



ASPEN GLOBAL  
INNOVATORS GROUP  
aspen institute



# Aspen Global Innovators Group 2022 Impact Report



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# About Aspen Global Innovators Group



The [Aspen Global Innovators Group \(AGI\)](#) is a policy program of the Aspen Institute, a non-profit organization that drives change through dialogue, leadership, and action to help solve the most pressing global health and development challenges. AGI promotes global health leadership and breakthrough solutions in global health and development through innovative partnerships, programs, and policies.

AGI programs include the Aspen New Voices Fellowship, which brings expert voices from the Global South into the global development debate; the Healthy Communities Fellowship, a media fellowship for leaders addressing the social determinants of health; the Aspen Ideas

Incubator, an action-oriented ideas lab to improve access and quality of healthcare across the globe; and Aspen Ideas: Health, a three-day conference on health preceding the annual Aspen Ideas Festival. AGI also leads AMP Health, which supports leadership and management in Ministries of Health; the Communities First Global Collaborative, which brings community-rooted voices to the table to create a health system that works for all; the Aspen Forum on Women and Girls, a joint effort in partnership with Ascend at the Aspen Institute and the Center for Native American Youth giving visibility and voice to women, girls and allies advancing gender equality and justice around the globe.

## Our Team

The AGI team shares the diversity in race, ethnicity, geography and gender of the leaders and communities that we serve. The team has fluent speakers of Amharic, French, Hindi, Spanish, Portuguese, Tigrinya, Turkish, Swahili, and English to better meet the needs of our growing and often overlooked communities.

# Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I introduce to you the Aspen Global Innovators Group's inaugural impact report. This 2022 report reflects our accomplishments and learnings from across our programming in the past year. I am proud that our mission of driving change through dialogue, leadership, and action to help solve today's most pressing global health and development challenges is making a concrete impact around the world.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to underline the critical importance of elevating underrepresented voices on the global stage. Through our team community of fellows, partners, and leaders, the Aspen Global Innovators community rose to meet this challenge. We held 12 global convenings, welcomed 44 new fellows, provided \$75,000 USD in catalytic funds, and are experiencing unprecedented demand for our programs from partners in over 50 countries. There is still much work to be done, and we are confident that our demonstrated blueprint for driving global health will help us achieve a more equitable world for all.

AGI's global focus is inclusive of the United States and ensures that community leaders are represented and engaged in our work and that they have the opportunity to learn from one another, develop meaningful partnerships and codesign new ideas and programs despite geographic barriers. We recognize that women's rights are under attack in the United States, where we are headquartered.



*Looking forward, in 2023, the Aspen Global Innovators Group is focusing on how to strategically maximize our impact.*





*Good health is not only an end in itself but a means to a fuller life. Global health, therefore, is not only a public good, but a foundation for the future of human civilization.”*

The Supreme Court’s recent ruling contradicts the idea of equality in the US Constitution by denying women and girls the ability to make their own decisions about their bodies and families, and threatening body sovereignty. This and other recent legislation underline the importance of the Healthy Communities Fellowship, and the Communities First Global Collaborative. These programs are working to advance gender, racial and health equity and build community resilience and access to health resources and services and are elevating the voices of community leaders while providing evidence-based solutions to eliminating health disparities. Now more than ever, the Aspen Institute Forum on Women and Girls is critical to continuing to progress in this area by providing the indomitable SOAR fellows - women of diverse backgrounds and with invaluable lived experiences - with the right tools to shape the global dialogue on women’s health and propel women and girls toward greater opportunity.

Looking forward, in 2023, the Aspen Global Innovators Group is focusing on how to strategically maximize our impact. Part of this strategy includes expanding our internal staff capacity, developing new content driven programming in partnership with aligned organizations and leaders that will contribute directly to advance relevant policy and advocacy agendas. We are pleased to share that we recently welcomed four talented and knowledgeable staff members to ensure we are delivering the highest level of programming

across the globe.

I want to take the opportunity to personally thank our incredible partners and fellows. Without your leadership and support, this work would not be possible. We are also appreciative of our donors and funding partners, whose support is critical to our program as we continue to navigate an increasingly complex and interdependent global health and development landscape.

We are excited about the path we have forged for 2023. While we are deeply saddened by the passing of Secretary Madeleine Albright, former Board chair of the Aspen Institute, and a loyal partner and fierce champion for women and girls around the world, we continue to take inspiration from her words: “Good health is not only an end in itself but a means to a fuller life. Global health, therefore, is not only a public good but a foundation for the future of human civilization.” I invite you to join us as we build a healthier, more equitable future together for generations to come.

Thank you for your continued support of the Aspen Global Innovators Group.

Sincerely,

**Lola Adedokun, Executive Director**

*Aspen Global Innovators Group*

*Co-chair of the Aspen Forum on Women and Girls*



# New Voices Fellowship

**LOCALLY ROOTED,  
GLOBALLY NETWORKED:  
THE NEW VOICES  
FELLOWSHIP IMPACT  
IN 2022**



## About the New Voices Fellowship

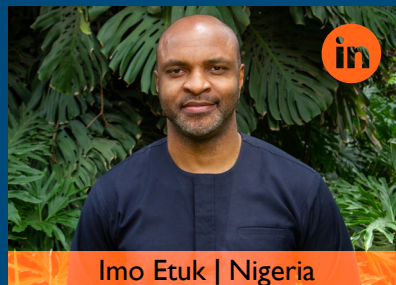
Now in its 10th year, the New Voices Fellowship increases the visibility and influence of development experts from countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America. The program provides comprehensive communications, advocacy and storytelling training to equip these experts and advocates with the skills required to shape public opinion and affect policy change. Fellows use their increased recognition and work with trained advocacy mentors to advocate for policy change at local, national, and global levels.

New Voices Fellows come from a variety of disciplines, including public health, education, poverty alleviation, agriculture, and community activism. Each Fellow is an expert in their field with a deep understanding of broad development challenges as well as a passion for communicating their views.



## 2022 New Voices Fellowship Program Highlights

The New Voices Fellowship program invited 14 new fellows to its community in 2022, bringing the total number of fellows since the program's inception to 187, hailing from 47 countries. The 2022 cohort includes:





## Ripple effects of this investment in leadership

Desmond Jumbam, a New Voices Fellow from 2022, was so influenced by the New Voices Fellowship that he launched his own Fellowship in 2023, the Global Surgery Advocacy Fellowship. With input from the New Voices staff, Desmond has co-created the global surgery fellowship with Operation Smile, the University of Global Health Equity, and the Nkafu Policy Institute dedicated to amplifying the voices of surgeons from low- and middle-income countries. Desmond says, “We believe that this program will truly revolutionize global surgery advocacy and have an incredible impact on millions of lives globally. Thank you for inspiring and supporting us.”

## Alumni Hopes for the New Voices Fellowship



*“The New Voices Fellowship is one of the best fellowship programs around the world and it is bringing the grass roots work happening in the global south centerstage. I think it is of utmost importance for the program to not just continue, but to expand rapidly.”*

Shuchin Bajaj | 2022 | India

*“The fellowship has identified and opened up untapped talent within Africa and Asia and provided them with a platform from which they can communicate and discuss their ideas, feel heard, provide leadership and advice share knowledge in the form of OpEds as well as act as an example and an inspiration to others. The fellowship has also provided fellows with a voice which they have used to challenge the status quo leading to change in the community. As the world continues to be faced with Climate change, disease outbreaks, war and hunger, I believe that more voices are needed to speak and debate about these issues creating more knowledge and awareness.”*

Janet Midega | 2017 | Kenya



*“The Fellowship opens up a world of possibilities unknown to most of us who come to it. I believe the best way to help anyone is to teach them how to best use their abilities to achieve their goals. This is what the fellowship did for me. I believe giving resources to programs that build capacity and awaken people’s abilities to create and develop their own solutions are most needed.”*

Anonymous Fellow

## Lessons Learned



### **STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS ARE CRUCIAL FOR AMPLIFYING IMPACT AND SECURING FUNDING, ESPECIALLY IN TIMES OF INCREASING HEALTH CRISES.**

Over the past decade, the New Voices Fellowship program has recognized that strategic partnerships are critical to achieving its mission and expanding its impact. Through collaborations with organizations that share its values and goals, the program has been able to bring in new resources, reach more communities, and amplify the voices of its Fellows. Given the challenging funding environment, it is imperative to build strong partnerships with funders, organizations, and individuals who are committed to advancing global health and development. In a world where health crises are increasing, the New Voices Fellowship program needs support to continue to elevate the voices and work of its Fellows who are on the front lines of improving health outcomes in their communities.



**ADAPTABILITY IS MORE CRITICAL THAN EVER.** The New Voices Fellowship operates in a constantly evolving landscape of global health and development, and it is crucial to be able to adapt to changing circumstances and emerging challenges. The program's success hinges on its ability to pivot quickly and adjust programming to meet the needs of fellows and the communities they serve. This entails adjusting training content to address emerging health issues or changing the format of meetings and events to accommodate changing circumstances. By being flexible and adaptable, the program continues to be relevant and effective in supporting the vital work of its Fellows.



**REGIONAL FOCUS MAY ENHANCE IMPACT.** The New Voices Fellowship program recognizes the significance of regularly reevaluating its theory of change and fundamental assumptions. As the program expands and evolves, the team has learned that a regional focus can significantly improve the experience and impact of Fellows. The program intends to launch regional fellowships that will facilitate more comprehensive discussions and targeted advocacy campaigns, providing Fellows with the tools to effect tangible change in their communities. By launching regionally focused fellowships, the New Voices Fellowship program remains committed to its core mission of supporting and amplifying the voices of its Fellows.

## New Voices Fellowship's 2023 Vision

The New Voices Fellowship program is excited to open applications for the IMPACT West Africa program. Spearheaded by leading African-led advocacy firm Niyel, in consultation with the New Voices Fellowship team, the program will spotlight advocates from French-speaking and English-speaking West African countries. It aims to foster a unified approach to development priorities, bridging the gap between West Africa's Francophone and Anglophone regions. By forging new cross-border alliances, this program seeks to tackle common challenges that affect half a billion people across the region's 17 countries. This program is a significant step towards the New Voices Fellowship program's goal of launching regionally-focused fellowships to enhance the impact and experience of its Fellows. Through

tailored advocacy training and targeted networking opportunities, the program is confident in equipping its Fellows with the necessary tools and support to amplify their voices and effect tangible change in the region.

In addition to piloting its first regional fellowships, the New Voices Fellowship program is cultivating strategic partnerships with organizations that share its values and goals. By building strong partnerships with funders, organizations, and individuals committed to advancing global health and development, the program aims to further elevate the voices and work of its Fellows who are on the front lines of improving health outcomes in their communities.







# AMP Health

## BUILDING A HEALTHIER AFRICA: AMP HEALTH SCALES TO MEET UNPRECEDENTED DEMAND FOR LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING IN 2022

### About AMP Health

Founded in 2015, AMP Health works to improve health systems and outcomes by collaborating with governments to strengthen the leadership and management capacity within Ministry of Health teams. AMP Health's approach combines mentoring and capability development; experiential learning through interactive in-person and online training; executive coaching; curated self-directed learning; and peer exchange across countries to build highly effective public sector teams, accelerate the adoption of new technologies, and facilitate the sharing of best practices.

AMP currently partners with ministry of health teams working in community health, non-communicable diseases, malaria, immunizations, and maternal and child health. AMP Management Partners are active in 12 African Countries: Central African Republic, Chad, Ghana, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, and Zambia. The team also continues to engage with teams that no longer have a Management Partner in Sierra Leone and Togo.

### Highlights from 2022

The past year continued to underscore the tremendous significance of leadership and management on the world stage. The COVID-19 pandemic tested leaders – both seasoned and new – and the success of response efforts hinged on a government's ability to manage complex systems, as well as navigate constant change and uncertainty. AMP Health embraced the opportunity to support African government teams that sought to develop the leadership and management capacities needed to achieve their goals.

To keep up with the increasing demand for their services, AMP Health has expanded its team, doubling in size to include six members based in Johannesburg. Additionally, the program now has 13 Management Partners now on board. With all but one of the Africa-based staff members originating from the continent, the team embodies diverse perspectives and experiences, representing 10 different countries. With backgrounds mostly in the private sector, the new team members possess valuable knowledge and experience that are beneficial to AMP's partner teams.

## Community Health

Community health programs are critical to strengthening health systems, increasing access to health care, and allowing people to live healthier, more prosperous lives. Since AMP Health began partnering with ministry teams in 2015, AMP Health has partnered with community health teams in Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Zambia to support their journey to be more effective leaders. With AMP's support in 2022:

- » Zambia's Community Health Unit (CHU) strengthened its governance systems and structures; reinforced individual and team skills in planning, implementation, and coordination of activities; enhanced its monitoring and evaluation reporting systems; and began drafting a five-year Strategy.
- » Togo's Division de la Santé Communautaire et des Personnes Âgées (DSCPA) created a Leadership and Management Learning Plan. This plan incorporates tools and processes designed to advance its objectives, including increasing the data availability, improving planning processes, instilling a culture of performance monitoring and evaluation, and enhancing internal and external communication and coordination.



*One thing that AMP has been working with us to do is to take a longer-term approach to our work. We are shifting from being a team that is working only on today's tasks or this week's tasks, and asking ourselves, "How does this task link to our bigger objectives?"*

– Dr Sylvia Chila, Assistant Director of Community Health at the Zambia Ministry of Health



*The DSCPA used to be just a little office behind the Ministry of Health. Now the DSCPA plays a much bigger role in the rollout of community health services. There are higher expectations, and the DSCPA is seen as a key decision-maker and advisor on community health projects throughout the country... a more confident team and the increased visibility of the DSCPA – have made it easier for us to get funding from partners. They have more trust in us now."*

– Dr Mouchadou Abdoukarim Naba, Head of the Division of Community Health and the Elderly at the Togo Ministry of Health, Public Hygiene and Universal Access to Healthcare



*We have become more effective as a team. Now we know which activities to prioritize and which ones to delay – scheduling has been more effective. We have also become more aware of influencing skills so that we are able to drive our own agenda rather than having others determine that agenda for us.”*

– Team member, Malawi Expanded Programme on Immunization



*[Most partners] with us to achieve their deliverables. AMP is different... We are learning to present information in such a way that donors and other partners are excited to work with us. If AMP pulls out tomorrow, we would still be able to mobilize resources and we will be able to implement the things we need to implement.”*

– Dr Anthony Tucker, Director of the NCD Division in the Liberia Ministry of Health

## Non-Communicable Diseases

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) contribute to more than two-thirds of all annual deaths worldwide and are among the leading causes of preventable illness and related disability and half of these deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. AMP has partnered with NCD teams in Liberia, Malawi, and Mozambique to ensure that teams responsible for managing NCD programs are not only technically competent, but also excellent planners, problem solvers, project managers and leaders. With AMP's support in 2022:

- » The Malawi Ministry of Health (MoH) Non-Communicable Diseases, Injuries and Mental Health (NCDI and MH) Unit developed a strategy to foster strategic partnerships to support advocacy for NCDI and MH and improved its operational planning capacity.
- » Liberia's Ministry of Health NCDI team developed national policies, strategies, guidelines, plans and protocols to that played a vital role in resource mobilization, team performance management, and data utilization for decision-making, advocacy, and communication.

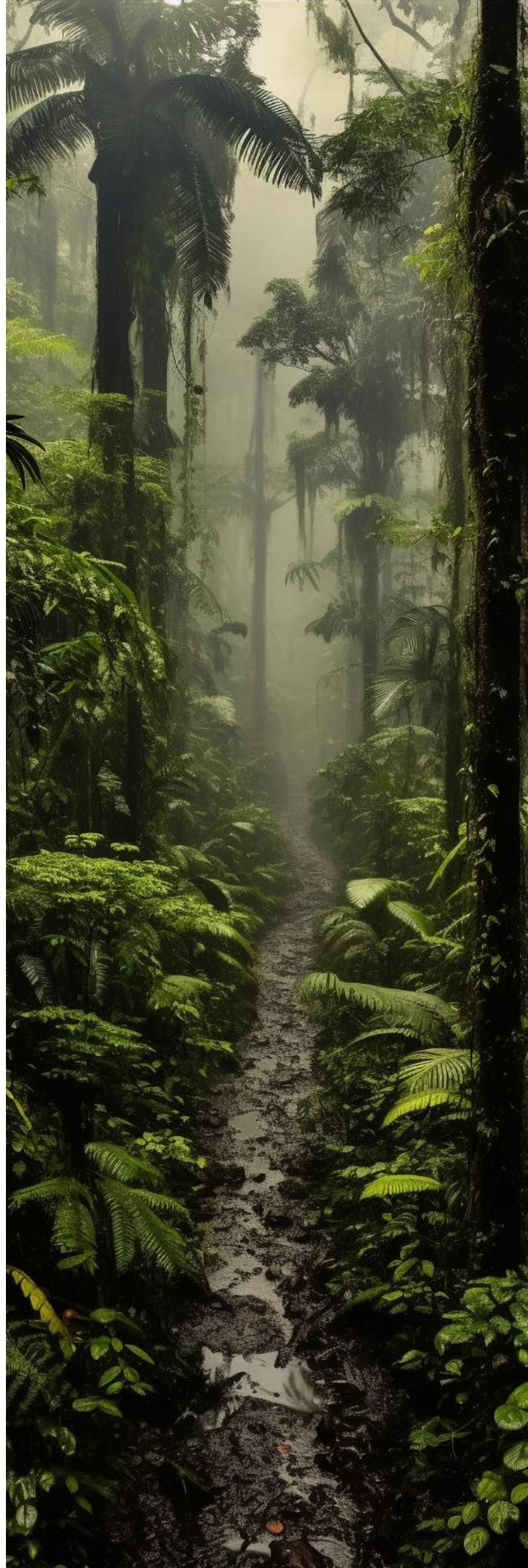




## Malaria

Malaria continues to be a major burden on public health, particularly in Africa, where 95% of malaria cases occur, and is the leading cause of death in children under the age of five on the continent. In addition, malaria takes a significant economic toll on both households and governments through treatment and lost economic opportunities. AMP supports teams in the Central African Republic, Chad, Mauritania, Namibia, and the Republic of Congo as they strive to prevent, control, and ultimately eliminate malaria. With AMP's support in 2022:

- » The Republic of Congo's Programme National de Lutte Contre le Paludisme (PNLP) improved its planning and data management capacity. They mobilized support from Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Global Fund for training. The PNLN also enhanced communication with partners and stakeholders to increase the visibility of their efforts. Additionally, it strengthened internal communication, fostering delegation of responsibilities and building trust between team members.
- » Mauritania's Malaria Control Service (MCS) expanded its team's capacity to eliminate malaria by boosting team morale through improving internal coordination, cohesion, and communication. The MCS made data-informed decisions to drive their malaria control strategies. Notably, they launched their Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SMC) campaign after several years of delay. The MCS also diversified their funding sources through partnerships with the World Bank's INAYA project and the Global Fund. Furthermore, the MCS improved coordination with its core and secondary stakeholders.
- » Chad's Programme National de Lutte Contre le Paludisme (PNLP) increased cohesion at all levels of the team by improving internal communications, defining roles, and sharing data between the program and its regional level teams. PNLN also partnered with Yale University to produce malaria vaccine research and won a NIH R01 grant.







## Fostering New Partnerships

AMP Health has partnered with several new ministries, thanks to the demand from African governments and the support of AGI's funding partners. The AMP Health team also expanded to new programmatic areas, including noncommunicable diseases and malaria. The AMP Health team also expanded to new programmatic areas, including noncommunicable diseases and malaria, and is partnering to support senior leaders working on health for women, children, and adolescents. Some of these partners include:

- » The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust has provided a grant to strengthen leadership and management skills in teams that are responsible for managing Type 1 diabetes and other non-communicable diseases in the Ministries of Health of Liberia, Malawi, and Mozambique.
- » The United States Agency for Internal Development (USAID) has allocated resources to AMP Health through the Sustaining Technical and Analytic Resources (STAR) project. This partnership aims to collaborate with the National Malaria Control Programmes (NMCP) in the Central African Republic, Chad, Mauritania, Namibia, and Republic of the Congo. The team will support the NMCP teams to deliver on ambitious malaria objectives through customized on-the job training, as well as embedded coaching and mentoring that will strengthen their leadership, programme management, problem solving, and analytical skills.
- » The Global Financing Facility (GFF), a multistakeholder global partnership housed at the World Bank will support AMP Health in the development and implementation of the next phase of their Country Leadership Program. The program aims to enable leaders to learn from one another and to equip them with the skills and support to drive systemic change across health systems. The focus ensuring all women, children, and adolescents can survive and thrive aligning with GFF's core mission.
- » With support from LGT Venture Philanthropy, AMP Health has partnered with the Community Health team in Mali to strengthen leadership and management capabilities of the Community Health team. By enhancing their skills and capacity, this partnership seeks to support them in building a more resilient Community Health system.

## 2022 Lessons Learned



**IT IS IMPORTANT TO LINK SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TO THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE TEAM.** Building skills has limited intrinsic value if these skills do not result in improvements in health systems.



**TEAMS FOLLOW SIMILAR PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT.** AMP Health aims to build trust with all stakeholders. Teams then shift their focus to introducing new ways of working and effectiveness measures by understanding roles and responsibilities, managing times, prioritizing, running more effective meetings, and working more collaboratively as a team. Once these foundations of trust are in place and teams are demonstrating higher levels of competency with these new ways of working, they start to become more efficient and strategic, and take on more ambitious goals.



**GLOBAL EXPANSION REQUIRES A LOCAL CONTEXT.** Over the past year, AMP Health has increased the number of countries with embedded Management Partners from four to twelve. This geographic expansion has required the team to build the capacity to work in multiple languages, while also to continue adapting its content to local contexts.

## AMP Health's 2023 Vision

Over the next year, the AMP Health Team is excited to implement its work through the Global Financing Facility, hosted by the World Bank, to support their Country Leadership Program in additional countries; conduct missions to explore potential partnerships in new sectors, such as with Ministries of Education and Ministries of Trade and Industry; bring a renewed emphasis on the power of coaching; and, as the pandemic eases, explore new opportunities to bring teams together to share knowledge and learn from one another.





# Aspen Institute Forum on Women and Girls

## ASPEN INSTITUTE FORUM ON WOMEN AND GIRLS: COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO DRIVING CHANGE

### About the Aspen Institute Forum on Women and Girls

The [Aspen Institute Forum on Women and Girls](#) is a powerful initiative that advances women's economic justice, political participation, civic engagement, and leadership across the globe. The Forum hosts a series of conversations and programs that aim to foster meaningful change and create a world where women and girls can thrive. This innovative program is a collaboration between Ascend at the Aspen Institute, Aspen Global Innovators Group, and the Aspen Institute Center for Native American Youth, bringing together a group of diverse and bold social justice leaders to drive change.

The Forum also hosts the SOAR Fellowship. The SOAR Fellowship invests in visionary leaders with bold ideas to address pressing issues affecting women and girls today. SOAR Fellows are committed to an intersectional approach and at an inflection point that will enable a quantum leap forward for gender equity, equality, economic justice, and well-being for women, families, and

girls in the US and around the world. The SOAR Fellowship is the Aspen Institute Forum on Women and Girls' signature leadership initiative.

Through a series of conversations and programs, the Forum uplifts promising ideas and leaders, leveraging the strength of families to create opportunities for women and girls. With a deep sense of urgency and possibility, the Forum inspires action that drives us closer to a world where women and girls have equal access to opportunities as their male counterparts.

The Aspen Institute Forum on Women and Girls exemplifies the benefits of collaboration within the Aspen Institute. By harnessing the strengths and resources of multiple programs, the Forum amplifies the voices of community leaders and supports women and girls in the United States and around the world, compelling them towards opportunity and equality.

## Highlights from 2022 SOAR Fellowship

The SOAR Fellowship is a program that supports innovative leaders who are tackling critical issues affecting women and girls. These leaders are dedicated to promoting gender equity, economic justice, and the overall well-being for women, families, and girls worldwide. As the Aspen Institute Forum on Women and Girls' flagship leadership initiative, the SOAR Fellowship takes an intersectional approach to these issues. In 2022, the Fellowship welcomed its second cohort of 18 dynamic changemakers. These Fellows are breaking down barriers and spearheading societal change on a range of critical issues. Their initiatives include building a social change movement for Asian American and Pacific Islander women and girls, empowering girls with mothers in prison to break the cycle of incarceration in the US, and transforming philanthropy in Africa.



**Stacy Aldinger**

Georgia, USA  
Chief of Staff and Strategy, CARE



**Siobhan Davenport**

Consultant, Capacity Partners  
Maryland, USA



**Christina Lowery**

CEO, Girl Rising  
New York, USA



**Patricia Ashanti**

Arkansas, USA  
Founder & CEO, Delta Circles



**Clarissa Doutherd**

Director, Parent Voices Oakland  
California, USA



**Amalia Luxardo**

CEO, The Women's Foundation for  
the State of Arizona  
Arizona, USA



**Brittany Barnett**

Founder, Girls Embracing Mothers  
Texas, USA



**Mosun Layode**

Executive Director, African  
Philanthropy Forum  
Lagos, Nigeria



**Lea Kilenga Masamo**

Executive Director, Africa Sickle  
Cell Organization  
Taveta, Kenya



**Jamila Belabidi**

Purchases Director, Global Women  
Economic Empowerment and  
Global Innovation, Procter &  
Gamble, Geneva, Switzerland



**Nicole Lynn Lewis**

Founder & CEO, Generation Hope  
Washington D.C., USA



**Sharonne Navas**

Executive Director, Education in  
Equity Coalition  
Washington, USA



**Sung Yeon Choimorrow**

Executive Director, National Asian  
Pacific American Women's Forum  
Illinois, USA



**Ellen Liu**

Vice President, Ms. Foundation for  
Women  
Maryland, USA



**Ashley Thomas**

Founder & Executive Director,  
The Hive Community Circle  
South Carolina, USA



**Verónica Colón Rosario**

Executive Director, Puerto Rico  
Women's Foundation  
Puerto Rico



**Stephanie Lopez**

Program Manager, Latinas  
Represent  
California, USA



**Ola Wadibia**

Vice President, Women on the  
Move, JPMorgan Chase & Co.  
Washington D.C., USA



## SOAR Fellows in Action



**Tsion Yohannes Waka**, the founding chair of the Center for Gender Equity at the University of Global Health Equity (UGHE), has played a pivotal role in academic, research, and community development projects to establish the Master's in Global Health Delivery Program with a Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health track. Her dedication, along with her colleagues, has made the Center a pioneer in promoting gender equity at a systemic level. In her recent publication, *Advancing gender equity from inside out: The UGHE gender equity agenda*, Tsion emphasizes the innovative UGHE model that addresses gender equity and emphasizes a systems-level approach.



**Lulete Mola**, the co-founder and first president of the Philanthropic Collective to Combat Anti-Blackness & Realize Racial Justice, drives intersectional social change, centering dignity and led by communities most affected by the issues. In response to the murder of George Floyd and the national uprisings against anti-blackness and racism, the Collective was established. As the president, Lulete has emphasized the importance of philanthropy as a lever of change, with a focus on centering Black dignity. Her article, "We must combat anti-Blackness at its root," offers strategies to promote true transformational and structural change in the fight against anti-blackness.

## Convenings

The Aspen Institute Forum on Women and Girls hosted two virtual convenings in 2022. "Accelerating Breakthroughs in Global Health" explored how to advance and celebrate women's leadership in global health. "The Book Talk with Nicole Lynn Lewis on *Pregnant Girl: A Story of Teen Motherhood*," was moderated by Generation

Hope Scholar Ariel Ventura-Lazo, a father of two and first-generation American who was the first in his family to attend college. The discussion celebrated the strength and resilience of young student parents, particularly single mothers, and transitioned into supporting young parents in actualizing their dreams.

## 2022 Lessons Learned



### **SUPPORTING WOMEN WHO ARE AT AN INFLECTION POINT IN THEIR JOURNEY IS IN HIGH DEMAND.**

There is a crucial need for promoting gender equality, fostering diversity, and creating a better system for all. By supporting women leaders at their inflection point, we can ensure that women have an opportunity to break barriers and have a support system to help tackle their challenges.



### **THE CROSS-LEARNING EXCHANGE OF GLOBAL/DOMESTIC CONVERSATIONS ARE NECESSARY.**

These conversations are essential to addressing various pressing issues and promoting understanding and collaboration on a global scale. Today's challenges must be addressed through a collaborative lens. Global/domestic exchanges that take place in this fellowship provide the platform for knowledge exchange and innovation. The team learned that creating these opportunities of learnings across culture and community results in creating important solutions.

## Aspen Institute's Forum on Women and Girls' 2023 Vision

The Aspen Institute Forum on Women and Girls team will travel to Kigali, Rwanda to convene SOAR Fellows around the theme of "Courage and Justice" and learn from Rwanda's healing process. The week will kick off with a panel of Fellows from the Aspen network, Manzi Anatole (Aspen New Voices Fellow) and Hope Azeda (Aspen Global Leadership Network Fellow), who will share their personal leadership journeys with the Fellows and celebrate women's leadership achievements on the continent. Throughout the week, Fellows will hear stories from a diverse set of leaders, and the team hopes that the event will be an inspiring and empowering experience for all participants.

The SOAR Fellowship and Forum was launched with catalytic start-up funding from the Doris Duke Foundation. With that funding, we were able to pilot and test the model and are thrilled to share that we have learned much along the way. We will be reimagining and relaunching the Forum at Aspen Ideas Health Festival in June 2023, to deepen its focus on championing gender equity and justice in the areas of economic mobility, education & learning, health, well-being and safety and civic and political leadership.



# Communities First Global Collaborative

## COMMUNITIES FIRST GLOBAL COLLABORATIVE: ADVANCING HEALTH EQUITY AND BUILDING RESILIENCE

### About the Collaborative

The **Communities First Global Collaborative** is a powerful initiative that was designed to address the profound health inequities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. It brings together diverse voices from communities around the world to share innovative solutions grounded in lived experience. By harnessing the wisdom and expertise of community leaders, the Communities First Global Collaborative supports sustainable, equity-focused efforts that strengthen health systems for everyone. The initiative leverages a range of tools, including the Peer-to-Peer Learning Exchange, Policy Roundtable series, and Catalyst Fund, to amplify the collective voice of community leaders and advance new ideas that can shape plans and policies in the ongoing fight against COVID-19 and future pandemics.

#### **Global Academy for Health Systems Resilience**

The Collaborative team, in partnership with Partners in Health and the University of Global Health Equity (UGHE), aims to create the Global Academy for Health Systems Resilience.

This academy will serve as a platform to strengthen and expand the pipeline of leaders who possess extensive experience in supporting governments and communities. These leaders will receive a certificate acknowledging their expertise in implementing coordinated and cross-system responses to address emergencies and day-to-day needs. The certificate will empower leaders and grant them the necessary credibility to act as community resilience experts.

#### **Catalyst Fund**

To promote innovation and responsiveness, the Collaborative will establish the Catalyst Fund. This funding mechanism will provide leaders with the flexibility to adapt their approaches in real-time and address the specific needs of local communities effectively.

#### **Public Series**

In an effort to showcase the impact of community strategies, the Collaborative will co-design virtual and in-person public educational series. These series will shed light on the strategies implemented and their outcomes, fostering transparency and knowledge dissemination.



## Democratizing and Decolonizing Knowledge Exchanges

Recognizing the valuable expertise of leaders predominantly from low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), the Collaborative, in collaboration with Partners in Health and Aspen Global Innovators group, will facilitate knowledge exchanges. This initiative will connect LMIC leaders with counterparts in the United States, allowing for the sharing of knowledge and expertise. Additionally, an online knowledge platform will be developed to ensure widespread access to valuable resources. Moreover, opportunities will be created for leaders from the global south to participate and share their insights on global stages, including GoalKeepers, Clinton Global Initiative, UN General Assembly, Aspen Ideas Health, Aspen Ideas Climate, and WHO convenings.

## Transformational Goal

The overarching goal of the Communities First Global Collaborative is to leverage and expand its extensive network. As the foremost platform (network of networks), the Collaborative aims to connect global donors, government leaders, community leaders, bilateral and multilateral agencies, research parties, and other entities with a network of local experts. This will facilitate the exchange of rich wisdom and foster collaborative efforts to advance health systems resilience worldwide.

## Highlights from 2022

Supporting community leaders to respond to COVID-19:

- » In 2022, the Communities First Global Collaborative partnered with local organizations to train and mobilize community members – especially youth and women – in vaccine education, distribution, and administration. In Kenya, SHOFCO directly served over 378,307 individuals across the ten slums. In India, SEWA reached over 1,142,100 individuals in 16 different states who benefited from SEWA's COVID vaccine education campaigns, training, and COVID care centers.



- » With support from the Gates Foundation in partnership with the University for Global Health Equity and Partners in Health, the Communities First Global Collaborative is building a platform and empowering local leaders to improve the quality of their services which results in improved outcomes across multiple countries in Africa. This collaborative has developed various courses, including Equity Approach to Pandemic Preparedness and Response, Decolonizing Global Education, and Healthcare Ethics and Quality Improvement. Over the past two years, approximately 20,000 leaders from over 100 countries benefited from the content and tools provided.

Strengthening public health systems to respond to future pandemics:

- » Despite persistent health system inequities exposed by the pandemic, there has been significant progress in the global fight against COVID-19. As of December 2022, the daily average of new reported cases has dropped by over half, from 1.2 million in December 2021 to 500,000. Likewise, the daily average of deaths has decreased from 6,200 to 1,340 over the same time period<sup>1</sup>.
- » However, it is important to note that new diseases with pandemic potential are emerging which highlights the need for continued vigilance and investment in global health security. In 2022, the introduction of five new deadly variations of SARS-CoV-2 further validated the theory of change embraced by the Collaborative<sup>2</sup>. Despite remarkable scientific and medical advances, the potential for diseases to spread is increasing, and the risk of outbreaks escalating into epidemics or pandemics<sup>3</sup>.

1 <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/world/covid-cases.html>

2 <https://covid19.who.int/>

3 Gavi, author. SARS, Ebola, Zika and now COVID-19. Disease epidemics and even pandemics are becoming increasingly common occurrences. Here are five reasons why. 2020. Apr 28, <https://www.gavi.org/vaccineswork/5-reasons-why-pandemics-like-covid-19-are-becoming-more-likely>.

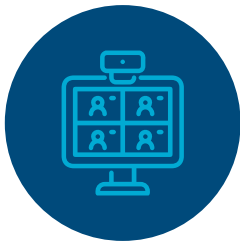
## 2022 Lessons Learned

In its second year of operation, the Communities First team learned several valuable lessons.



### **COMMUNITY LEADERS ARE ESSENTIAL DURING A PANDEMIC DUE TO THEIR ESTABLISHED TRUST AND NETWORKS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.**

Their relationships with community members and senior officials can aid in tasks such as translating public health messaging and encouraging vaccine acceptance. They also play crucial roles in supporting vulnerable populations, particularly in spaces where there are structural inequities. However, community leaders on the frontlines of COVID-19 still face challenges including lack of support and knowledge about available resources, language barriers, and limited access to technology. Moreover, the work of community leaders is often undocumented, unrecognized, and uncompensated.



### **COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS HAVE HAD TO SHIFT THE WAYS IN WHICH THEY DELIVER THEIR WORK DURING THE PANDEMIC.**

COVID-19 highlighted the importance of involving community-based organizations in pandemic preparedness discussions and plans at all levels. These organizations need to be adequately trained, resourced, and supported to respond effectively.



### **FORMAL NETWORKING SYSTEMS AND PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS PLANS ARE REQUIRED TO INCREASE PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS FOR COMMUNITIES.**

The Communities First team found the most effective way to create these opportunities was through strategic partnerships with University of Global Health Equity and Partners in Health, along with the support of funding partners like Skoll Foundation, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and Western Union Foundation. These partnerships also enabled support for a flexible catalytic fund to support organizational support and institutional strengthening of innovative start-up health organizations in the US and Africa.

## Communities First Global Collaborative's 2023 Vision

The Communities First Global Collaborative has ambitious objectives to advance global health equity in the coming year. The Collaborative aims to formalize the Global Academy of Health Resilience, co-created with Aspen team, Partners in Health, and the University of Global Health Equity. This will be achieved through productive meetings and discussions. The team will work to both strengthen and expand a flexible funding pool known as the Catalyst fund to support local leaders as they expand and implement programs at the local level. By focusing on these key initiatives and partnering with organizations that can support their expansion, the Communities First Global Collaborative is committed to building strong partnerships and promoting health equity across the globe.



# Healthy Communities Fellowship

**HEALTHY COMMUNITIES  
FELLOWSHIP EMPOWERS LEADERS  
FOR LASTING CHANGE**

## About the Healthy Communities Fellowship

The [Healthy Communities Fellowship](#) is a transformative program that equips locally rooted leaders with the tools they need to drive change in their communities. The fellowship works to advance equity by helping leaders of color to change the stories people tell themselves and each other. By working towards narrative change, we redefine what we think is just and/or possible. The fellowship provides individualized and tailored communication, narrative, and leadership training and coaching that prepares fellows to lead from a place of lived and learned experience. By investing in those closest to the challenges, the program empowers fellows to design and implement effective solutions to improve community health.

The program equips Fellows with essential skills such as opinion piece writing, advocacy planning, interviewing, and social media management, positioning them as experts in their respective fields. Leveraging the extensive experience and influential network of Aspen Global Innovators, the Fellowship provides unparalleled opportunities for Fellows to learn from and connect with global leaders.

Fellows in the cohort are community leaders spearheading movements to create healthy communities, address systemic inequities, and tackle social determinants of health such as education, environmental factors, income inequality, unemployment, food insecurity, housing, social inclusion, health services, and racial discrimination. By raising community awareness of these challenges and potential solutions, these Fellows chart innovative paths forward that significantly improve the lives of their neighbors.

Successful Fellows of the Healthy Communities Fellowship are deeply committed to making a difference in their communities. They view the Fellowship as an investment in their personal growth and actively engage in training, mentorship, and fostering a supportive cohort. While the program is based in the U.S., curated connections with global leaders allow Fellows to extend their impact beyond their local communities. By supporting the Healthy Communities Fellowship, funders play a pivotal role in cultivating a new generation of leaders who will drive positive change in their communities and have a lasting influence on a broader scale.



## Highlights from Healthy Communities in 2022

The Healthy Communities Fellowship program welcomed 12 new Fellows from Georgia, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas, bringing the total number of Fellows since the program's inception to 33. The 2022 cohort includes:



Leah Upton  
Tulsa, Oklahoma



Monique Antoinette Smith  
Atlanta, Georgia



Reggie Ivey  
Tulsa, Oklahoma



Laura Bellis  
Tulsa, Oklahoma



Kwamane Liddell  
St Louis, Missouri



Sheyda Brown  
Houston, Texas



Ashlee Wisdom  
New York, New York



Aaron "AJ" Johnson  
Tulsa, Oklahoma



Camryn Smith  
Durham, North Carolina



Ivelyse Andino  
Bronx, New York



Erica Plybeah  
Memphis, Tennessee



Jabraan Pasha  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

## Fellowship Spotlight

### *Dr. Jabraan Pasha - Championing Health Equity in Greenwood*

Dr. Jabraan Pasha, a dedicated advocate for health equity, is making a significant impact on the healthcare landscape in Greenwood. As the Vice President of Health Equity at Juno, an innovative healthcare organization, Dr. Pasha is spearheading efforts to provide comprehensive and inclusive medical care to underserved communities.

With extensive experience at the University of Oklahoma's School of Community Medicine, Dr. Pasha has been a driving force in addressing healthcare disparities, particularly in Oklahoma. Now, at Juno, he is applying his expertise and passion to elevate Greenwood's healthcare system.

Dr. Pasha recognizes the importance of education alongside patient care. He firmly believes that the impact of health education is as significant as direct medical interventions. Juno allows him to combine both aspects seamlessly.

Juno's presence in Greenwood aims to provide equitable and accessible healthcare services to the entire community. By assembling a diverse team of healthcare professionals from Tulsa, Juno ensures that the needs and experiences of Black and brown consumers are understood and addressed effectively.

Beyond medical support, Juno envisions offering social resources that contribute to overall well-being. Dr. Pasha emphasizes the pivotal role of social determinants of health and recognizes the significance of providing local resources in conjunction with medical care.

With a deep understanding of the historical challenges faced by marginalized communities, Dr. Pasha's commitment to Juno's mission is unwavering. He envisions a healthcare environment where individuals' stories are heard, valued, and honored.

Juno Medical, located next to the Greenwood Rising Museum, is set to open its doors in March or April 2023, marking a transformative step towards better healthcare access for the Greenwood community.

Dr. Jabraan Pasha's journey exemplifies the invaluable impact of the Healthy Communities Fellowship. The program's commitment to cultivating leaders like Dr. Pasha has empowered him to drive change and ensure equitable healthcare for all.



## ***Erica Plybeah - Empowering Healthcare Access through MedHaul***

Erica Plybeah, a passionate entrepreneur, is transforming healthcare access in Memphis through her company, MedHaul. Recognizing the transportation barriers faced by vulnerable patients, Erica established an online platform that provides safe and reliable transportation services for individuals in underserved communities. MedHaul's partnership with FedEx and Epicenter amplifies its impact, ensuring equitable care for those with complex needs.

Inspired by her grandmother's struggle to find transportation for healthcare check-ins, Erica's platform connects healthcare professionals with patients, coordinating rides on their behalf. This innovative solution not only enhances patient safety and preserves their dignity but also addresses the specific challenges faced by marginalized communities. MedHaul's launch in 2019 coincided with the critical onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing essential transportation services when public transit options were limited.

Supported by the Memphis Medical District Opportunity Challenge and Epicenter's mentorship and startup capital, MedHaul has successfully scaled its operations beyond Memphis. Over 10,000 patients have already benefited from MedHaul's extensive network of specialty transportation providers, ensuring access to procedures, routine appointments, and prescription pickups. By reducing transportation barriers, MedHaul contributes to improved healthcare outcomes for underserved individuals.

Erica's journey exemplifies the value of the Healthy Communities Fellowship, empowering entrepreneurs to address urgent healthcare needs and unlock growth potential within their communities. Through strategic partnerships and innovation, MedHaul is paving the way for inclusive healthcare access and inspiring future generations of entrepreneurs to make a lasting impact.





## 2022 Lessons Learned



### **MOVING TOWARDS A REGIONAL-BASED MODEL IS ESSENTIAL FOR CREATING IMPACT.**

Due to the success of the first regional-based cohort, the Fellowship team is enthusiastic about expanding this model in communities around the United States. The regional-based approach not only allows for shared learnings within a community but also brings those teachings to similar communities across the country. As a testament to their effectiveness, the team has been invited into two additional communities in Texas and Alaska to further highlight local leadership and innovation.



### **ACCESS TO A COHORT OF COMMUNITY LEADERS IS ESSENTIAL FOR LEADERS WORKING IN THE HEALTH EQUITY SPACE.**

Numerous highly innovative and community-led solutions have been developed all over the country and the world; however, they must be amplified to larger audiences to address pervasive health inequities. This fellowship program exposes these innovative ideas to other community leaders but to a larger audience. By providing community leaders with access to a cohort of leaders who have created innovative solutions, the Fellowship encourages intentional cross-collaboration to flourish.

## Healthy Communities Fellowship's



Looking ahead to 2023, the Healthy Communities Fellowship is poised for another year of success in advancing health equity and supporting local leaders in disproportionately impacted communities. With a focus on states such as Alaska, Oklahoma, and Texas, the program will continue to empower Fellows to bring forth innovative solutions and expertise to address critical issues such as food access, environmental health, and mental health. The Fellowship's training will be centered around building public arguments through the op-ed model, enabling Fellows to hone their advocacy skills and

amplify their community-related issues. The team will also work closely with Saxum, a digital advocacy organization, to provide social media training to Fellows and help them build a stronger online presence.

As the year progresses, the Healthy Communities Fellowship will convene fellows in Oklahoma and Texas, focusing on the themes of storytelling and health equity. This will provide an opportunity for Fellows to connect with each other, share their experiences, and learn from experts in the field. Simultaneously, the program will actively seek funding for the next cohort and develop expansion plans and partnerships in the deep South. With a focus on community-driven solutions and leadership, the Healthy Communities Fellowship is committed to making a meaningful difference in the lives of those most impacted by health and economic disparities.

# Artisan Alliance

## A NEW PHASE OF GROWTH AND IMPACT: THE ARTISAN ALLIANCE TRANSITIONS TO THE IBU FOUNDATION



### About the Artisan Alliance

The [Artisan Alliance](#) is an initiative that offers an open-source library of resources for artisan businesses and social enterprises operating in the artisan sector, both in the United States and worldwide. Created in partnership between the Aspen Institute and the U.S. Department of State's Office of Global Women's Issues, the Artisan Alliance has developed tailored resources and built a community of over 240 artisan businesses committed to advancing sustainable growth for the artisan sector globally.

Through the Artisan Alliance, consumers, retailers, and other artisan businesses can access a curated list of organizations that have demonstrated support for artisan producers across the globe. Additionally, a wide range of tools, research, and best practices is available to strengthen artisan businesses. The program also engages in specific projects aimed at elevating the importance of the artisan sector, supporting and growing artisan businesses, and promoting collaborative learning.

The core mission of the Artisan Alliance is to empower artisans, particularly women, by fully integrating them into global commerce and creating increased revenue for artisan producers and communities in need of economic opportunities. By promoting the power and potential of the artisan sector to create jobs, enhance cultural heritage, and promote development that respects the uniqueness of people and place, the Artisan Alliance is working towards a world where artisans have greater opportunities to succeed and thrive.

## Highlights from the Program

The Artisan Alliance has cultivated a learning community of more than 240 artisan businesses and support organizations. The program has been able to increase access to finance through a first-of-its-kind small loan program with Kiva for artisan entrepreneurs, as well as provide targeted technical assistance and trainings to artisan business owners across the globe. The program has been paused since 2022, but in the previous year was able to elevate the importance of the artisan sector by:

- » Bringing together more than 600 members, partners, and supporters at key events to support artisan enterprise globally, including keystone meetings at the U.S. Department of State, TED Women Global Showcase, and the Aspen Institute in Washington DC.
- » Reaching over 6 million social media users with the hashtag #ChooseArtisan and a global multimedia campaign for artisan enterprise.
- » Facilitating research and the writing of 3 case studies documenting the economic and psycho-social impact of artisan employment opportunities for refugee women.
- » Hosting 12 hour-long digital learning sessions to facilitate cross-network learning and collaboration.
- » Collecting research studies on the global artisan sector, value of the creative economy, and best practices in investing in artisan enterprise.

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The Artisan Alliance also supported artisan businesses by providing access to finance by:

- » Raising \$410,035 in Artisan Loan Program funds for 44 artisan entrepreneurs in partnership with Kiva.
- » Supporting 70% female borrowers and maintained 100% repayment rate.

- » Providing loans to more than 20,000 artisans in 17 countries.
- » Disbursing \$280,000 in small grant funds to build infrastructure to support sustainable artisan tourism practices.

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Additionally, the Alliance provided technical assistance and training in various ways, including:

- » Developing tailored Artisan Innovation Workshop (formerly the Artisan Value Chain Toolkit) which facilitated the mapping of the artisan value chain to uncover key business insights.
- » Writing and designing the Artisan Business Coaching: Record Keeping manual in partnership with the International Labor Organization's SIYB program.
- » Piloting the Artisan Value Chain Toolkit and Record Keeping trainings with more than 300 artisan partners in Rwanda, Peru, the Philippines, China, and the United States.

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Finally, the Artisan Alliance shared best practices in a Collaborative Learning Community by:

- » Engaging 240+ members and partners, including artisan businesses, social enterprises, support organizations, corporations, foundations, and multilateral partners.
- » Touching more than 100,000 artisan partners across 127 countries around the world.
- » Serving 82% women artisans across all member organizations.



## 2022 Lessons Learned



### **THE ARTISAN ALLIANCE HAS GROWN FROM ITS INITIAL MEMBERSHIP OF 28 TO NEARLY 250 MEMBERS.**

While this growth has undeniably amplified the program's impact in the artisan sector, it has also brought new challenges that require additional resources and strategic focus to maintain the program's success. To ensure that the program's impact continues to grow, the decision has been made to transition the Artisan Alliance to the Ibu Foundation.



### **THE ARTISAN ALLIANCE PROGRAM'S TRANSITION TO THE IBU FOUNDATION IS A STRATEGIC MOVE THAT WILL BENEFIT ARTISANS WORLDWIDE.**

The Ibu Foundation has a longstanding commitment to supporting artisanal industries and preserving traditional craftsmanship, making it a natural fit for the program. Leveraging the Foundation's expertise in artisanal business development and their established networks, the program will be able to expand its reach and impact. The transition will also ensure the program's long-term sustainability, as the Ibu Foundation has the resources and infrastructure to support the program's growth and continued success. Ultimately, this transition is a pivotal step in advancing the Artisan Alliance program's mission of promoting sustainable economic growth and cultural heritage preservation for artisans worldwide.



# Recognizing Our Generous Supporters

Thank you to all of our funders who invested in the Aspen Global Innovators Group in 2022. We look forward to continued collaboration in 2023 and invite any organizations curious about supporting our work to connect with us.

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