

Being

FEBRUARY 2025



INNOVATION LOOKBOOK

www.beingininitiative.org



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ABOUT THE BEING INITIATIVE

Being is an international mental health initiative envisioning a world where young people feel well and thrive. We work with young people to improve their mental health and wellbeing through research, innovation and ecosystem building, with a focus on prevention and promotion in 12 priority countries: **Colombia, Ecuador, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Pakistan, Romania, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Vietnam.**

Those closest to the challenges can better identify needs and barriers and offer impactful and sustainable solutions. That's why our funding priorities in innovation, and ecosystem building have been informed by a locally driven landscape analysis and country consultations with youth, policymakers, local organizations, and mental health experts. **[Explore the report that dives into the insights from this research!](#)**

Being is hosted by [Grand Challenges Canada](#) (funded in part by the [Government of Canada](#)), in partnership with [Fondation Botnar](#), the UK's [National Institute for Health and Care Research](#), [Orygen](#), the [Science for Africa Foundation](#), and [United for Global Mental Health](#).





COLOMBIA



In Colombia, 25% of teenagers experience family dysfunction including parental absence, communication breakdowns, financial stress, conflict, insecurity, and trauma. The majority of stakeholders consulted in Colombia's landscape analysis highlighted family functioning as a critical area for intervention and a significant driver of youth mental health challenges like anxiety, depression, suicide, self-harm, and substance use.

National policies currently prioritize strong family connections and supportive school environments, positioning communities and educational systems as vital spaces to develop innovative solutions that strengthen family dynamics and support young people and their caregivers.

PROOF-OF-CONCEPT FUNDING IN COLOMBIA

Proof-of-concept (POC) funding up to \$250,000 CAD will be awarded to early-stage projects that can implement, test and refine solutions to country-specific personal, social, and/or environmental factors impacting young people's mental health and wellbeing in one of the 12 countries.

In Colombia, we're funding POC ideas to strengthen family functioning. These innovative solutions should include a focus on addressing family conflict or violence for young people and their parents/caregivers.





FLORI – CONNECTING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING BETWEEN CLASSROOMS AND HOMES IN LATIN AMERICA

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [COSCHOOL](#)
TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT
LOCATION: COLOMBIA
THEMATIC AREA(S): DIGITAL

Flori is an innovative AI-powered app and platform designed to enhance social-emotional learning (SEL) and mental health support for students through personalized resources and activities. Co-designed by young people, Flori is integrating SEL into the daily lives of students aged 10–14. Through AI-powered chat sequences on WhatsApp, Flori guides teachers and parents to relevant resources and activities to implement SEL activities in their classrooms or at home. By aligning themes between teachers and parents, Flori promotes a holistic learning environment that strengthens family relationships and child development. Through Flori, Coschool's goal is to help students develop essential life skills such as resilience, empathy, and effective communication, which are vital for managing stress, building strong relationships, and preventing mental health challenges like anxiety and depression.



KAMALEÓN: MY TRUE STORY

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [LA MIXERA FUND](#)
TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT
LOCATION: CAUCA, MAGDALENA, GUAJIRA, ANTIOQUIA, CHOCÓ, AND BOYACÁ
THEMATIC AREA(S): ARTS, STORYTELLING

KAMALEÓN: My True Story is a training and support program focused on promoting and preventing mental health issues by working with youth ages 15–17 and their families in six rural educational communities in Colombia: Cauca, Magdalena, Guajira, Antioquia, Chocó, and Boyacá. Based on principles of Jungian psychology, the initiative's approach encourages self-discovery and the development of a strong sense of identity. Through an educational book that uses creative self-expression techniques, the KAMALEÓN project seeks to strengthen youth agency through three key stages:

1. **Express (Self-awareness):** "I share my story, my truth."
2. **Connect (Relationships with family and peers):** "We establish common goals to rebuild broken bonds."
3. **Act (Healing):** "We drive change in our realities and foster collective repair."



TRANSITION-TO-SCALE FUNDING IN COLOMBIA

Transition-to-scale (TTS) funding between \$300,000 CAD and \$1,500,000 CAD will be awarded to support tested mental health promotion and prevention approaches that align with country-specific priorities along their scaling journey to help catalyze their sustainability and impact.

In Colombia, we're funding TTS approaches to strengthen family functioning.

These innovative solutions should include a focus on addressing family conflict or violence for young people and their parents/caregivers.



ECOSYSTEM CATALYST FUNDING IN COLOMBIA

Ecosystem catalyst (EC) funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$300,000 CAD will be awarded to organizations that can address priority barriers to scale, such as legislation, evidence, coordination, and mobilize demand to help mental health initiatives succeed and grow in one of 12 priority countries.

In Colombia, we're funding EC proposals that support implementation and accountability mechanisms for national youth mental health policies that are related to environments where youth spend time, such as schools and community settings.





In Ecuador, rising violence is deeply impacting young people, with 770 crime-related fatalities recorded in 2023—a staggering 640% increase from 104 cases in 2019. Insecurity, violence, and the fear of harm are taking a serious toll on youth mental health. The majority of stakeholders in our landscape analysis identified insecurity as an urgent concern for youth safety and wellbeing, highlighting its role in driving mental health challenges such as anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance use, and suicide attempts.

Consulted stakeholders also highlighted the need for stronger collaboration among national mental health actors in Ecuador. A well-coordinated network is essential to integrating promising youth mental health approaches into national frameworks and resource plans.

PROOF-OF-CONCEPT FUNDING IN ECUADOR

Proof-of-concept (POC) funding up to \$250,000 CAD will be awarded to early-stage projects that can implement, test and refine solutions to country-specific personal, social, and/or environmental factors impacting young people's mental health and wellbeing in one of the 12 countries.

In Ecuador, we're funding POC ideas to promote the physical and emotional safety of young people within community, school or family environments. These innovative solutions should include a focus on preventing violence against young people.





CENTROS DE BIENESTAR (WELLBEING SPACES)

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [FUNDACIÓN SALUD MENTAL ECUADOR](#)

TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

LOCATION: QUITO, CUENCA, GUAYAQUIL, ISLA PORTETE, CHILLA GRANDE

THEMATIC AREA(S): SERVICE DELIVERY

The "Centros de Bienestar" is testing the effectiveness of physical and virtual safe spaces through short-term wellbeing hubs that provide support, information, and activities for young people's mental health in schools, urban centers, and rural communities. A digital application will also offer virtual safe spaces. The physical and virtual hubs support youth 10 to 20 who have experienced violence, discrimination, addiction, or mental health challenges, as well as their parents and caregivers. These safe spaces help youth build coping skills, develop positive social connections, and access emotional support through support groups, workshops, a Psychological First Aid chat, and school mental health clubs.

Through these wellbeing spaces, Fundacion Salud Mental Ecuador aims to prevent mental health challenges among youth and foster a support network that encourages healthy relationships, better communication, and improved conflict resolution among youth, their peers, and families.



TRANSITION-TO-SCALE INNOVATIONS IN ECUADOR

Transition-to-scale (TTS) funding between \$300,000 CAD and \$1,500,000 CAD will be awarded to support tested mental health promotion and prevention approaches that align with country-specific priorities along their scaling journey to help catalyze their sustainability and impact.

In Ecuador, we're funding TTS approaches that promote the physical and emotional safety of young people within community, school or family environments. These innovative solutions should include a focus on preventing violence against young people.



ECOSYSTEM CATALYST FUNDING IN ECUADOR

Ecosystem catalyst (EC) funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$300,000 CAD will be awarded to organizations that can address priority barriers to scale, such as legislation, evidence, coordination, and mobilize demand to help mental health initiatives succeed and grow in one of 12 priority countries.

In Ecuador, we're funding EC proposals that support better alignment and collaboration among mental health stakeholders to advance youth mental health and their safety on the national agenda.





Bullying in Ghanaian schools is a growing concern, with research showing that 41% of students aged 12 to 17 have faced bullying or cyberbullying. The majority of consulted stakeholders in Ghana’s landscape analysis saw bullying as a major driver of mental health challenges like depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, poor physical health, and school absenteeism among young people in Ghana.

Ghana has a well-structured national mental health ecosystem with the education system recognizing the importance of school mental health. However, stakeholder consultations highlighted gaps in current school health programs, which primarily focus on nutrition and lack structures to support mental health initiatives—particularly those addressing bullying prevention.

PROOF-OF-CONCEPT FUNDING IN GHANA

Proof-of-concept (POC) funding up to \$250,000 CAD will be awarded to early-stage projects that can implement, test and refine solutions to country-specific personal, social, and/or environmental factors impacting young people's mental health and wellbeing in one of the 12 countries.

In Ghana, we're funding POC ideas to promote positive youth mental health and wellbeing within school environments. These innovative solutions should include a focus on anti-bullying and cyberbullying solutions for young people and school staff (teachers, counsellors, and others).





LEARNING BY DOING: A PEER-LED MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN GHANAIAN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [AFRICA HEALTH PROMOTION](#)

TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

LOCATION: NORTHERN, BONO EAST, ASHANTI, ACCRA, VOLTA, AND OTI

THEMATIC AREA(S): PEER-BASED

Learning by Doing is a peer-led program that promotes antibullying education and mental health awareness in 12 senior high schools across six regions of Ghana: Northern, Bono East, Ashanti, Accra, Volta, and Oti. Targeting students aged 13–21, the program trains students as peer advocates and educators for bullying prevention and mental health promotion in extracurricular activities such as drama and debate clubs, sports, music, and religious groups, ensuring widespread engagement. The program also supports developing and adopting school-specific policies on bullying prevention and mental health promotion in collaboration with school authorities. It also aims to establish leadership and membership roles in the formal school system for future student cohorts and staff to sustain the initiative. The Learning by Doing program's goal is to reinforce the right of every Ghanaian student to learn in a safe, supportive, and bullying-free environment.



REDUCING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR AND VICTIMIZATION AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [INSPIRE TO ACT](#)

TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

LOCATION: TAMALE, YENDI, GUSHEGU, AND KPANDAI DISTRICTS

THEMATIC AREA(S): PEER-BASED

Inspire to Act's **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) program** is tailored to young people's needs, cultural norms, and lived experiences and will engage youth aged 10–24 across junior and senior high schools in four communities in Ghana's Northern Region: Tamale, Yendi, Gushegu, and Kpandai districts, through Anti-Bullying Clubs. The project trains teachers and student peers to lead SEL lessons featuring animated videos or printed storyboards (for schools without electricity) with animal characters that illustrate key SEL skills like self-awareness, self-management, decision-making, and relationship skills to make SEL concepts accessible. This relatable storytelling approach allows students to reflect on the characters' behaviours and connect them to their own experiences with bullying. The project also engages parents in observing behaviours at home and providing feedback. Ghana Education Service Guidance and Counselling officers will also monitor teacher facilitation and complete observations.



TRANSITION-TO-SCALE FUNDING IN GHANA

Transition-to-scale (TTS) funding between \$300,000 CAD and \$1,500,000 CAD will be awarded to support tested mental health promotion and prevention approaches that align with country-specific priorities along their scaling journey to help catalyze their sustainability and impact.

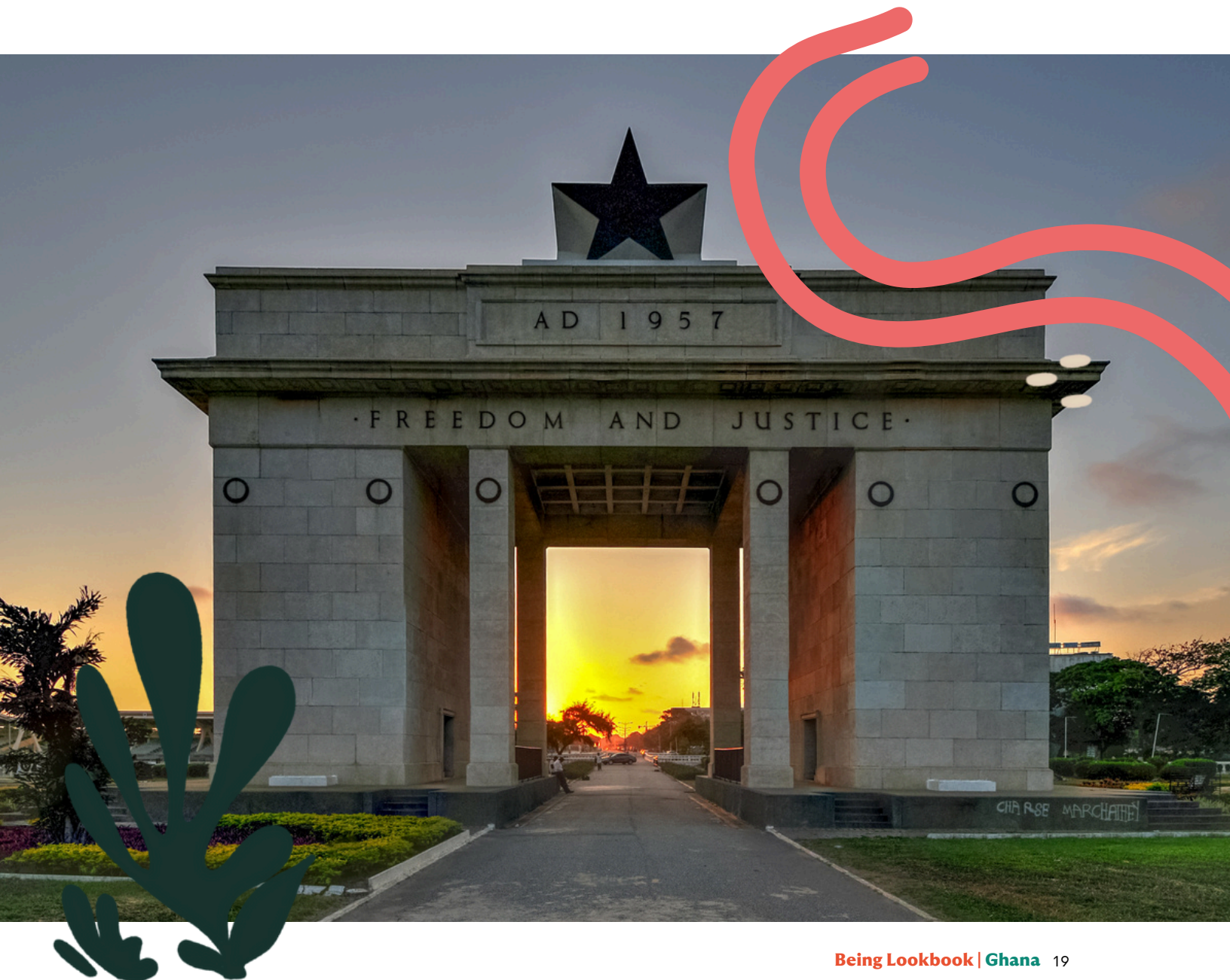
In Ghana, we're funding TTS approaches to promote positive youth mental health and wellbeing within school environments. These innovative solutions should include a focus on anti-bullying and cyberbullying solutions for young people and school staff (teachers, counsellors, and others).



ECOSYSTEM CATALYST FUNDING IN GHANA

Ecosystem catalyst (EC) funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$300,000 CAD will be awarded to organizations that can address priority barriers to scale, such as legislation, evidence, coordination, and mobilize demand to help mental health initiatives succeed and grow in one of 12 priority countries.

In Ghana, we're funding EC proposals that work with government bodies and other stakeholders to effectively integrate mental health initiatives, including innovations, into the school health programs.





INDIA



In India, the National Crimes Records Bureau reported that “family problems” were the leading cause of suicide among 2,556 children under 18 in 2022. Most stakeholders consulted in India’s landscape analysis agreed that challenges within the family, such as conflict, hostile environments, low interactions, and a lack of perceived support, are key drivers of mental health issues among Indian youth, including anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, self-harm, and suicide.

Mental health programming in India often overlooks the vital role of parental involvement, despite its potential to improve young people’s wellbeing. Strengthening policy support to endorse approaches that enhance family functioning presents a key opportunity to scale and sustain mental health innovations.

PROOF-OF-CONCEPT FUNDING IN INDIA

Proof-of-concept (POC) funding up to \$250,000 CAD will be awarded to early-stage projects that can implement, test and refine solutions to country-specific personal, social, and/or environmental factors impacting young people's mental health and wellbeing in one of the 12 countries.

In India, we're funding POC ideas to strengthen family functioning. These innovation solutions will focus on addressing parent-child communication and parents' perceptions of mental health with a goal of improving parent-youth relationships.





GRATITUDE, KINDNESS, HOPE: SCALING FAMILY-BASED YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS THROUGH INDIA'S SCHOOL SYSTEM

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [CITIESRISE](#)

TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

LOCATION: CHENNAI, INDIA

THEMATIC AREA(S): ARTS, GAMES

citiesRISE is testing an **arts-based game** for youth aged 10 to 14 and their parents/caregivers to strengthen parent-child communication and improve perceptions of mental health. The game equips children and parents with tools to support their wellbeing, focusing on gratitude, kindness, and hope (GKH)—all of which have positively impacted youth wellbeing, resilience, and connectedness. The GKH game features three levels, each designed to be a 45-minute session. Every level introduces evidence-based GKH practices and fosters opportunities for parent-child communication with a recommended playtime of at least three times over three months. citiesRISE will promote the game through schools across India, ensuring that more youth and parents can benefit from this engaging, family-centred approach to mental health and wellbeing.

CITIESRISE

QUTWE: QUEER-AFFIRMATIVE UNICORNS TRANSFORMING WELL-BEING ECOSYSTEM

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [RESTLESS DEVELOPMENT](#)

TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

LOCATION: DAKSHINPURI, DELHI, INDIA

THEMATIC AREA(S): PEER-BASED

The **QUTWE** project aims to strengthen parent-child relationships among LGBTQIA+ youth (ages 16–24) and their parents/caregivers through Youth Resource Centers (YRCs) that provide youth-led, community-based, and non-judgmental safe spaces in the Dakshinpuri area of Delhi. The YRCs use a three-pronged intervention model:

- **Youth-led peer training** focused on mental health and sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sexual characteristics, along with the provision of psychosocial first aid.
- **Parental engagement** through wellbeing circles and interactive workshops led by parents to encourage intergenerational dialogues and reduce stigma.
- **Referral services to connect** youth to queer-affirmative and youth-sensitive mental health providers.

By promoting open, supportive dialogues within families and communities, reducing stigma, and creating inclusive LGBTQIA+-friendly ecosystems, QUTWE aims to build a peer support network for LGBTQIA+ individuals and relevant service providers.

**RESTLESS
DEVELOPMENT**



TRANSITION-TO-SCALE FUNDING IN INDIA

Transition-to-scale (TTS) funding between \$300,000 CAD and \$1,500,000 CAD will be awarded to support tested mental health promotion and prevention approaches that align with country-specific priorities along their scaling journey to help catalyze their sustainability and impact.

In India, we're funding TTS approaches to strengthen family functioning. These innovation solutions will focus on addressing parent-child communication and parents' perceptions of mental health with a goal of improving parent-youth relationships.



ECOSYSTEM CATALYST FUNDING IN INDIA

Ecosystem catalyst (EC) funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$300,000 CAD will be awarded to organizations that can address priority barriers to scale, such as legislation, evidence, coordination, and mobilize demand to help mental health initiatives succeed and grow in one of 12 priority countries.

In India, we're funding EC proposals that can enhance multi-sectoral coordination to champion family-related interventions at both national and state levels. The focus will be on increasing action on this important issue, including efforts to augment domestic funding.





At least 78% of Indonesian adolescents have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) related to violence, bullying, harassment, and various forms of abuse—sexual, psychological, verbal, and physical—perpetrated by peers and family members. Stakeholders consulted in Indonesia’s landscape analysis overwhelmingly agreed that ACEs are a significant driver of youth mental health challenges, contributing to issues such as substance misuse, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and an increased risk of chronic mental illness.

While Indonesia has a strong national mental health policy framework, consulted stakeholders pointed out its implementation is hindered by decentralization, with varying governance structures across regions and localities. To ensure the effective execution of youth mental health initiatives, a coordinated approach to multi-stakeholder engagement at regional and local levels is crucial for alignment and accountability.

PROOF-OF-CONCEPT FUNDING IN INDONESIA

Proof-of-concept (POC) funding up to \$250,000 CAD will be awarded to early-stage projects that can implement, test and refine solutions to country-specific personal, social, and/or environmental factors impacting young people's mental health and wellbeing in one of the 12 countries.

In Indonesia, we're funding POC ideas to prevent adverse childhood experiences among young people. These innovative solutions should include a focus on addressing peer and/or family violence against young people.



TRANSITION-TO-SCALE FUNDING IN INDONESIA

Transition-to-scale (TTS) funding between \$300,000 CAD and \$1,500,000 CAD will be awarded to support tested mental health promotion and prevention approaches that align with country-specific priorities along their scaling journey to help catalyze their sustainability and impact.

In Indonesia, we're funding TTS approaches to prevent adverse childhood experiences among young people. These innovative solutions should include a focus on addressing peer and/or family violence against young people.



ECOSYSTEM CATALYST FUNDING IN INDONESIA

Ecosystem catalyst (EC) funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$300,000 CAD will be awarded to organizations that can address priority barriers to scale, such as legislation, evidence, coordination, and mobilize demand to help mental health initiatives succeed and grow in one of 12 priority countries.

In Indonesia, we're funding Ecosystem Catalyst projects that strengthen coordination among mental health stakeholders to support accountability of national mental health policy implementation at regional and local levels, particularly those policies focused on youth, at all levels.





MOROCCO



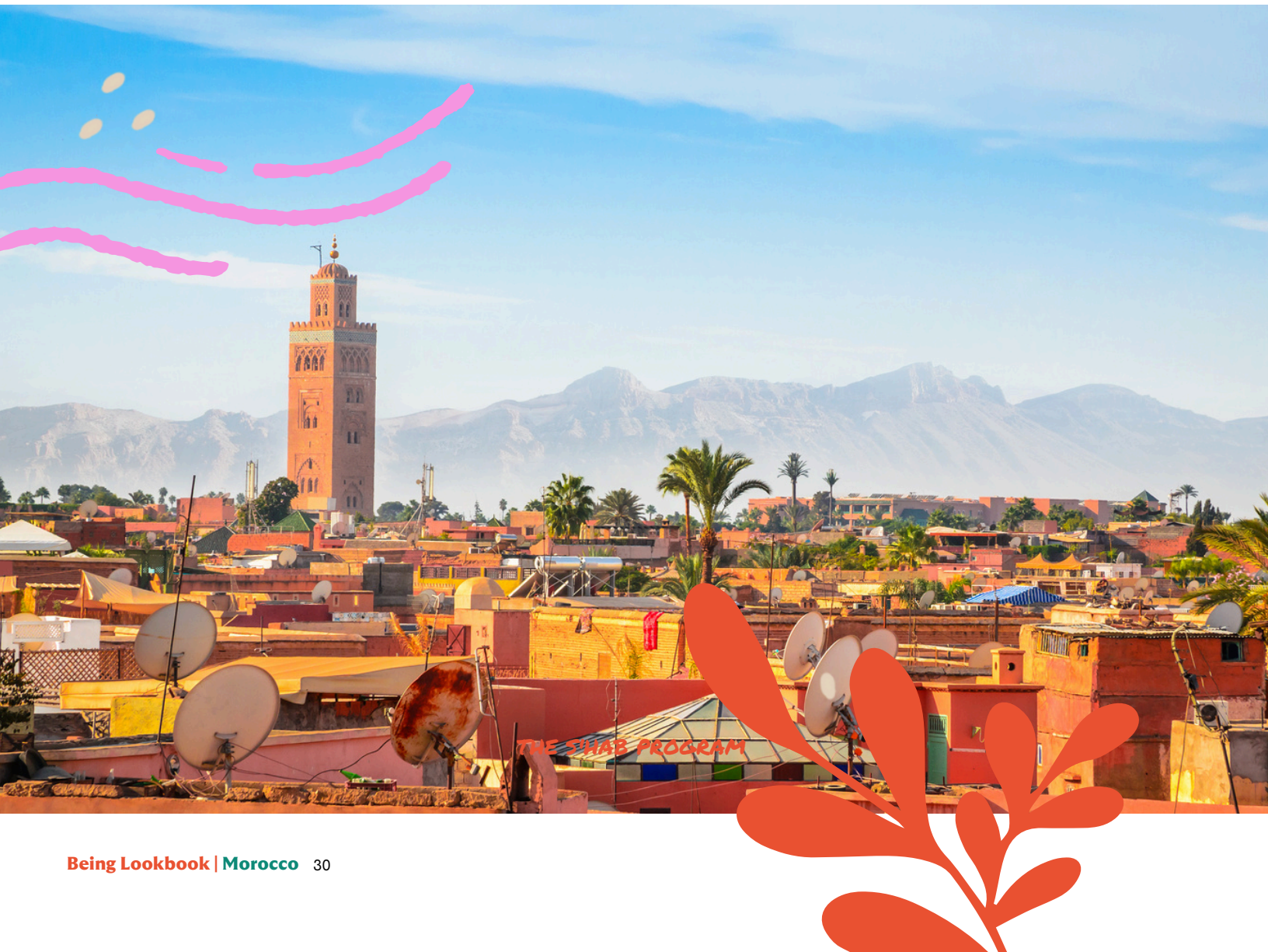
In Morocco, stakeholders consulted in our [landscape analysis](#) highlighted that performance-driven education systems and a lack of safe spaces in schools significantly impact youth self-esteem, as many students equate their self-worth with academic and career success. According to our consultations, low self-esteem is an increasing concern among Moroccan students, contributing to youth disengagement from education, strained relationships with teachers, and involvement in risky behaviours.

Morocco's national strategies provide a strong foundation for advancing youth mental health. As per consulted stakeholders, there is an opportunity to enhance implementation and create a more supportive environment for mental health prevention and promotion by strengthening school health policies and translating them into actionable programs.

PROOF-OF-CONCEPT IN MOROCCO

Proof-of-concept (POC) funding up to \$250,000 CAD will be awarded to early-stage projects that can implement, test and refine solutions to country-specific personal, social, and/or environmental factors impacting young people's mental health and wellbeing in one of the 12 countries.

In Morocco, we're funding POC ideas that promote positive youth mental health and wellbeing within school environments. These innovative solutions should focus on addressing bullying or overuse of social media amongst young people and school staff (teachers, school counsellors, and others).





THE S'HAB PROGRAM

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [INSPIRECORP](#)
TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT
LOCATION: CASABLANCA, RABAT, MOROCCO
THEMATIC AREA(S): GAMES, STORYTELLING

The **S'HAB program** (meaning "Friends" in Arabic) is a school-based Social Health and Anti-Bullying initiative for youth aged 15 to 18 in Moroccan schools. It aims to empower young people by shifting their sources of power from external validation to internal strength, helping them build self-esteem, supportive relationships, and a positive school environment that nurtures their development. The program is co-developed by youth and uses a hybrid, gamified approach with three key components:

1. A digital micro-learning component focused on capacity development;
2. In-person activities focused on narrative transformation and dialogical pedagogy to engage youth in critical dialogues and encourage them to challenge systemic beliefs;
3. Community-building as a follow-up to the program allows participants to anchor prosocial beliefs while building supportive peer relationships and providing ongoing critical engagement beyond the program.

Accessible and cost-effective, the S'HAB program will help youth thrive in education, careers, or entrepreneurial ventures by promoting narratives around trust, collaboration, and prosocial behaviour while fostering resilience and capacity-building in urban and rural settings in Morocco.

InspireCorp



TRANSITION-TO-SCALE FUNDING IN MOROCCO

Transition-to-scale (TTS) funding between \$300,000 CAD and \$1,500,000 CAD will be awarded to support tested mental health promotion and prevention approaches that align with country-specific priorities along their scaling journey to help catalyze their sustainability and impact.

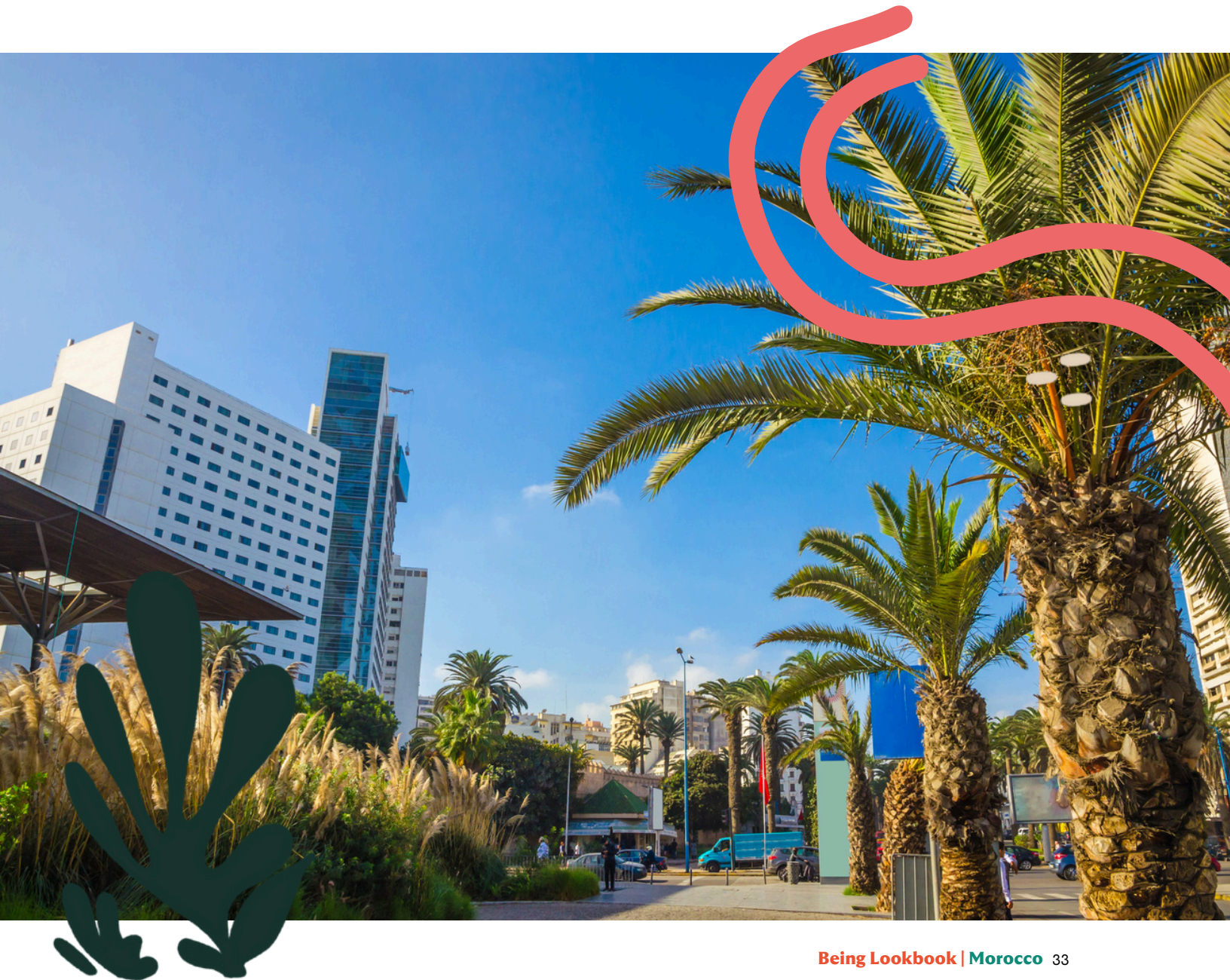
In Morocco, we're funding TTS approaches that promote positive youth mental health and wellbeing within school environments. These innovative solutions should focus on addressing bullying or overuse of social media amongst young people and school staff (teachers, school counsellors, and others).



ECOSYSTEM CATALYST FUNDING IN MOROCCO

Ecosystem catalyst (EC) funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$300,000 CAD will be awarded to organizations that can address priority barriers to scale, such as legislation, evidence, coordination, and mobilize demand to help mental health initiatives succeed and grow in one of 12 priority countries.

In Morocco, we're funding EC proposals to work with government and non-governmental bodies to bridge the gap between policy intent and implementation to ensure that adolescents in Morocco are supported by a positive school environment.





Consulted stakeholders in Pakistan's landscape analysis highlighted that strict parenting styles and parental career pressure can hinder open dialogue within families, leading to an increased risk of depression, anxiety, self-harm, and stress among Pakistani youth.

Consultations revealed that while youth mental health interventions exist in Pakistan, they are mainly small-scale, with significant barriers to broader implementation. This presents an opportunity to strengthen implementation guidance and resources and increase advocacy at the national level to scale and sustain these initiatives.

PROOF-OF-CONCEPT FUNDING IN PAKISTAN

Proof-of-concept (POC) funding up to \$250,000 CAD will be awarded to early-stage projects that can implement, test and refine solutions to country-specific personal, social, and/or environmental factors impacting young people's mental health and wellbeing in one of the 12 countries.

In Pakistan, we're funding POC ideas to strengthen family functioning. These innovative solutions will address strict parenting styles and a lack of parental support with a goal of improving parent-child relationships.





WINGS: SCHOOL WELLBEING PROGRAM

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [TASKEEN HEALTH INITIATIVE](#)

TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

LOCATION: KARACHI AND ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN

THEMATIC AREA(S): SERVICE DELIVERY, DIGITAL

The **Wellbeing Initiative for Nurturing Generations through Schools (WINGS)** is testing self-sustaining wellbeing hubs in schools by integrating task-shifting methodologies and digital tools. The program empowers parents, caregivers, and teachers through interactive workshops that enhance mental health management, communication skills, and parenting practices, ultimately fostering healthier environments at school and home for adolescents. WINGS trains a subset of teachers as School Wellbeing Mentors (SWMs), supported by a mental health chatbot, to deliver life skills education to students aged 13 to 17. This approach builds resilience, relationship-building skills, and promotes healthier parenting practices for future generations. The SWMs play a key role in identifying students experiencing mental health challenges, engaging parents, and providing referral support. This contributes to improving family dynamics, reducing the impact of generational trauma, and strengthening overall family functioning.

TASKEEN 
A MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE



TRANSITION-TO-SCALE FUNDING IN PAKISTAN

Transition-to-scale (TTS) funding between \$300,000 CAD and \$1,500,000 CAD will be awarded to support tested mental health promotion and prevention approaches that align with country-specific priorities along their scaling journey to help catalyze their sustainability and impact.

In Pakistan, we're funding TTS approaches to strengthen family functioning. These innovative solutions will address strict parenting styles and a lack of parental support with a goal of improving parent-child relationships.



ECOSYSTEM CATALYST FUNDING IN PAKISTAN

Ecosystem catalyst (EC) funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$300,000 CAD will be awarded to organizations that can address priority barriers to scale, such as legislation, evidence, coordination, and mobilize demand to help mental health initiatives succeed and grow in one of 12 priority countries.

In Pakistan, we're funding EC proposals that can convene national-level stakeholders from different ministries, as well as non-government organizations, to increase their commitment, create demand and resource mobilization for youth mental health promotion and preventive approaches.





ROMANIA



Romania consistently ranks among the top three countries with the highest incidence of bullying in schools, with one-third of elementary and high school students reporting that they have been victims of physical and psychological abuse in schools. Stakeholders consulted in Romania's landscape analysis highlighted that bullying is a key driver of mental health issues like anxiety, depression, substance abuse, conduct and behavioural issues among Romanian youth.

Consulted stakeholders highlighted that Romania has adopted progressive mental health policies, aligning with the European Union's comprehensive approach. However, the landscape analysis revealed the need for clearer implementation guidelines, particularly for addressing bullying through evidence-based interventions. Strengthening stakeholder collaboration will be crucial.

PROOF-OF-CONCEPT FUNDING IN ROMANIA

Proof-of-concept (POC) funding up to \$250,000 CAD will be awarded to early-stage projects that can implement, test and refine solutions to country-specific personal, social, and/or environmental factors impacting young people's mental health and wellbeing in one of the 12 countries.

In Romania, we're funding POC ideas to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying.

These innovative solutions will focus on school-based anti-bullying interventions with the goal of promoting safe school environments.





YOUTH AGAINST AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE!

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [SOCIETATEA DE EDUCATIE CONTRACEPTIVA SI SEXUALA](#)

TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

LOCATION: BUCHAREST, BACAU AND TULCEA COUNTIES

THEMATIC AREA(S): ARTS, EDUCATION

“Youth against aggression and violence!” addresses bullying, cyberbullying and gender-based violence in school settings through information sessions and social theatre amongst students aged 10–19 years from rural and urban areas in Bucharest, Bacau and Tulcea counties. The project leverages a holistic approach that focuses on prevention at the student, teacher and school level through a three-pronged approach:

1. Implementing an alternative education program for students based on social theatre that goes beyond essential knowledge and extends to building up the socio-emotional skills of students (empathy, conflict resolution, problem-solving, self-control, decision-making).
2. Training teachers and school counsellors in alternative teaching methods that incorporate social theatre to strengthen their knowledge of bullying, cyberbullying, gender-based violence and their impacts.
3. Leveraging the Romanian legislation for bullying prevention to develop a working model for in-school prevention mechanisms.

The project also aims to undertake a comprehensive survey to understand further bullying, cyberbullying and gender-based violence issues in Romania.

secs
Societatea de Educație
Contraceptivă și Sexuală



TRANSITION-TO-SCALE FUNDING IN ROMANIA

Transition-to-scale (TTS) funding between \$300,000 CAD and \$1,500,000 CAD will be awarded to support tested mental health promotion and prevention approaches that align with country-specific priorities along their scaling journey to help catalyze their sustainability and impact.

In Romania, we're funding TTS approaches to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying. These innovative solutions will focus on school-based anti-bullying interventions with the goal of promoting safe school environments.



ECOSYSTEM CATALYST FUNDING IN ROMANIA

Ecosystem catalyst (EC) funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$300,000 CAD will be awarded to organizations that can address priority barriers to scale, such as legislation, evidence, coordination, and mobilize demand to help mental health initiatives succeed and grow in one of 12 priority countries.

In Romania, we're funding EC proposals that can engage various national-level stakeholders, including the private sector, with the goal of developing national-level implementation guidance and coordination mechanisms on solutions to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying.





Senegal's landscape analysis highlighted that stigma is a growing concern and a key driver of mental health challenges like depression and substance abuse among Senegalese youth. This stigma can create barriers to seeking support, as young people may fear judgement, shame and discrimination.

As per consulted stakeholders, Senegal's first national mental health strategy is in development. This presents a key opportunity to strengthen mental health policies by integrating youth-focused prevention strategies and addressing gaps in evidence-based decision-making and stakeholder collaboration.

PROOF-OF-CONCEPT FUNDING IN SENEGAL

Proof-of-concept (POC) funding up to \$250,000 CAD will be awarded to early-stage projects that can implement, test and refine solutions to country-specific personal, social, and/or environmental factors impacting young people's mental health and wellbeing in one of the 12 countries.

In Senegal, we're funding POC ideas to reduce stigma related to mental health.

These innovative solutions will address the lack of knowledge about mental health and dispel harmful cultural beliefs in schools and communities, with the goal of having a supportive environment that promotes youth mental health and well-being.

Please note: Being's Transition-to-Scale funding is not available in Senegal.





DIGITAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS PLATFORM FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN SENEGAL

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: INSTITUT DE RECHERCHE ET D'ENSEIGNEMENT EN PSYCHOPATHOLOGIQUES (IREP)

TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

LOCATION: DAKAR AND ZIGUINCHOR, SENEGAL

THEMATIC AREA(S): DIGITAL

This **multimedia platform** in French and Wolof aims to improve mental health literacy and reduce stigma among young people in Senegal. The platform will adapt its content according to age (10-15 / 16-24) to respect young people's development and expectations. For ages 10-15, the platform uses a board game format to help children explore emotions, express themselves, and learn how to react to everyday situations. For ages 16-24, videos and podcasts illustrate real-life scenarios relevant to this age group, offering practical solutions and encouraging help-seeking behaviours. The platform will be co-developed with young people and validated by mental health experts to ensure its messages are appropriate for the target audience.

MATCH FIT - USING FOOTBALL TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: TACKLE

TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

LOCATION: GUÉDIAWAYE, SENEGAL

THEMATIC AREA(S): ARTS, GAMES, SPORTS

'Match Fit', in partnership with the Association of Working Children and Youth, is testing the effectiveness of experiential football sessions to improve young people's mental health knowledge, dispel harmful cultural beliefs and reduce mental health-related stigma in schools across Guédiawaye, Senegal. The project aims to address three elements to promote wellbeing holistically: (1) Participation in sport, (2) Removal of judgement and stigma by providing a safe space to discuss taboo topics in groups of 20-25 peers with trained teachers/coaches, and (3) experiential learning through representations on the pitch, addressing the lack of mental health knowledge. Alongside the football activities, the project will engage parents and religious leaders in group workshops to foster intergenerational dialogue and interactive discussions on mental health issues and ensure that key messages are framed in culturally appropriate ways and resonate with local beliefs.



ECOSYSTEM CATALYST FUNDING IN SENEGAL

Ecosystem catalyst (EC) funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$300,000 CAD will be awarded to organizations that can address priority barriers to scale, such as legislation, evidence, coordination, and mobilize demand to help mental health initiatives succeed and grow in one of 12 priority countries.

In Senegal, we're funding EC proposals to work closely with key stakeholders, including government bodies, to improve coordination and advocacy for data driven youth mental health strategies and appropriate resourcing to enable a strong focus on prevention and promotion.





SIERRA LEONE



In 2024, the government of Sierra Leone declared Kush, a new highly addictive drug, a national emergency due to its widespread use, particularly among youth in urban areas. Sierra Leone's landscape analysis showed that the high prevalence of substance use among young people is driving serious mental health challenges, including substance abuse, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicide and suicidal thoughts.

Stakeholders consulted highlighted that while national legislation criminalizes harm-reduction activities and drug users for both possession and use, which can perpetuate stigma, the recent declaration of Kush as a national emergency presents an opportunity. This moment can be used to strengthen preventative approaches to youth mental health and wellbeing in policy to address the underlying factors of drug use like poverty, trauma, lack of economic opportunities, etc.

PROOF-OF-CONCEPT FUNDING IN SIERRA LEONE

Proof-of-concept (POC) funding up to \$250,000 CAD will be awarded to early-stage projects that can implement, test and refine solutions to country-specific personal, social, and/or environmental factors impacting young people's mental health and wellbeing in one of the 12 countries.

In Sierra Leone, we're funding POC ideas to reduce and prevent substance use.

These innovative solutions will combine substance use education and alternative youth programming, with the goal of providing youth with the skills and opportunities they need to thrive.





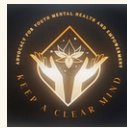
FIGHT AGAINST KUSH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN SIERRA LEONE

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: ADVOCACY FOR YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND EMPOWERMENT

TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

LOCATION: FREETOWN, MAKENI, KAMBIA, PORT LOKO, MOYAMBA AND BO
THEMATIC AREA(S): PEER-BASED

Advocacy for Youth Mental Health and Empowerment (AYMHE) is implementing a **community and peer-based mental health awareness, and substance use prevention model** in schools and community centers across Sierra Leone. The program trains youth leaders and educators to offer weekly one-on-one support sessions and lead monthly interactive discussions on mental health literacy, resilience, and substance use prevention using media, open dialogues, and role-playing. Youth leaders and educators are trained to identify early signs of mental health challenges and substance use, providing timely interventions and referrals. The project also partners with the Sierra Leone Psychiatric Mental Hospital for counselling and rehabilitation services. AYMHE will also conduct workshops with families, educators, and local leaders and provide training sessions to law enforcement officers on substance use prevention and techniques for handling cases with empathy and adherence to human rights. Finally, AYMHE will run an awareness media campaign through local radio, television stations, newspapers, and social media.



IT TAKES A VILLAGE: EMPOWERING FREETOWN SLUM COMMUNITIES TO PREVENT KUSH USE AND PROMOTE WELLBEING AMONG ADDICTED YOUTH

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: GLOBAL YOUTH NETWORK FOR EMPOWERMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

LOCATION: FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE

THEMATIC AREA(S): SPORTS, PEERS-BASED

Led by Global Youth Network in partnership with YAMA and ARMeD Victims SL, this initiative aims to address widespread Kush use in four slum communities of Freetown, Sierra Leone, through a community-based, holistic approach. It combines psychosocial support through yoga, somatic dance, and music therapy with vocational, entrepreneurship, and soft skills training. The goal is to raise awareness of the mental health risks of Kush use while providing support to help youth overcome addiction and build better futures. Targeting youth (ages 16-24), particularly out-of-school, unskilled, and unemployed individuals, the project integrates mental health education and substance use prevention into schools, youth centers, and healthcare providers. By offering both wellbeing support and practical skills, the initiative seeks to create a pathway to resilience. This model has the potential for scalability across Sierra Leone, fostering lasting change among youth facing addiction.



TRANSITION-TO-SCALE FUNDING IN SIERRA LEONE

Transition-to-scale (TTS) funding between \$300,000 CAD and \$1,500,000 CAD will be awarded to support tested mental health promotion and prevention approaches that align with country-specific priorities along their scaling journey to help catalyze their sustainability and impact.

In Sierra Leone, we're funding TTS approaches to reduce and prevent substance use. These innovative solutions will combine substance use education and alternative youth programming, with the goal of providing youth with the skills and opportunities they need to thrive.





BRAVE HEART INTERVENTION: PREVENTING SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN SIERRA LEONE

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: SLUM AND RURAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

TYPE: TRANSITION-TO-SCALE

LOCATION: FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE

THEMATIC AREA(S): DIGITAL, PEER-BASED

The **Brave Heart Intervention (BHI)**, launched by the Slum and Rural Health Initiative (SRHIN) in 2021, aims to tackle mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) challenges among youth aged 10 to 24. Initially piloted in internally displaced camps in Nigeria, the project is now expanding to Freetown, Sierra Leone. BHI focuses on prevention by addressing key risk factors for mental health issues, offering young people essential information and practical tools for making informed decisions, along with life skills training to enhance job readiness and competencies. With prior funding from Grand Challenges Canada for proof-of-concept, SRHIN implemented this project in Nigeria and showed that community members could effectively deliver trusted and community-based mental health support for young people through the BHI intervention, which led to meaningful improvements in mental health outcomes. Now, with TTS funding from Being, SRHIN is expanding BHI's reach to address SUD prevention in Sierra Leone, training teachers and community members with lived experience to deliver culturally relevant SUD literacy to youth in high schools and local communities. The curriculum, developed in English and three local languages, will be shared through the SIMBI Health mobile app.



ECOSYSTEM CATALYST FUNDING IN SIERRA LEONE

Ecosystem catalyst (EC) funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$300,000 CAD will be awarded to organizations that can address priority barriers to scale, such as legislation, evidence, coordination, and mobilize demand to help mental health initiatives succeed and grow in one of 12 priority countries.

In Sierra Leone, we're funding EC proposals to support advocacy efforts with the goal of influencing national action plans and regulatory frameworks related to mental health and substance use towards effective prevention and promotion strategies and stigma reduction.



TANZANIA



In Tanzania, stakeholders consulted in our [landscape analysis](#) emphasized that mental health stigma remains a significant challenge due to cultural beliefs, limited community awareness and restricted access to mental health services. They agreed that this stigma plays a major role in mental health issues among young people, including depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicidality. Tanzania is set to launch its first strategic mental health plan.

Given the government's current prioritization of mental health, a coordinated approach involving local mental health experts and youth representation will be critical to ensure Tanzania's mental health priorities include drivers for youth mental health and wellbeing.

PROOF-OF-CONCEPT FUNDING IN TANZANIA

Proof-of-concept (POC) funding up to \$250,000 CAD will be awarded to early-stage projects that can implement, test and refine solutions to country-specific personal, social, and/or environmental factors impacting young people's mental health and wellbeing in one of the 12 countries.

In Tanzania, we're funding POC ideas to reduce stigma related to mental health.

These innovative solutions will focus on addressing the lack of appropriate mental health education in schools and communities, with the goal of reducing harmful cultural norms and discrimination.





ENGAGING YOUTH AND COMMUNITY THROUGH BONGO FLAVA MUSIC FOR MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS IN TANZANIA

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [REACHING THE UNREACHED TANZANIA \(RUT\)](#)
TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT
LOCATION: DODOMA, TANZANIA
THEMATIC AREA(S): ARTS

Reaching the Unreached Tanzania (RUT) seeks to address mental health stigma by harnessing the power of "Bongo Flava" (meaning "the vibe of the brains"), a popular Tanzanian music genre, to promote open dialogue, provide accurate mental health information, and improve care-seeking behaviours. The project targets youth aged 10-24, particularly out-of-school youth, in Dodoma. Through Bongo Flava songs and music videos addressing mental health themes, RUT aims to challenge misconceptions, normalize conversations about mental health, and encourage help-seeking. The initiative will collaborate with local youth artists, media, medical professionals, and youth volunteers to develop culturally relevant campaigns and organize workshops, concerts, and community events where young people and community members can discuss mental health openly and share their experiences. By providing accurate information and fostering peer support, RUT aims to empower youth to advocate for their mental health and challenge harmful cultural norms.



LEVERAGING FOOTBALL COACHING FOR MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [POWER PLUS FOUNDATION](#)
TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT
LOCATION: KAHAMA, TANZANIA
THEMATIC AREA(S): SPORTS

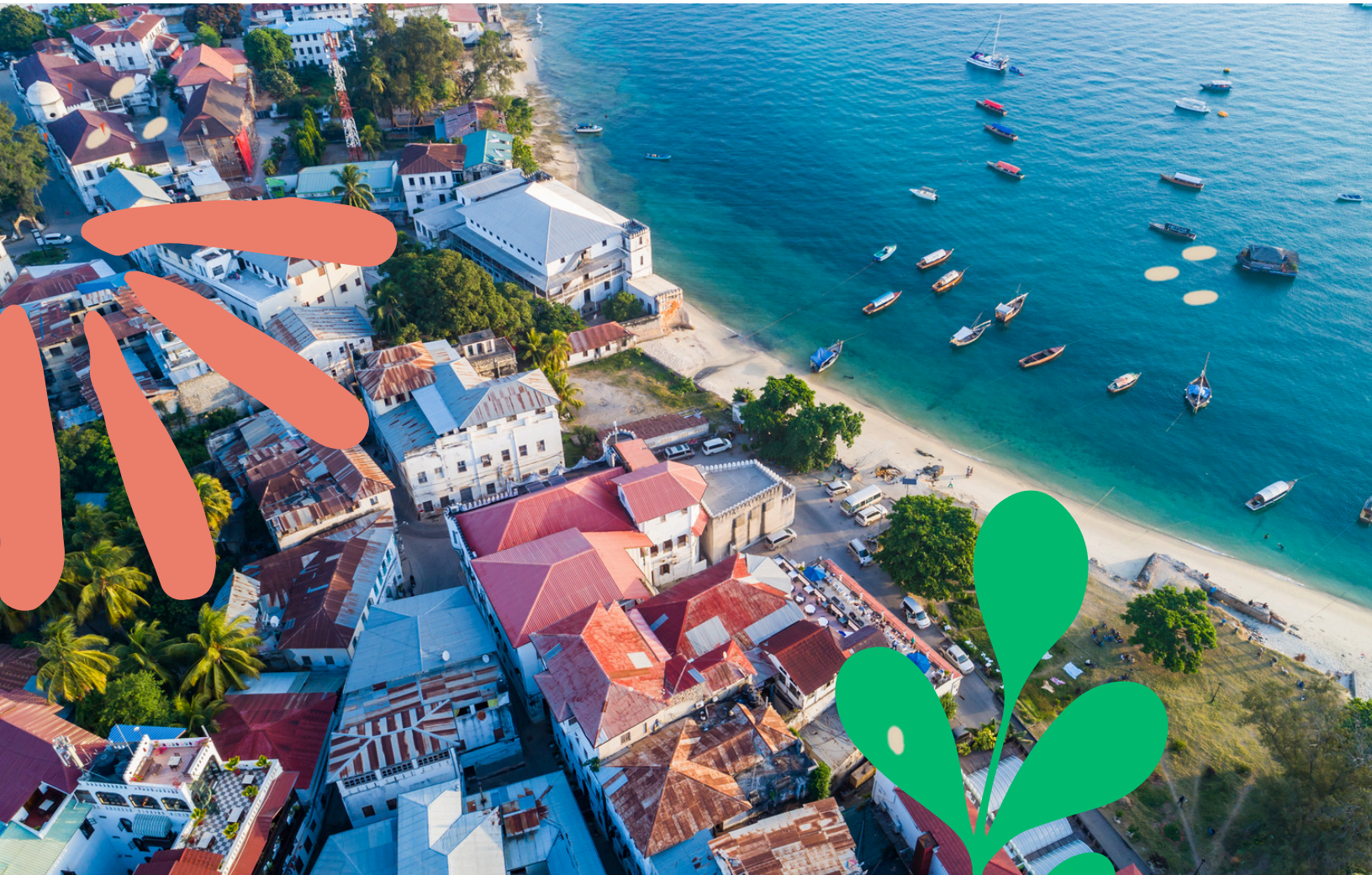
Power Plus Foundation's **sports-based innovation** integrates mental health education into football coaching sessions, using the popularity of football to engage youth in discussions about mental well-being. Trained youth facilitators will lead sessions to challenge stigma, empower youth, and improve care-seeking behaviors, while fostering resilience. The project aims to combat stigma, enhance quality of life, and bridge the gap in mental health support by raising awareness and encouraging positive attitudes toward mental health.



TRANSITION-TO-SCALE FUNDING IN TANZANIA

Transition-to-scale (TTS) funding between \$300,000 CAD and \$1,500,000 CAD will be awarded to support tested mental health promotion and prevention approaches that align with country-specific priorities along their scaling journey to help catalyze their sustainability and impact.

In Tanzania, we're funding TTS approaches to reduce stigma related to mental health. These innovative solutions will focus on addressing the lack of appropriate mental health education in schools and communities, with the goal of reducing harmful cultural norms and discrimination.



ECOSYSTEM CATALYST FUNDING IN TANZANIA

Ecosystem catalyst (EC) funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$300,000 CAD will be awarded to organizations that can address priority barriers to scale, such as legislation, evidence, coordination, and mobilize demand to help mental health initiatives succeed and grow in one of 12 priority countries.

In Tanzania, we're funding EC proposals to improve national-level coordination and advocacy efforts among key stakeholders around the development, sustainable financing, and implementation of the strategic mental health plan.





In Vietnam, many young people grow up in adverse family environments and face elevated risks of mental health challenges. Most stakeholders consulted in Vietnam's landscape analysis agreed that adverse family circumstances are a key driver of anxiety, depression, stress, trauma, hyperactivity, and even suicide among Vietnamese youth.

National policies in Vietnam currently prioritize the prevention, detection, and treatment of youth mental health disorders. Although this robust policy framework exists, consulted stakeholders in Vietnam highlighted that there is limited focus on family functioning and including parents and/or caregivers in youth mental health prevention and promotion targets and guidelines.

PROOF-OF-CONCEPT FUNDING IN VIETNAM

Proof-of-concept (POC) funding up to \$250,000 CAD will be awarded to early-stage projects that can implement, test and refine solutions to country-specific personal, social, and/or environmental factors impacting young people's mental health and wellbeing in one of the 12 countries.

In Vietnam, we're funding POC ideas to strengthen family functioning. These innovative solutions should include a focus on addressing strict parenting styles or family conflict/violence for young people and their parents/caregivers.





ROOTS + WINGS: STRENGTHENING FAMILIES, EMPOWERING YOUTHS

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [WECARE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE](#)

TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

LOCATION: HANOI, VIETNAM

THEMATIC AREA(S): SERVICE DELIVERY, STORYTELLING

The "Roots & Wings: Strengthening Families, Empowering Youths" project is designed to enhance communication between parents and adolescents while promoting youth mental health awareness in Hanoi, Vietnam. The initiative combines public narratives training for youth with structured discussions for parents, fostering empathy, understanding, and dialogue on mental health and authoritarian parenting practices. Through a series of storytelling workshops, digital storytelling competitions, expert-led training sessions, an online resource hub, and community engagement events, the project empowers young people to express their mental health challenges while equipping parents with the knowledge and skills to support their children effectively. By integrating evidence-based interventions and community-driven support networks, the project aims to normalize discussions on mental health, reduce stigma, and create a more supportive family environment where youth feel heard and understood.



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MONITORING SYSTEM (YDMS)

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: [LEADERINYOU](#)

TYPE: PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

LOCATION: HANOI, VIETNAM

THEMATIC AREA(S): DIGITAL

The **Youth Development Monitoring System (YDMS)** is a mobile app designed to monitor and support the development of Vietnamese youth aged 10 to 15. The app aims to address family dysfunction and its impact on youth mental health by fostering better communication and understanding within families and improving overall youth wellbeing. The app integrates direct feedback from youth, parents, guardians, and educators into a unified system that tracks developmental progress across emotional, social, physical, and educational dimensions. This approach provides a comprehensive view of each child's wellbeing. The app's real-time data collection and analysis offers immediate insights and recommendations to families and offers young people access to personalized insights, encouraging them to take an active role in their mental wellbeing. Sensitive input from parents and caregivers is also carefully filtered to ensure it is appropriate before being shared with youth users while safeguarding policies protect user privacy and provide a secure experience. YDMS also strengthens community support systems by offering training sessions for parents, teachers, and caregivers. These sessions provide strategies and resources to build positive relationships and promote social-emotional learning (SEL).



TRANSITION-TO-SCALE FUNDING IN VIETNAM

Transition-to-scale (TTS) funding between \$300,000 CAD and \$1,500,000 CAD will be awarded to support tested mental health promotion and prevention approaches that align with country-specific priorities along their scaling journey to help catalyze their sustainability and impact.

In Vietnam, we're funding TTS approaches to strengthen family functioning. These innovative solutions should include a focus on addressing strict parenting styles or family conflict/violence for young people and their parents/caregivers.



ECOSYSTEM CATALYST FUNDING IN VIETNAM

Ecosystem catalyst (EC) funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$300,000 CAD will be awarded to organizations that can address priority barriers to scale, such as legislation, evidence, coordination, and mobilize demand to help mental health initiatives succeed and grow in one of 12 priority countries.

In Vietnam, we're funding EC proposals to support the prioritization and integration of improved family functioning and parental / caregiver involvement in national policies and/or guidelines that govern provinces and school settings.



