



# The Unlonely Planet:

## How Ashoka Accelerates Impact

### Results of the 2018 Global Fellows Study



*“Changemaker journeys are often very lonely. One of the biggest sources of support from Ashoka is being the “unlonely planet” where I can connect with people who have equally lonely journeys. Ashoka has reconfirmed my self-belief in moments of absolute self-doubt. It’s a huge strength and support in those moments. Ashoka has also connected me with an interesting network where I can constantly learn from other changemakers on similar journeys, and people from other walks of life. For an organization to spread its approach to different corners of the world, it needs to be known. Ashoka has helped me amplify my voice.”*

**Paramita Banerjee**  
Indian Fellow

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# Preface

**Diana Wells**

President Emerita



In today's world of unprecedented change, where can we turn for answers about how to thrive and best contribute so we can ensure these changes are for the good of all? I have had the distinct privilege of an extraordinary array of answers to this question through our Ashoka Fellows. This historical moment has offered new technologies to eliminate barriers to participation and offers new ways of organizing. I have learned from our social entrepreneurs that practicing empathy, skilled teamwork, offering new roles for others to be changemakers are signature qualities of a new leadership for our time. The following pages offer what we have learned from our largest survey of our Ashoka Fellows to date.

In 2018 more than 850 Ashoka Fellows from 74 countries took part in a Global Fellows Study designed to understand their impact as well as the role Ashoka has had in contributing to that impact. We believe this to be the largest global study of system change social entrepreneurs done to date.

[The Data Set Represents a Diverse Group of Fellows In Various Sectors and Geographies](#)

Of the 858 responses, 42% were women, 57% were male and 1% identified as

“other gender identity.” This distribution is representative of Ashoka’s overall network. The respondents focus on a wide variety of population groups including people living in poverty (55%), women (48%) and people with disabilities (25%). The Fellow respondents also represented a variety of business models, with 32% reporting that they received no revenue from selling products or services, and 12% reporting that they received all of their revenue from selling products or services.

[Fellows Generate Systems Change that Sticks](#)

Ashoka's view of system change is emergent and context-dependent. It is open to a whole array of system elements as well as how they interact - including but not limited to public policy, industry norms, changes in market systems, building new professions, how different systems interact, etc. Ashoka learns with each social entrepreneurs' journey not simply the issues relevant in each geography where that entrepreneur is working, but the how-tos of strategy as well as the skill required and support needed for building leadership for deep and lasting positive change.

Our metrics to measure systems change have evolved since we first conducted this study in 1998, and include: independent replication, public policy change, market change, and shifting mindsets. In the Global Fellows Study we found that 90% of Fellows report having seen their idea replicated by independent groups or institutions, 93% reporting having changed markets and/or public policy, and 97% report that their strategy focuses on mindset shift.

Systems change often necessitates many different strategies targeting a diverse array of stakeholders, demonstrated by Fellows' reported partnerships. 86% of Fellows report partnering with NGOs, 72%

with Universities and 61% with for-profit companies. Ashoka is learning from Fellows' partnerships with companies and leveraging their work to create a more equitable world where everyone is powerful and able to create positive change.

### Ashoka Is a Powerful Accelerator for Fellows' Impact

In this study Fellows report that Ashoka has had a substantial impact on their work — from validating their identity as a social entrepreneur, to providing mission-critical financing in the early stages of their venture, to offering access to a global network and strategic support.

A core principle which Ashoka got right from the beginning, is applying consistent criteria to a disciplined selection process. Every Ashoka Fellow elected has passed a five-stage selection process where at each of five stages the criteria has been met. Ashoka has never been prescriptive of the how-tos of getting to system change nor prescriptive about the time horizon for getting there. The selection process is designed to be predictive and recognizes that big change does not happen overnight, which is why we recognize that we need to assess a life time pattern of persistence. 92% of Ashoka Fellows reported that the stipend helped them focus full-time on their idea and several Fellows in the interviews confirmed that this early stage funding was "mission critical." In addition, extremely high percentages of Fellows report that Ashoka had an influence on their thinking and how they practice leadership, and perhaps most importantly, that their strategy or behavior changed as a result. All told, 84% of Fellows agreed that Ashoka had helped increase their impact.

Beyond financial support, Ashoka has provided an ecosystem of support for Fellows and our entire network of partners. Fellows in the study reported that they

gained a wide variety of ecosystem supports from Ashoka staff, partners and other Fellows — from strategic guidance and mentorship to new funding connections and wellbeing support. Beyond interactions with Ashoka staff, Fellows report high rates of collaboration with other Fellows and partners. This is no surprise as we have heard for decades that Ashoka's Fellowship (the global network of Fellows) has been a key source of support in allowing social entrepreneurs to persist through times of challenge. The data shows that 74% of Fellows have collaborated with at least one other Fellow, with an average of 4 peer collaborations per Fellow globally.

### The Study Has Surfaced Insights That Point to New Opportunities Moving Forward

The findings from this study around Fellows' young changemaking experiences and influences in childhood are critical to Ashoka's LeadYoung strategy and our Everyone a Changemaker vision. We see in this data that exercising a muscle of changemaking while young enables individuals to gain more comfort with being uncomfortable — a critical survival skill in a rapidly changing world. With new evidence validating our strategy there is an incredible opportunity to create a world in which every young person has mastered changemaking skills for the social good.

Finally, the survey results demonstrated a complex picture for female social entrepreneurs. While we see social entrepreneurship has created a remarkable space for women to lead — what other sector can boast women's leading institutions they founded pursuing ideas they authored at a rate 40%? — disparities still remain. Ashoka's Women in Social Entrepreneurship (WISE) initiative led by Iman Bibars is launching a movement to redefine "success" metrics for social entrepreneurs and provide an improved support system for female entrepreneurs.



# Methodology

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The 2018 Global Fellows Study used a “mixed-methods” approach which incorporated both quantitative and qualitative research methodology. Of the 50 questions in the survey 47 were closed-ended, enabling a purely quantitative analysis.

Overall, the survey received 858 unique respondents (26% of our Fellowship population) representing 74 countries. The highest response rate came from Europe, with 34% of their Fellows, and the lowest from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), which represents 17% of their Fellows.

Forty-three Fellows were selected for one-hour qualitative interviews from a randomized sample of respondents to the survey. This sample was also representative in terms of gender and geographic location.

A team of experts at LUISS University in Rome conducted an independent evaluation of the survey results. They determined that “overall, the study can be considered complete, solid and reliable.”



**Part I:**  
Fellows are Driving Systems  
Change to Make Everyone  
Powerful



# PART I:



## Ashoka Fellows Are a Diverse Community

### Field of work



11%  
environment



20%  
economic  
development



17%  
civic  
participation



18%  
education



17%  
health



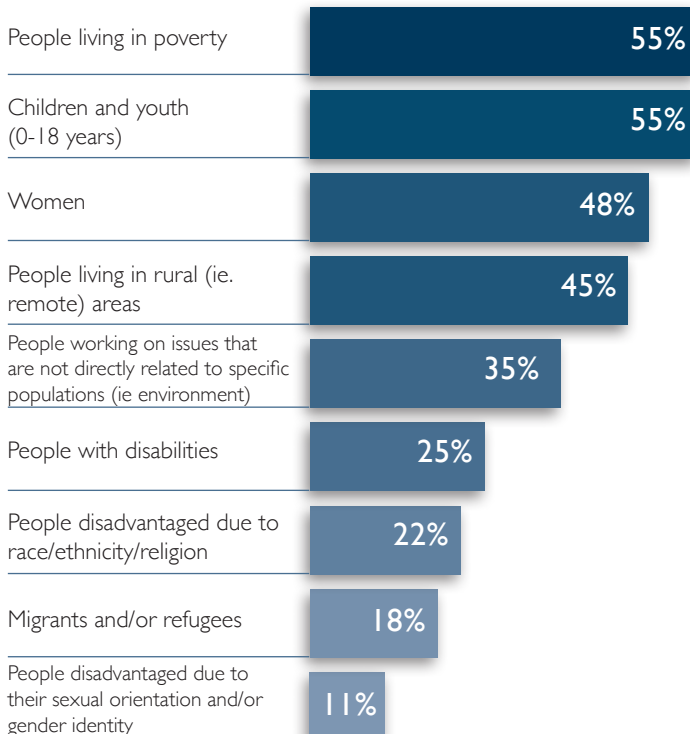
17%  
human rights

### Gender



<1% Other  
gender identity

### Population Focus

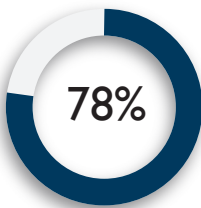




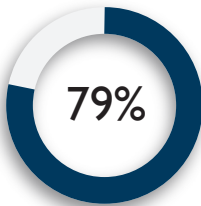
## Ashoka Fellows Changing Systems: Independent Replication

In addition to reaching people directly, Fellows are scaling their idea through systems change, which social entrepreneurship researcher Gregory Dees defined as “alter[ing] the social system that creates and sustains the problems in the first place.”

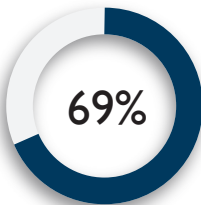
Ashoka Fellows know that in order to spread their idea quickly and turn it into society’s new normal, they must employ innovative strategies to get their idea into the hands of as many people as possible. We define independent replication as when an independent organization or institution takes on a Fellows’ idea and brings it to even larger scale and indirect impact.



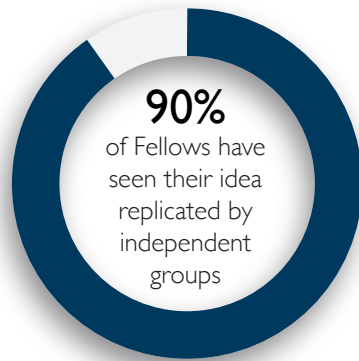
of Fellows have partnered with schools or Universities



of Fellows have partnered with local or national governments



of Fellows have actively encouraged others to replicate their idea or have open-sourced their idea



of Fellows have seen their idea replicated by independent groups



Of these, **65%** have seen their idea replicated within their country of residence



and **41%** have seen their idea replicated in other countries



## CASE STUDY - KRITAYA SREESUNPAGIT

Kritaya Sreesunpagit is a Fellow from Thailand whose story illustrates this trajectory. Kritaya's Youth Innovation Year Project nurtures young leaders to articulate new ideas for social development and connects them to the resources and skills they need to bring their ideas to life. She explained that over time, she shifted from a direct service model to consciously replicating her idea through partnerships. She began training other groups and institutions in her model in order to expand across Thailand.

*“Once we start working for a couple years, then we look more at like policy expansion so that we know that we can cater to the whole country or for the whole region. We want to find partners and for them to take on the ideas and adapt to whatever approach that’s more suitable for the areas. So we work with the National Innovation Council so that [our approach] could also be incorporated into their strategies, in supporting innovations.”*





## CASE STUDY - BAMBANG SUWERDA

Bambang Suwerda first become concerned about waste after a heavy earthquake in his hometown of Bantul. Initially, his goal was to manage the huge amount of waste after the earthquake. But in the process, Bambang realized that “waste banks” that serve as community-based recovery facilities could change societal mindsets and behaviors. He started by introducing Bank Sampah (“Waste Bank”) at weekly meetings in villages. Soon, his model was noticed by local and national media, as well as the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. The Ministry developed a national policy to include Bank Sampah as one of the important criteria for each city in Indonesia to receive the Adipura (Clean City) Award. As a result, every city and region in Indonesia has allocated a portion of their budget to establish Bank Sampah. By 2017, 5,244 Bank Sampah had been established across Indonesia.

*“We started with the model of multi-level marketing, [so that] everyone can replicate the model and invite other people to do the same. The National Policy in Indonesia (Presidential Decree No 97 in 2017) helps to spread the impact because the government can support every city to implement Bank Sampah with funding and training support.”*





## Ashoka Fellows Changing Systems: Mindset Shift

Fellows know that changing societal beliefs and acceptance towards certain behaviors is often necessary for sustainable, long-term social transformation.



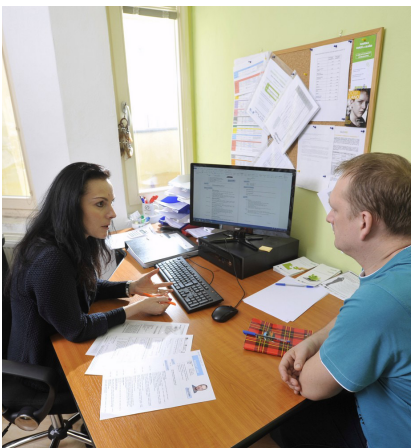
of Fellows reported that their idea focuses on influencing societal mindsets/ cultural norms

### CASE STUDY - DAGMAR DOUBRAVOVA



As Czech Fellow Dagmar Doubravova knows, mindset shift in itself is not a single strategy — in her work improving outcomes for incarcerated people, she used a multi-pronged mindset shift strategy including media campaigns, peer mentoring programs and volunteer coaching programs in prisons by private sector leaders. Dagmar believes that without public understanding and support of criminal justice and the related debt reform, even changing legislation and developing scaling mechanisms for successful programs will not be enough for systems change

*“The first goal [in mindset shift] was that we were able to cooperate with the media, so if they call us and ask for some stories, we are ready to prepare our client so they are able...to share their stories positively. The second is community centers where we have organized many activities for the public, but behind these activities and gardening center are also our clients. So people can see our clients in other situations and [see] how we can change the mindset of the general public. It’s good for everybody if we give a second chance to people with a criminal past.”*





## CASE STUDY - MONIRA RAHMAN

Fellow Monira Rahman founded the Acid Survivors Foundation to end acid attacks in Bangladesh, but also to challenge patriarchal social norms that were the root cause of many attacks. Monira launched a movement of citizens, medical practitioners, acid attack survivors, and legal groups. Together, they won new legislation controlling access to acid, imposing severe penalties for acid throwers, and policing support institutions. Monira also founded a hospital to provide comprehensive medical services and began a nationwide acid attack prevention campaign, and mobilized leading print and online media to spread the message to all over the country. Today Monira's work has helped reduce acid attacks in Bangladesh, changed social norms and stigmas, and is inspiring organizations in other countries combating violence against women. Monira is now focusing on promoting mental health and wellbeing for sustainable development in Bangladesh.

*“Bangladesh is the first country to observe a reduction in the number of acid attacks, from 500 in the year 2002 to below 50 in 2018. We have been able to change the story from shame to strength by transforming acid survivors to change agents; by engaging men and boys; and by bringing systemic change in laws, policies and practices. This is an example that violence against women is preventable if we all work together with sincerity and dedication. It’s everyone’s business.”*

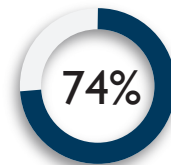
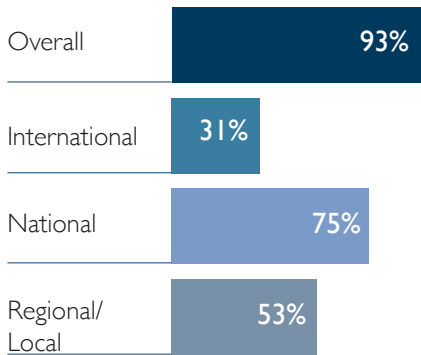




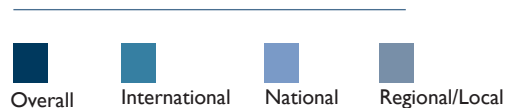
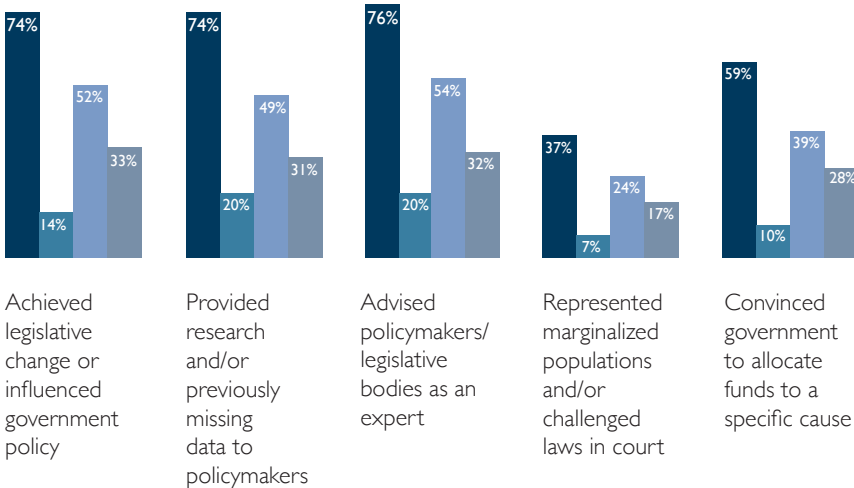
# Ashoka Fellows Changing Systems: Public Policy

The term “policy change,” often brings to mind the most well-known end result: legislation. Indeed, new or modified legislation can have widespread and long-term social impact. However, in addition to new legislation, Ashoka measured several other key strategies for public policy change in the 2018 Global Fellows Study.

### Collectively



of Fellows report changing legislation/ influencing public policy





## CASE STUDY - BALIJEPALLI SAILAKSHMI

Indian Fellow Balijepalli Sailakshmi is involving stakeholders such as local governments, educational institutions, and private providers to address the gaps in public healthcare, with a particular focus on neonatal and maternal health. Dr. Sailakshmi has been intentionally working to convince the government to allocate funding to her idea (one of the “targeted systems change” strategies for policy change) so that it can be replicated and scaled at a level she could not have achieved on her own. By convincing the government to take up her idea, she is able to scale her community-based healthcare model across the country without increasing her staff, operating budget or number of direct beneficiaries.

*“What we are operationalizing, the government is implementing in 73 community health units across the state and bringing in donors. That model is being replicated in other districts. And now, since we are working with the government and UNICEF, the word spreads and...we are being invited to [implement in] different states and partnerships. And apart from this, the global chapters are starting... they’re setting up these chapters and they’re learning the model.”*



**CASE STUDY - ALICE EMASU**



In 2003, Ugandan Fellow Alice Emasu founded the Association for the Re-orientation and Rehabilitation of Teso Women for Development (TERREWODE) to unlock rural women's potential. After a personal experience losing several friends to preventable maternal health-related issues, as well as witnessing the challenges of obstetric fistula, Alice was inspired to speak up for women's health rights despite societal stigmas around these issues. Alice realized that in order to raise awareness, she needed to change government funding priorities. TERREWODE partnered with the Ugandan Ministry of Health and other agencies to reach hundreds of thousands of women with direct services in addition to extending obstetric fistula, sexual and reproductive rights trainings to law enforcement officers, health professionals, schools, community clubs and members of the media.

*“Due to Uganda’s patriarchal society, the obstetric fistula has remained a silent women’s struggle, affecting national budgetary allocation and policy enforcement. TERREWODE’s continuous advocacy and lobbying has brought obstetric fistula to the national agenda and initiated strategic partnerships with the Ministry of Health, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the United States Agency for Development, Amref Health Africa and EngenderHealth. In partnership with the Ugandan Ministry of Health, we have established a diverse vibrant community volunteer network to raise awareness, identify, refer and support women for treatment and socially reintegrate them back in their communities.”*



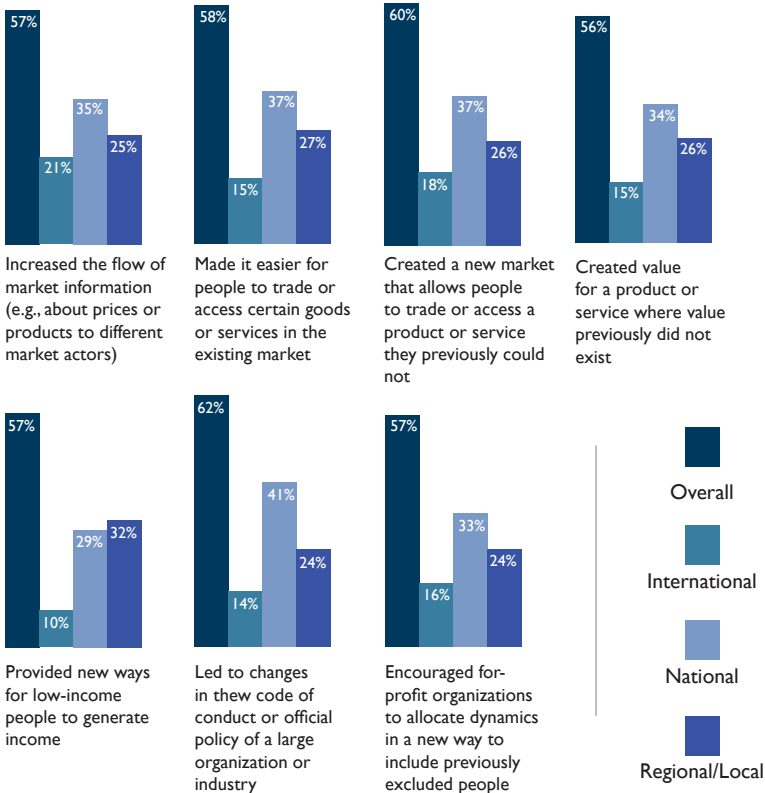
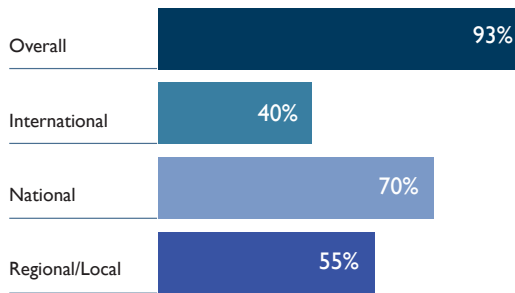
This interview originally appeared in E4Impact.



## Ashoka Fellows Changing Systems: Markets

In certain contexts, the market is not operating at full “efficiency:” there is a lack of information, access to products or services, or income-generating opportunities. All too often, market inefficiencies disproportionately affect poor and marginalized communities. Ashoka Fellows alter market systems by targeting the key variables driving inefficiencies — when these variables are changed, so too is the entire market system.

### Collectively



**CASE STUDY - KEVIN KIRBY**



US Fellow Kevin Kirby is creating a new market for substance abusers, their loved ones and their employers to both prevent and treat addiction. Kevin is breaking down stigma around addiction, in part through a public education campaign, but mainly by pointing out the economic incentives for employers to become part of the solution. To date there is no other for-profit organization that has targeted employers with these types of prevention and treatment services.

*“There’s nothing even remotely like us in our field. There’s nobody penetrating the private sector and delivering value to those with the most skin in the game in the community, being employers. We could have an army of peer addiction management coaches operating out of our facilities. But if we haven’t done anything to systemically address the issue in a community, we’re just another service provider. [Our services are] a necessary step, but we also have to mainstream addiction into the employer employee relationship or we’re not going to get sufficient penetration to solve the problem in a community. We also have to mainstream addiction into healthcare.”*





## CASE STUDY - TAKASHI KAWAZOE



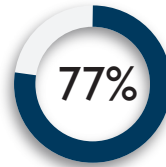
Japan Fellow Takashi Kawazoe is creating a new market for health care check-ups, as well as providing new employment opportunities for Japan's 2 million nurses. Takashi's CarePro self-check medical stations are changing health awareness throughout Japan. They are located in convenient places, are easy to access, and quick to use. For JPY 500 (US\$6) anyone can have a simple physical check-up on street corners, in train stations, or in department stores, as well as access to a nurse. Meanwhile, CarePro is addressing the massive underemployment of nurses in Japan and offering them more flexible working hours. As a result of Carepro's advocacy, in 2014 the Japanese government created new guidelines about self checkup services. Today more than 1,600 competitors provide self check-up services in Japan.



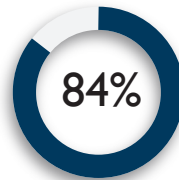


## Ashoka Fellows Changing Systems: Everyone a Changemaker

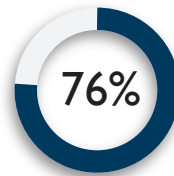
A new paradigm is emerging where new skills are needed for a rapidly changing world. These “changemaker skills” are embodied by the great majority of Ashoka Fellows: they learned to practice cognitive empathy at an early age, started to exercise their changemaking muscle in their teens, see the power of fluid teamwork and practice a kind of leadership that invites everyone to lead. This study shows that Fellows, beyond embodying changemaking themselves, are also creating spaces within their work for everyone to be powerful.



of Fellows are putting young people in charge of leading initiatives within their organization



of Fellows are encouraging young people to create independent initiatives to spread/scale their work



of Fellows have spoken to funders, government officials, and other stakeholders about the importance of putting young people in charge



### CASE STUDY - RAQUEL ROSENBERG

Raquel Rosenberg's Engajamundo is an online platform that enables young people in Brazil to self-organize and become involved in the political process. In Brazil, young people are underrepresented in government, and multiple corruption scandals have led to widespread distrust in the national government and judicial system. Engajamundo encourages young people to mobilize around issues that matter to them, discuss actions, and either start their own

initiatives or join initiatives started by other youth members in their region or across the country. Young people also lead trainings for new members and attend international conferences, in effect creating the next generation of youth leaders and decision makers. Engajamundo has spread to 18 states, with almost 3,500 young people participating in peer groups.



## CASE STUDY - ADNANE ADDIOUI

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Adnane Addioui, a Fellow from Morocco, is changing the public school system — by empowering students to lead the change themselves. Through Tamkeen’s training program, high school students develop the mindset of problem solvers as they launch their own solutions in schools. Adnane seeks not just to transform the student’s mindsets, but to change the education system itself, which is why Tamkeen works directly in schools, engaging teachers, school authorities, and parents associations. It is also why students are empowered to drive change in a system that isn’t working for them and to turn schools into spaces of innovation.

*“The world is changing and becoming more complex. Thus if you want to prepare people for the future, you need to have a future-proof system that is not focused on content; but on how people analyze and create new patterns and models. [Currently] if young people want to do something, they are very much discredited because they are young and so-called lack skills. Tamkeen in Arabic means empowerment. The idea of this program is to show how young people can provide solutions that others may not have managed starting from their own environment their schools and involving all their ecosystems parents, teachers, school administrators. We want to empower every part of this value chain to produce solutions rather than just rants.”*



## Part 2: Ashoka's Impact on Fellows





## Ashoka Finds and Selects Leading Social Entrepreneurs with a Systems Changing Idea

In 2018:



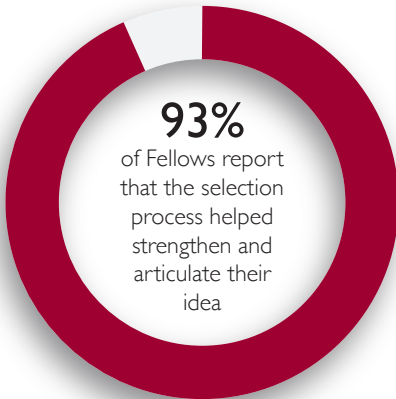
Ashoka received over 4,500 applications for the Fellowship

and elected

108  
Fellows



dispensing over USD \$3.6 Million in stipends



*“My fellowship selection took a long time: almost two years! I was able to evolve that strategy towards co-creation. When I was selected in Ashoka we were working in a smaller magnitude within villages. Through the Ashoka selection, the scaling strategy was defined, and we understood that most important factors were interfacing the technology, gender integration with the technology, involving ourselves in open-source technology, and to create open inclusive process of all technical institutes [working with us] that dramatically changed our model.”*

- Biplab Paul, India





## The Stipend Supports Fellows in Pursuing Their Idea Full-Time

The personal stipend that Ashoka gives to most Fellows emerged from the surveys and interviews as one of the most important benefits of entry into the Fellowship. The stipend is meant to help the social entrepreneur focus full-time on their social mission without the need to work elsewhere to maintain themselves or their families. Ashoka's selection process is designed to elect Fellows at an inflection point in their idea, so that the impact of the Fellowship network and stipend can be maximized.



of Fellows report the stipend helped them focus full-time on their idea



of Fellows report the stipend was the first significant source of funding for their idea

*"The Ashoka Fellowship really saved my life because until it came along, I was the sole income earner and main manager of my household, my five person or six person family. And I was getting up at four or five in the morning to make money, and I would work until 11pm or midnight. The Ashoka stipend gave me three years to work full time on all the possibilities that we were uncovering in our work. I also went on and did a master's degree and then a few years later I did a doctorate, which is something I never would have imagined. So Ashoka made it possible to do all that and to move ahead in a way that didn't create a conflict between my need for income and my organization's need to build itself up independently."*  
-Chilean Fellow

*"I was at the bottom point of my life when I got a call from Ashoka. And in a real way it empowered me, it gave me legs to stand on. It proved to me at the time when I was doubting everything I had been doing up to that point that indeed what I was saying was really real and valid. So I don't think you can get more empowered than that. Plus it gave me money to live on during the transition."*  
-US Fellow

*"The fact that Ashoka invests in individuals is something that helped me, because now I'm able to implement my idea without having to consider other side jobs. Being able to just concentrate on the mission is what has made my organization survive up to now. If you have your individual needs covered then you can spend your time thinking through what needs to be done and how it is going to create impact."*  
Fredrick Ouku, Kenya



## Ashoka's Network Enables Learnings, Collaboration and Scale



On average, each Fellow reports collaborating with 4 other Fellows

**74%**

Fellows report collaborating with at least 1 other Fellow

**19%**

report collaborating with more than 5



**45%**

of Fellows report new partnership and collaboration opportunities from other Fellows

*"I'm continuing to learn from the Fellows, because we all face similar challenges and there are solutions that we end up bringing to the table together. I never had access to those kinds of folks, or to that kind of space where we can cry together, be challenged together, dream together. It really has taken a role in my life."*

-Denisa Livingston, US

*"The Ashoka team, for me they are the connectors. I can tell them okay, this is my problem, and then they try to find someone from the network who I can work with or talk with. And this is extremely helpful because I had almost no network when I started, and Ashoka connected me with a lot of people who could support me, had ideas to solve my problems."*

-Christoph Schmitz, Germany



**35%**

of Fellows report receiving strategic guidance to help them achieve their vision from other Ashoka partners



**35%**

Fellows report receiving mentorship from Ashoka staff

**45%**

report connection to funders and donors

**41%**

report receiving support for their wellbeing from Ashoka staff



## Ashoka Supports Fellows and Changes How They Think and Lead

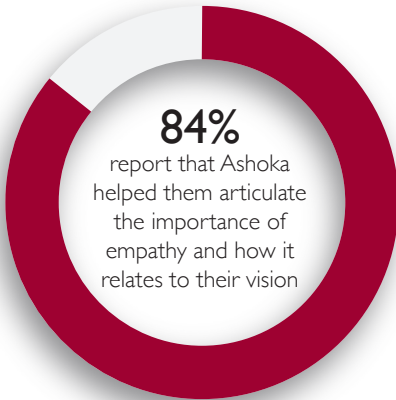


report that Ashoka helped them see their work at a systems-change level

and of those Fellows

**92%** made changes to their strategy as a result

*“I think as an organization we have made that kind of organic evolution from project based work into system change. But with Ashoka, I think, it became a strategy.”*  
-Daniel Kerber, Germany



**84%** report that Ashoka helped them articulate the importance of empathy and how it relates to their vision

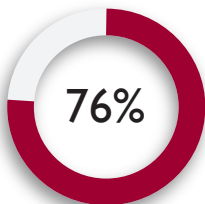
*“Ashoka’s recognition has given more dignity to our role and more awareness of the possibility that we could truly generate change. So while initially the vision was to change the lives of people in detention, we then realized that we could generate systemic change, and at that point we made a qualitative leap in the vision. We understood that we could really influence change, and this certainly has been given to us by Ashoka.”*  
-Luciana Delle Donne, Italy



of Fellows report that Ashoka changed how they see themselves as a leader

and of those Fellows

**94%** are leading differently as a result



of Fellows report that Ashoka helped them see the importance of independent replication

and of those Fellows

**92%** encouraged others to replicate their idea as a result



## Ashoka Accelerates Fellows' Impact



of Fellows report that  
Ashoka helped increase  
their impact

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*“What I’m doing now wouldn’t have happened without Ashoka. You know, I started off helping three kids. I didn’t think about it, I just did it. The next year some of their friends phoned me and asked for help, and the year after that more did, so it grew on its own. There’s no doubt that the most important thing Ashoka did was to convince me that what I was doing was important, because I didn’t think that way. I was just a little farmer on a very small scale and I mean if you’d said to me that I could do something to change agriculture in this country, I would have laughed at you because I didn’t imagine for a moment that I could make any kind of impact at all. And I had to learn that. And it’s great because now I know that every single person has got something that they can contribute to change lives.”*

-Judy Stuart, South Africa



*“My network has expanded so much since I became an Ashoka Fellow. Before it would take me a very, very long to get significant alliances and reliable working partners. And now that I’m part of Ashoka, that has changed a lot. I think Ashoka helped me to understand things from a bigger perspective and from this point of view where I’m not alone in this world and I’m not the first one who is traveling this road. And there are a lot of people who can help. Ashoka has been a catalyzer for my project, in terms of impact.”*

-Greta Rios, Mexico

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*“If I had not come to know Ashoka, my level of contacts, my level of energy — it would have been restricted to my own village. The opportunity to connect with other parts of the country would be much less. The Fellowship connections, with other Ashoka Fellows, with the government, straight away it opened up a big network.”*

-Elango Rangaswamy, India

**Part 3:**  
New Insights on Young  
Changemaking

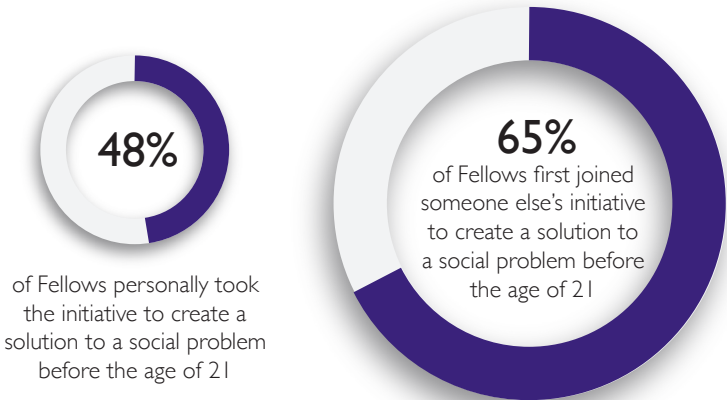




## The Importance of Young Changemaking

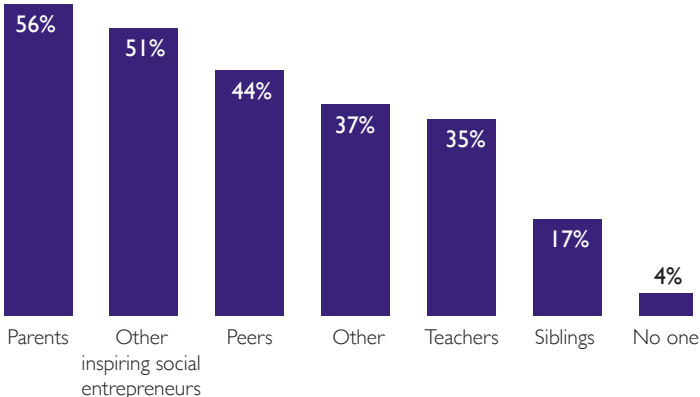
In a world of rapidly accelerating change, how do we prepare young people to lead social change? How do we build a society where every person is powerful? In the Global Fellows Study we asked several questions about Fellows' young changemaking experiences. The results demonstrate that opportunities to lead young were critical for many Fellows' later social change efforts.

In the Global Fellows Study we found the following:



We asked all Ashoka Fellows what people/groups were most influential in supporting their development as a person who creates social change. The top influences were parents, other social entrepreneurs, peers, and teachers.

Which people/groups were most influential in supporting your development as a person who creates social change?



N=800



## Fellows are Driving a World Where Everyone is Powerful

These findings lie at the heart of Ashoka's efforts to share stories of successful business and social entrepreneurs as well as young changemakers in their teens who "lead young" for the good of all.

Beyond leading young themselves, the Ashoka Fellows are putting young people in charge as a way to create positive social and environmental change.

Of the Ashoka Fellows working with young people:

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*"It really forms who you are. What you are exposed to during those years will form how you lead your life afterwards."*

- Kritaya Sreesunpagit, Thailand

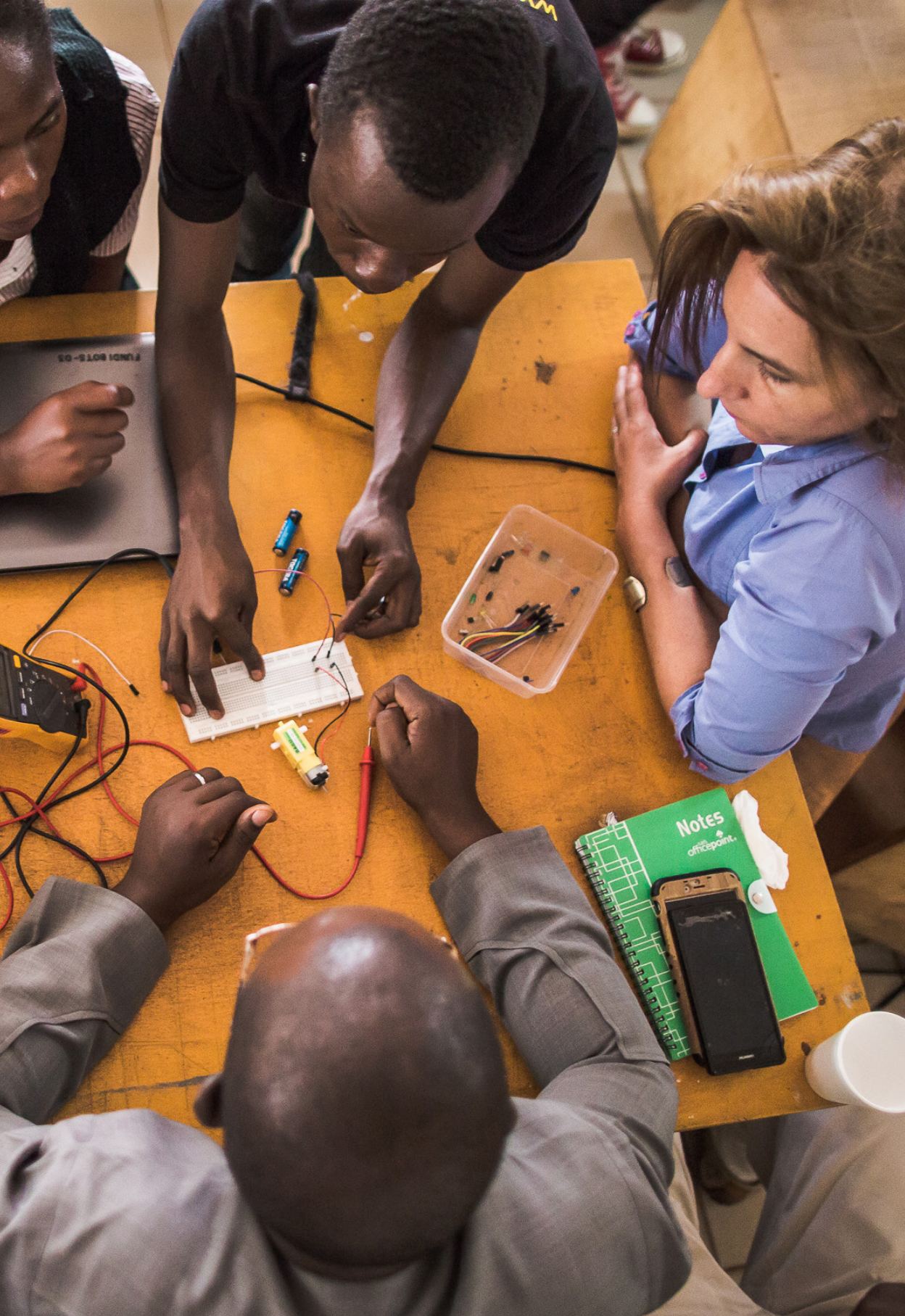


reported putting young people in charge of leading initiatives within their organization



reported encouraging young people to create independent initiatives to spread and scale the Fellows' work

Ashoka Fellows have been leading the movement to empower people as changemakers for nearly 40 years. The Global Fellows Study is evidence that young people need powerful learning experiences through which they become empathic, face up to the world's problems, find their purpose, take the lead, and work with others in creatively solving those problems. Given the challenges we face locally and globally, we believe there is nothing more urgent for the future.





## Acknowledgments

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- Volunteer translators
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- Volunteers who participate in the 5-stage Fellow selection process
- Thought Leaders including the late Greg Dees, Sally Osberg, Bev Schwartz, and Leslie Crutchfield

We would also like to thank Social Innovations Journal for their support in sharing this work which was published in Issue 52 in December 2018.

And last but not least — thank you to the Fellows for participating in this study with generosity and honesty, and for your inspirational leadership that guides us at Ashoka as well as many others around the world. Thank you for the incredible work that you do.

*“I really feel that Ashoka looked at the problem I solved through my eyes, instead of looking at the problem and then trying to find someone who fit that problem or fit that solution. I think if today I wasn't a Fellow, I definitely wouldn't be where I am right now. I would probably still be dealing with mental battles of should I keep on going or should I stop?”*

*Being a Fellow makes things go faster at least in a possibility sense; the Fellowship is like our reactor. If you don't have this reactor in your equation, things will still work out but slower, more locally. When you get Ashoka into the equation, things can go global. So I know for instance, once I get my platform working and I know that it works, I can pick up the phone and ask Ashoka to help me scale my platform to another country because the network will have a local ally to help me. It's like now we have the possibility to get this to the whole world.”*

**Mauricio Canseco**  
Mexican Fellow



**ASHOKA**