the survey shows that an average of 46.4% of Fellows were leaders of non-profits within their home countries, a year after their participation in the Fellowship. There also appeared to be a general increase in the number of Fellows who headed non-profits in the year after their return to their home country.

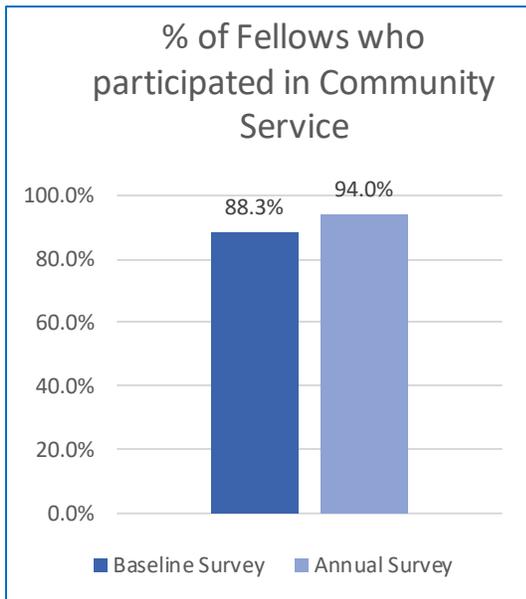
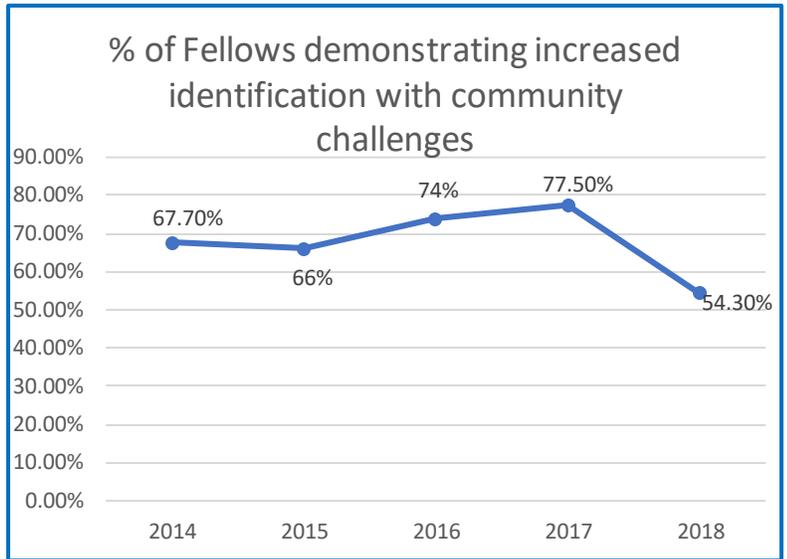


"When I started the Fellowship, I had 3 women and they are the ones that I taught how to make jewelry. Today, we have 60 women [and] we are in four different countries. We are in United States - we export to the University of Nebraska - we are in Guinea, we are in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, one of the fellows is helping us sell our products. And, by the time we leave [the Continental Conference], we will be in Nigeria because we are already in talks and one of the Fellows is coming."

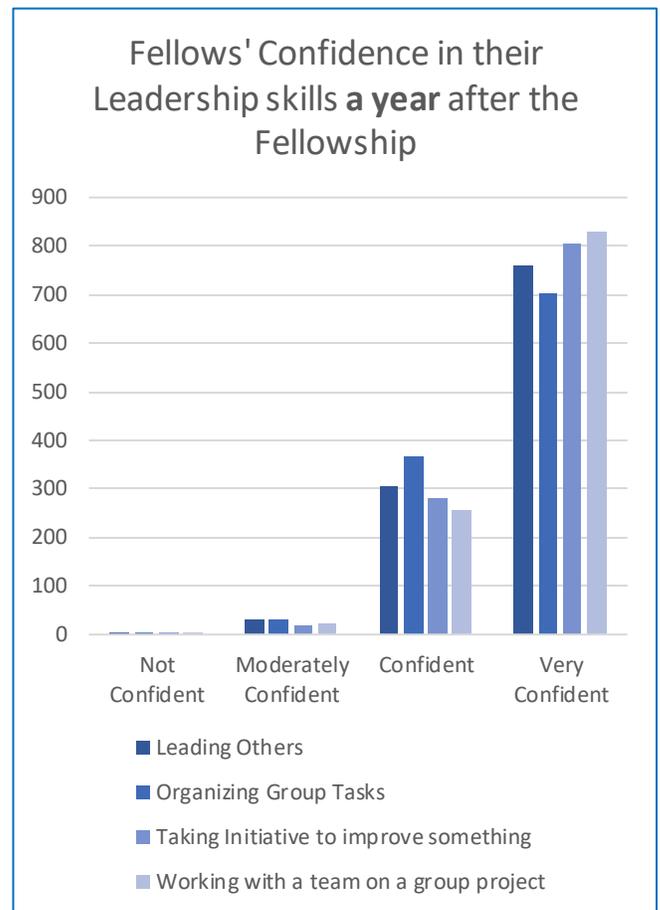
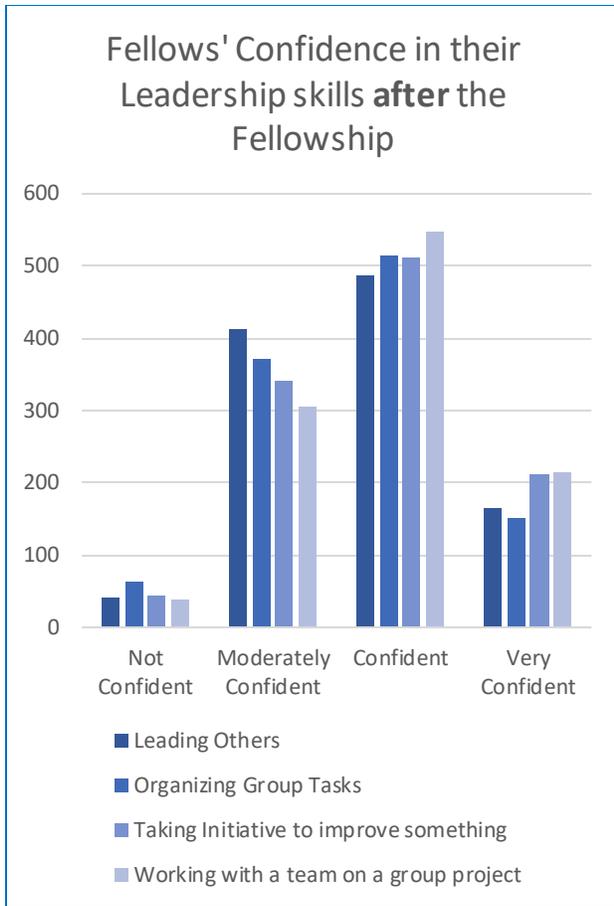
Jennifer Achiro, 2017 Mandela Washington Fellow, Uganda

Serve Communities

In addition to increasing the networks of Fellows, the program aimed to help Fellows become more engaged with their communities. To better understand what community engagement really meant, we measured Fellow level of identification with community challenges before and after the program. On average, 67.9% of all Fellows who answered this question on the Annual Survey from the 2014-2018 cohorts demonstrated increased identification with community challenges. Overall, the trend we saw related to community engagement is that their engagement with community challenges increased after participation in the program.



Data collected also measured the change in Fellows' civic knowledge, skills, and leadership, which showed that there was an average of a 12.4% increase in civic knowledge, skills, and leadership for Fellows who responded to the annual survey from the 2014-2018 cohorts, between first completing US-based MWF programming and one year after completing US-based MWF programming. This data was compiled through asking a series of questions, including self-reflecting questions that asked Fellows how they would compare their leadership skills once the Fellowship was over, as compared to a year after the Fellowship was completed. It is important to note that the baseline already showed a high level of knowledge and skills in these areas from the outset, however the program boosted these levels even higher.



Networks among Fellows

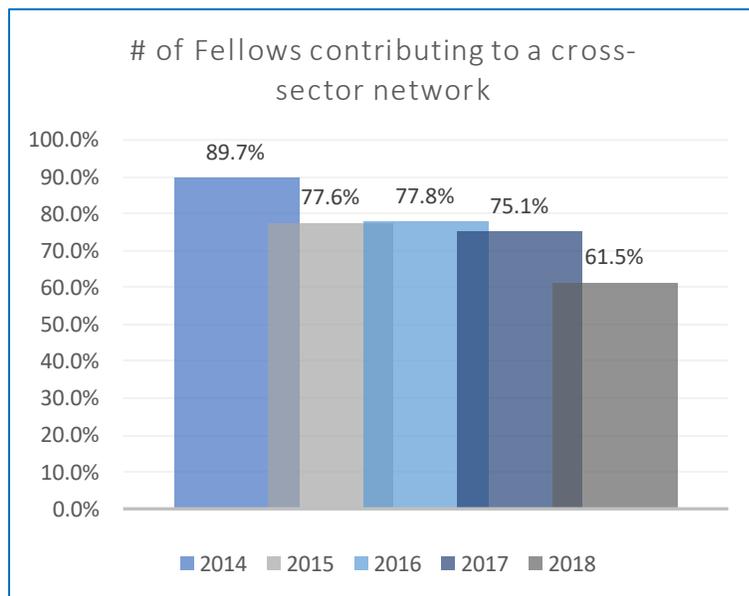


On average, **76.3%** of 2014 – 2018 Fellows reported having **contributed to a cross-sector network** – a network that includes Fellows from at least two tracks of study.

Fellows and networking have helped those who are in business to expand existing businesses and to start new businesses. Through collaboration, they are not only able to achieve a wider geographical reach but are also able to start innovative ventures outside of their primary field of expertise. Based off focus group sessions collected in Nigeria for the Final Impact Evaluation Report, women interviewed said that the networks and the benefits of networking was the biggest change brought about by the program. Their network participation reminded them of their purpose as leaders and gave them confidence to forge ahead with their initiatives. It also connected them with human and financial resources they would not otherwise have access to without the networks. For example, a Fellow who owned a local travel business when she started the Fellowship, has expanded that business, but has also started a FinTech business aimed at women in Africa.

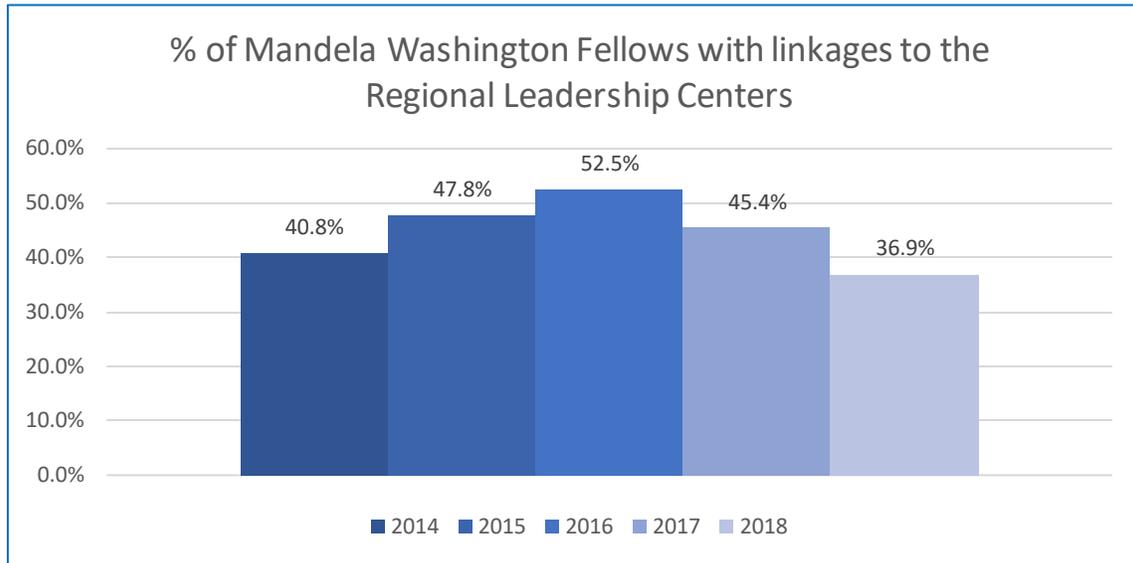
“ I refuse to do a local business anymore...It's not just about the numbers or the money anymore, it's just about the reach.....I'm collaborating with someone in Uganda who already works in the tech world...I'm just collaborating there, so everyone has their strengths, my strength is women, your strength is financials, your strength is tech, and we all come together we can do one thing...”

Female Fellow at a Final Impact Evaluation Focus Group

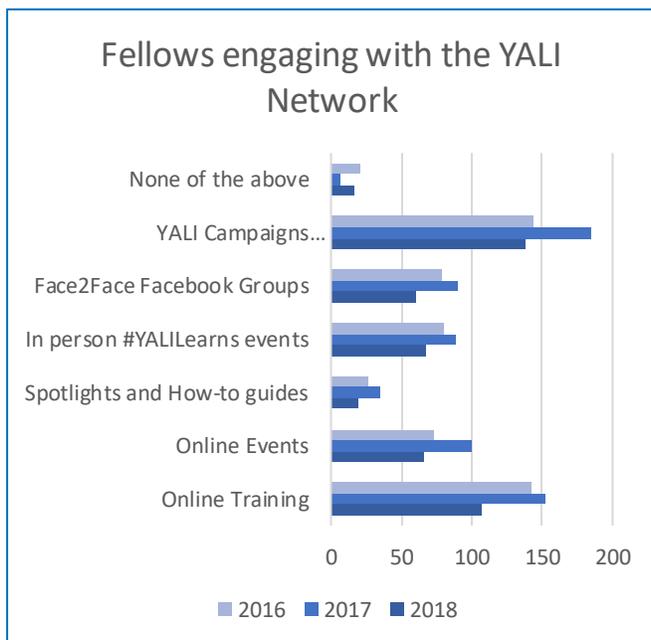


Over the course of five years on average **76.3%** of Fellows contributed to a cross-sector network, defined as a network that includes Fellows from at least two tracks of study, indicating that Fellows are networking with one another on their own and are seeking avenues to connect with other Fellows across sectors. This result is consistent with feedback we received from Fellows that they sought additional avenues to collaborate within the network and with the kinds of collaborations Fellows undertook through the Collaboration Fund Grant program.

Connecting with the YALI network



Fellows also connected with the broader YALI initiative once they return to their home countries. This includes engaging with Regional Leadership Centers (RLCs) and RLC participants as well as the online YALI Network. Of the 14,55 Fellows that responded to this question over five years on the annual survey, 651 reported linkages¹⁰ with RLCs. These figures are further broken down by yearly percentages as shown below.

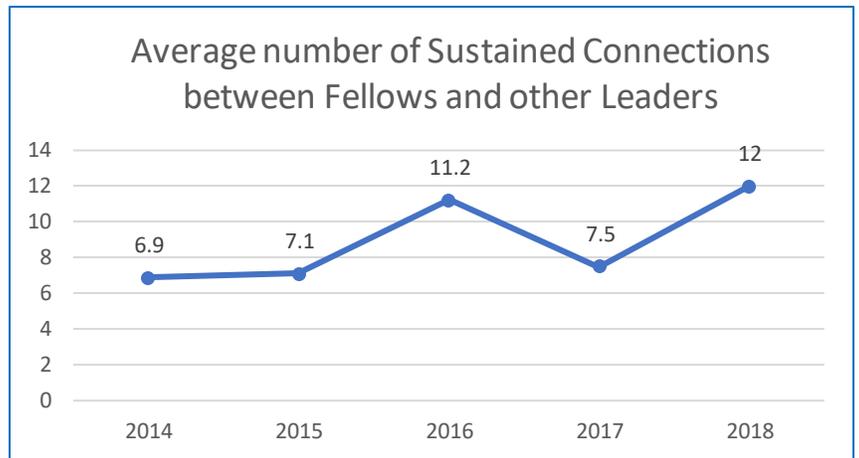


Another area where Fellows could continue engaging with YALI was the online YALI Network. Notwithstanding data from 2014 and 2015, YALI Network's online campaigns and online trainings appeared to have the most engagement, perhaps due to the campaigns' relatability as well as the trainings' utility for the Fellows' professional development.

¹⁰ Linkages refer to mentoring RLC contacts by returned MWFs as well as connections made via online and in-person networking opportunities.

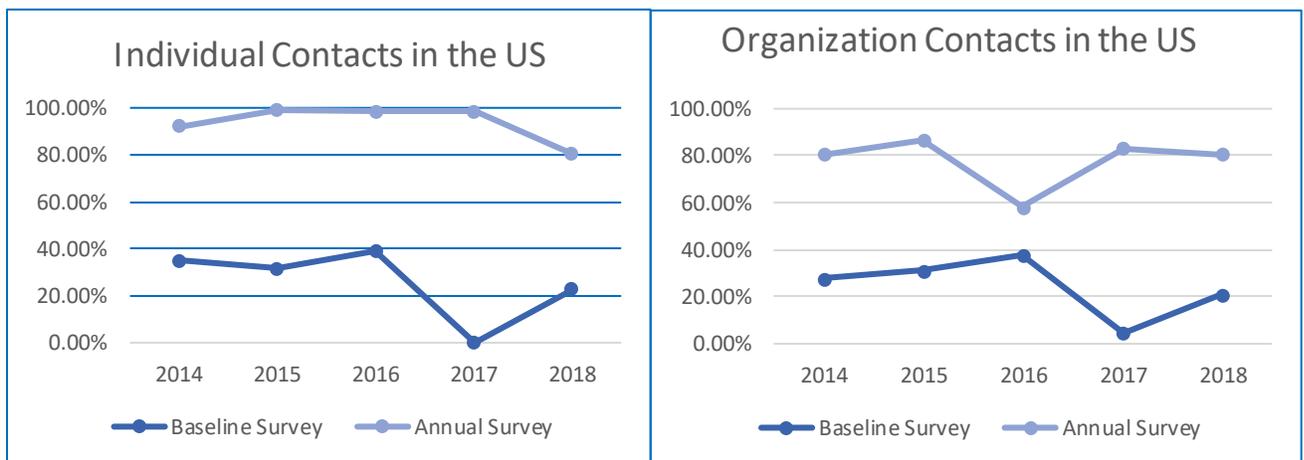
Connections with external networks

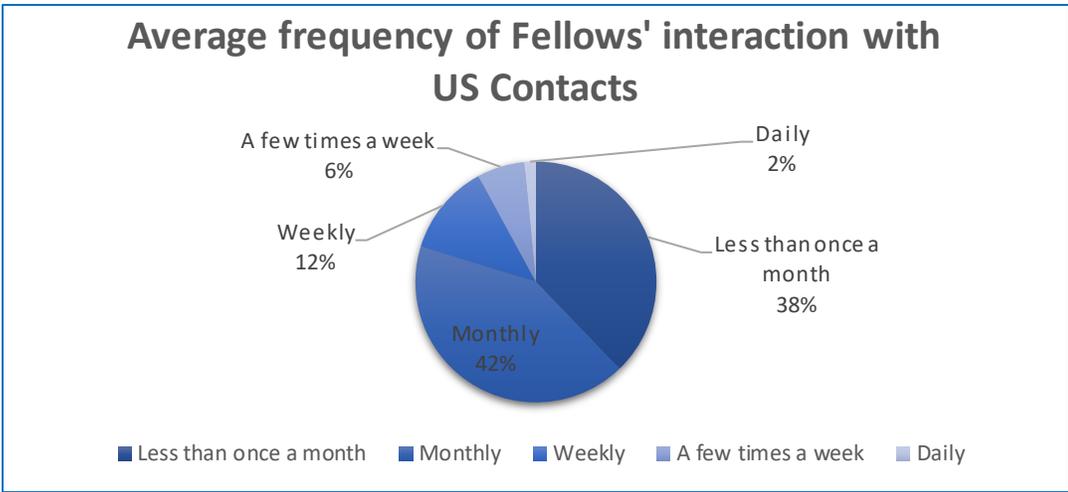
IREX made efforts to connect Fellows with external stakeholders and potential partners in addition to facilitating networking opportunities for Fellows amongst themselves. On average, Fellows reported sustaining 8.9 connections with other leaders, with women reporting an average of 9.04; men reporting an average of 9.68.



Contacts in the U.S.

To better understand connections Fellows make to develop their external networks, we asked about contacts they have with individuals and organizations in the U.S. before and after participating in the program. The baseline survey data showed that on average 25.6% of Fellows had individual contacts in the US before the Fellowship, while 21.1% of all Fellows had organizational contacts. The average data from the annual surveys showed a highly significant jump to an average of 93.6% of Fellows with US individual contacts, and an average of 80.4% of Fellows with organizational contacts. Highlighting this data indicates that even a year after the Fellowship, the nature of their networks intrinsically had a more global nature to them. Additionally, with 62% of Fellows interacting with US contacts at least once a month, the data suggests that there is permanence to their US networks.

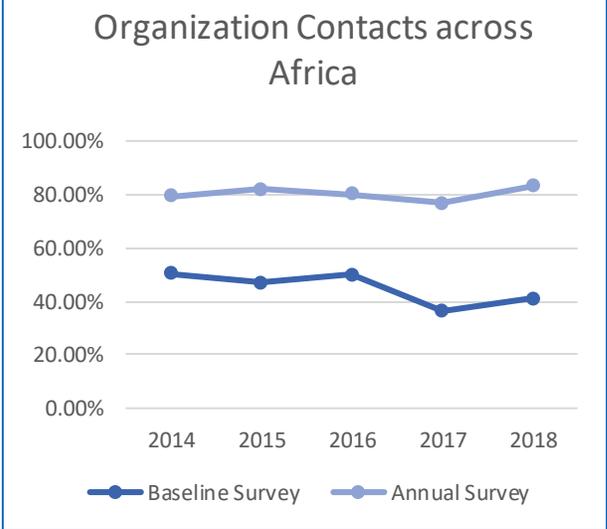
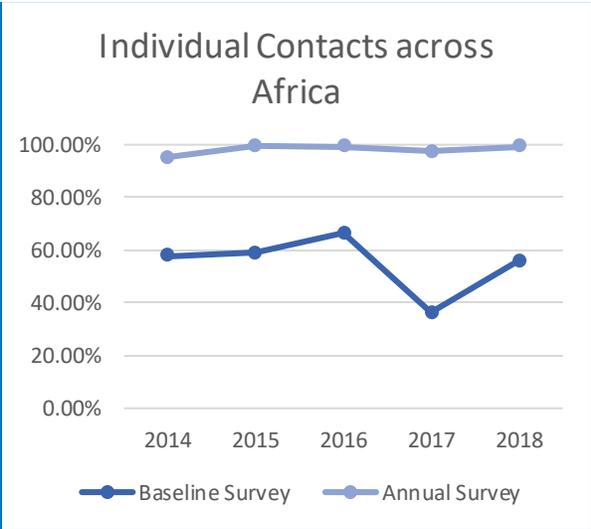


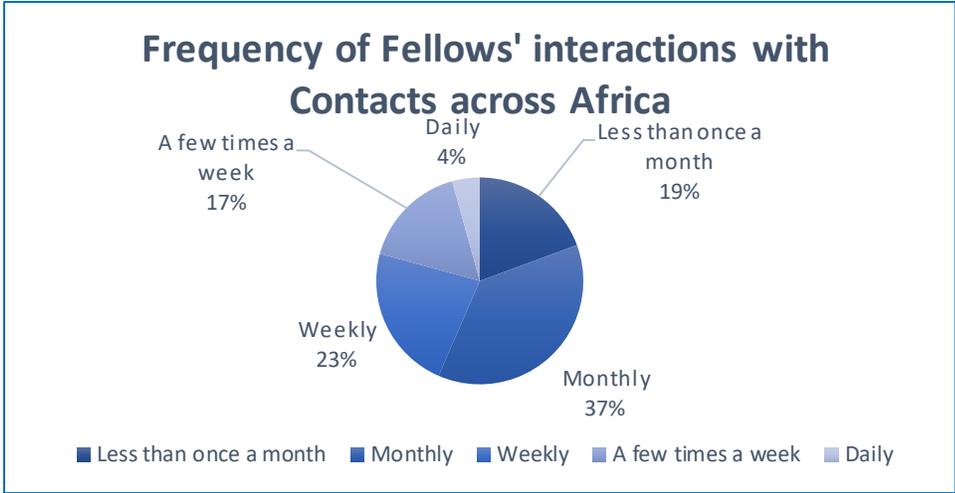


Contacts in Africa

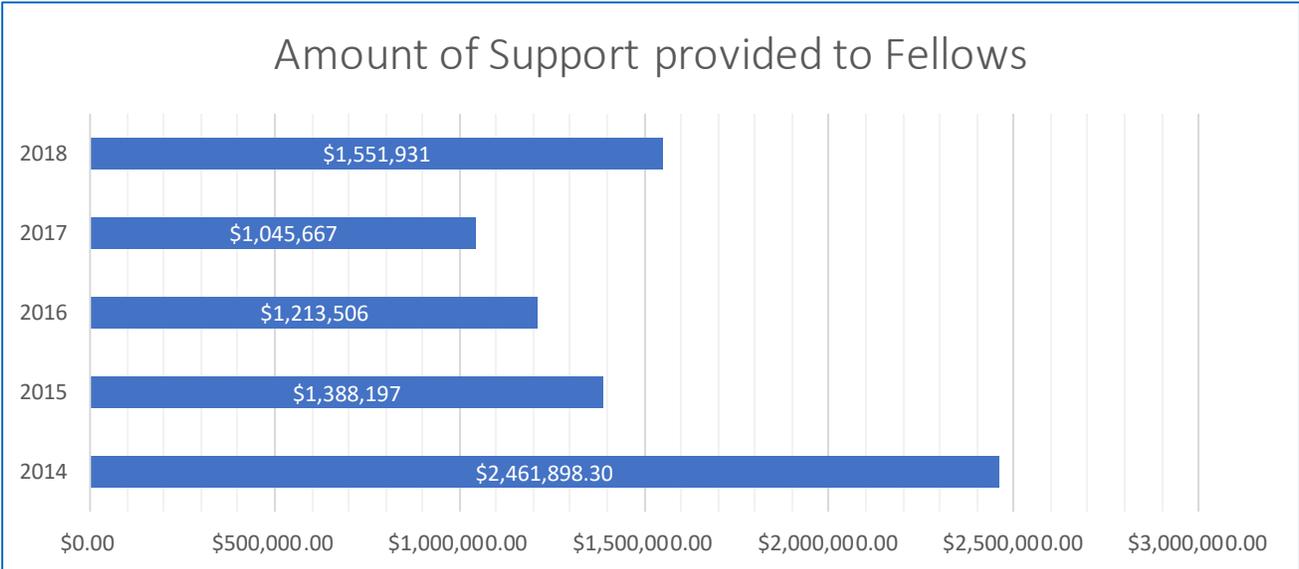
The program also aimed to build networks between Fellows and other individuals and organizations in Africa outside of their home countries, thus we also asked Fellows about the number of contacts they had with such groups before and after participating in the program.

Over the course of five years, in the Fellows who responded to the baseline and annual surveys, the data shows a 45% increase in the number of contacts they have with individual Africans outside of their home country. In a similar pattern, 44.4% of respondents on the baseline survey had organizational contacts in Africa, while this number jumped to an average of 80% of all respondents having organizational contacts. Much like the trend with US contacts, Fellows frequently interacted with their African contacts, with 81% of Fellow respondents reaching out to their African networks at least once a month.





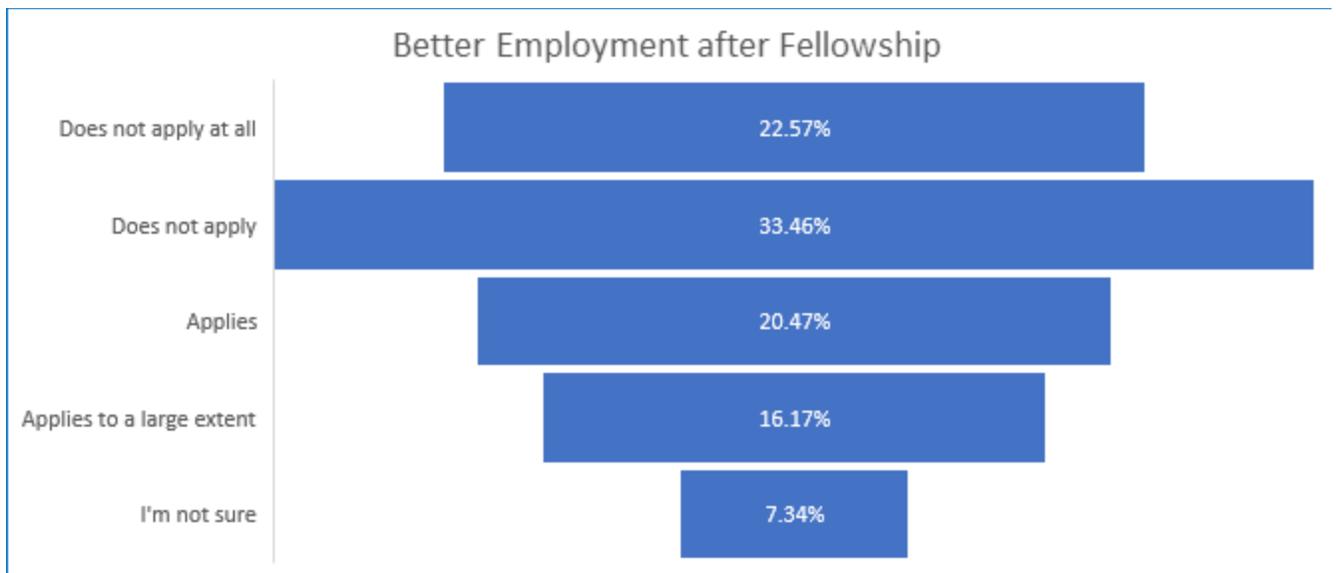
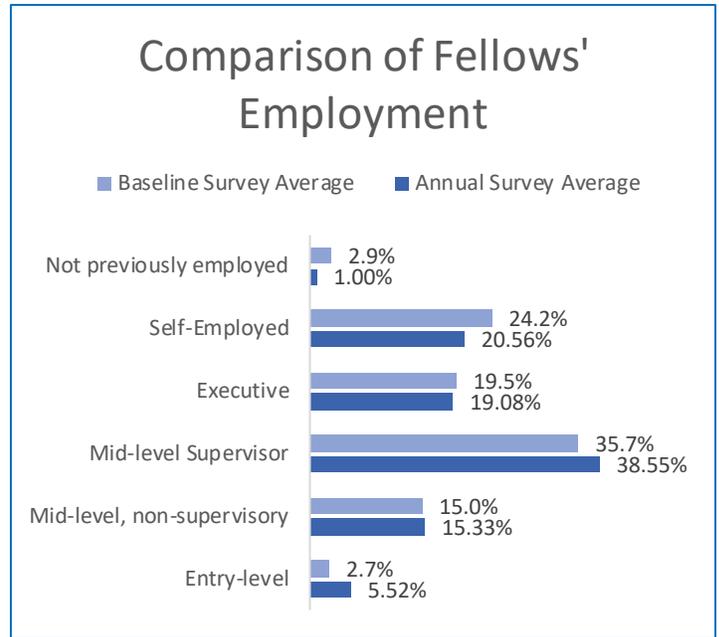
Becoming active and constructive citizens



An objective of the program was to ensure that Fellows are active and constructive citizens. There are many ways in which this might happen, but ensuring they have the right skills and opportunities to apply these skills is key to successful engagement, as is having the resources. Throughout the course of the program, a total of \$7,661,199.30 in support was provided directly to Fellows, with a breakdown of the amount of support shown above.

Employment prospects

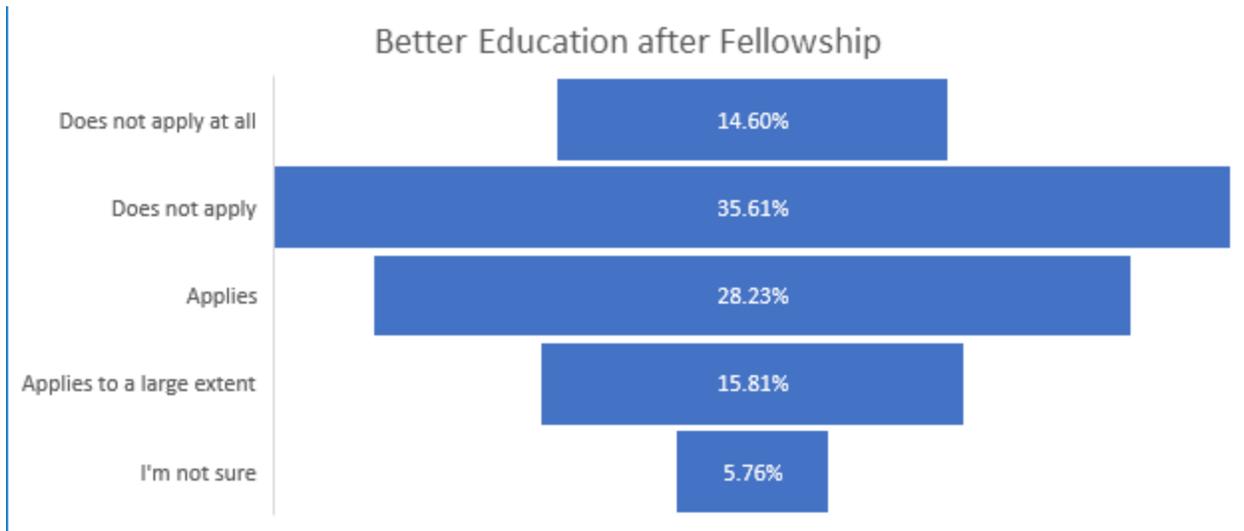
To see if Fellows are advancing in their careers, we measured change in Fellows' professional position over the course of the program and saw certain trends emerge. Based from average numbers throughout the course of the program, there was a decrease in the number of unemployed Fellows from 2.9% to 1%, as well as a decrease in the number of self-employed Fellows from 24.2% to 20.6%. The Fellows who work both in Executive and mid-level non-supervisory levels showed little difference in change in both datasets. However, there was an increase of about 3% of Fellows who became mid-level supervisors or became entry-level employees.



Based on aggregate data from the 2015-2018 cohorts, at least 36% of Fellows gained better employment as a result of their participation in the Mandela Washington Fellowship. The question of better employment is based on the Fellows' perception of whether their employment is better.¹¹ Similarly,

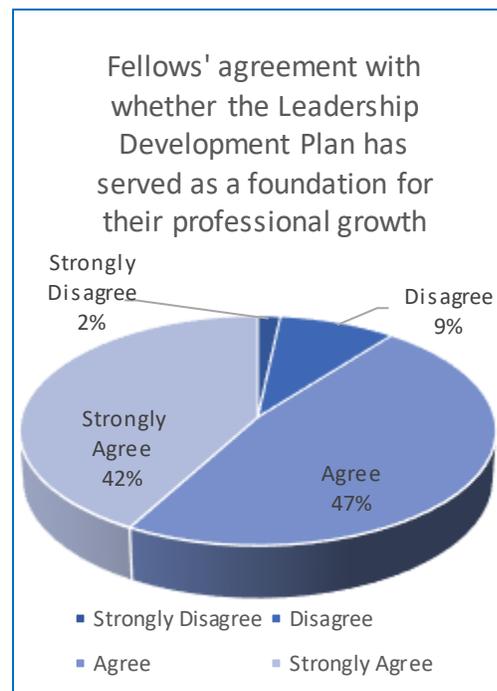
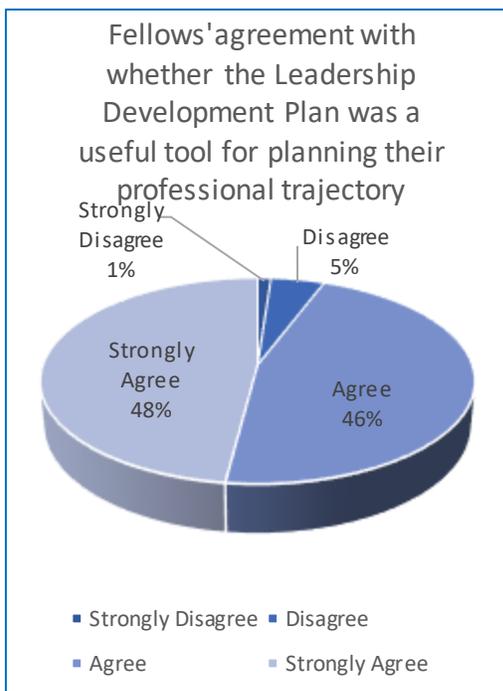
¹¹ This is defined whether it is closer to home, has better pay or schedule, is a new position, received a promotion to a more senior position, received an increase in salary, changed from part-time to full-time work, and/or started your own business or enterprise.

around 44% of Fellows reported to have improved education prospects in their year upon returning from their participation in the Mandela Washington Fellowship.¹²



Increased exposure to best practices and strengthened skills

One tool that the program uses to help Fellows build their individual skills is the Leadership Development Plan. The program provides Fellows with a Leadership Development Plan (LDP) tool to help them plan their career trajectories after returning home. The vast majority of Fellows reported that the LDP was a useful tool for planning their professional trajectory (94% of 2015-2018 Fellows), and that it served as a foundation for continued growth (89% of 2015-2018 Fellows).



¹² Improved education is based on if you have advanced at least one level in your education or returned to formal education or training after leaving.

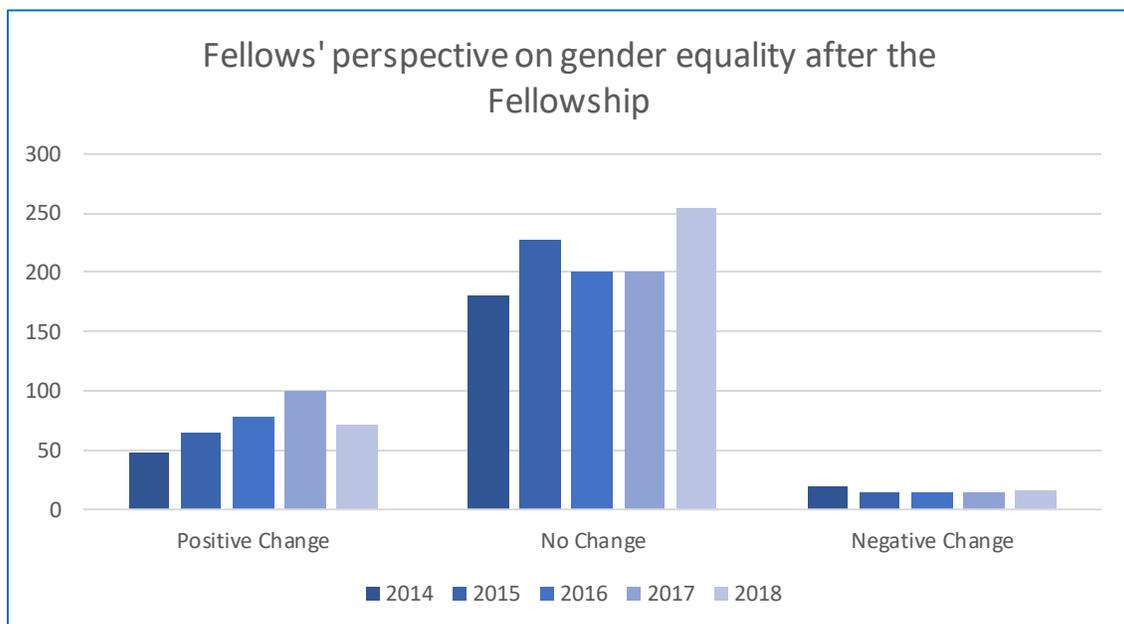
Empower women and youth



“During the Fellowship, a new idea came up to do a documentary [...] to give a voice to the African girl child. So that’s what brought the birth of Tunaweza, a Swahili name that means “we can,” a pan-African documentary series where we cover trust stories and the narrative of the African girl child and their difficulties and challenges towards having a great future. [...] We focus on girls that have gone through challenges [and] are doing something positive with their own lives, so we can use their stories to inspire, transform, and motivate other girls all over the world. We are now channeling that we need to cover the whole 54 countries in the Continent. In making this become effective, I decided to commit myself to self-funding this project.”

Valerio Thompson Boco, 2017 Mandela Washington Fellow,
Equatorial Guinea

Working to empower women and youth is a cross-cutting theme throughout the program, thus the analysis we conducted for this report included a gender lens and looked specifically at attitudes towards women’s social and economic participation.



M&E Conclusion

Overall, the integrated approach the program takes to strengthen Fellows' skills and to build networks has resulted in a network of engaged and active Fellows. The program made great strides towards attaining the program goals. The five years of adapting follow-on programming of the Mandela Washington Fellowship resulted in impactful interventions and spurred the innovation of new ideas. We were able to sustain the results seen through activities like the practicum program, while responding to Fellow feedback to create Collaboration Fund Grants. In doing so, we created more opportunities for networking that supported the interests and needs of Fellows and further strengthened the connections they make amongst themselves and with their communities.

F. Conclusion

The program goal was to build the skills of young African leaders to improve the accountability and transparency of government, start and grow businesses, and serve their communities. One high-level indicator of progress towards achieving this project goal has been participation in follow-on activities in Africa. In total, 2198 Fellows from the 2014-2018 cohorts participated in follow-on programming through a variety of means including 747 Mentorships, 169 Speaker Travel Grants, 104 Collaboration Grants, Regional or Continental Conferences and Convenings attended by 1698 Fellows, over 25 Communities of Practice, 669 Practicums, Regional Advisory Boards, and 133 Continued Networking and Learning Events. Fellows completed over 320,000 workforce development hours and over 2800 Fellows submitted LDPs demonstrating their intention to build their leadership potential.

It has been an honor and privilege to implement this program and facilitate the experiential learning, networking, and give back that Fellows have achieved through the USAID-funded follow-on for the Mandela Washington Fellowship.

G. Attachments

All attachments are included as separate documents:

1. Intervention Specific Recommendations
2. Final Regional Advisory Board Toolkit
3. 2014 – 2018 Regional Advisory Board Bios
4. EduHeros Toolkit
5. OPI Training Materials
6. List of TA (trainings) provided during OPI intervention
7. 2018 Regional Convening Reports
8. Staff Networking and Outreach Overview
9. 2014 – 2018 Continued Networking and Learning Events
10. Agendas for three post-convening trainings
11. Speaker Travel Grant Final Report Template
12. 2014 – 2018 Speaker Travel Grants
13. Practicum Tools – Toolkit for Host, Toolkit for Fellows, Practicum T&Cs, Stipend & Relocation Structure
14. 2014 – 2018 Practicums
15. 2017 – 2018 Collaboration Fund Grants
16. Mentorship Toolkit – Mentor Toolkit, Mentee Toolkit, Peer Mentorship Toolkit
17. 2014 – 2018 Mentorships
18. Leadership Development Plan
19. 2014 – 2017 Social Network Analysis Report
20. Final Impact Evaluation Report
21. Progress Against Indicators
22. Fellow-owned Business Report