RE-Novate
Pilot Report
2021
2023

Re-imagining secondary education through
entrepreneurship and innovation

Funding Partners:

Acknowledgements

Our team pioneered this model with strength, courage, passion, and an unwavering commitment to excellence and impact, in spite of the numerous challenges, as discussed in this report – and this progress is hugely dedicated to us.

In various parts of this report, we capture each and every one of our partners whose financial, technical, and moral contributions led to the success of the pilot.

About the Report

This report presents learnings and results from piloting RE-Novate – an entrepreneurial academy for high school students. Through RE-Novate, TRIBE is integrating entrepreneurship and work skills into high schools' curricula to equip students with the skills, tools, resources, and access to become adequately prepared to thrive in the real world right out of high school.

The findings from the pilot, as presented in the report, validate TRIBE's pioneering school-to-work model for high school students, and defines a clear pathway for continuity in 2023 and beyond.

Authors

Elvis M. D. Browne | Madrid
Joshua L. Alston | Monrovia
Kweeta F. Kolleh | Monrovia

Contributors

Lexanndine Taylor | Monrovia
Pius Noble Nkrumah | Monrovia

Editors

Cathleen Jeanty | New Jersey
Wainright Acquoi | Monrovia
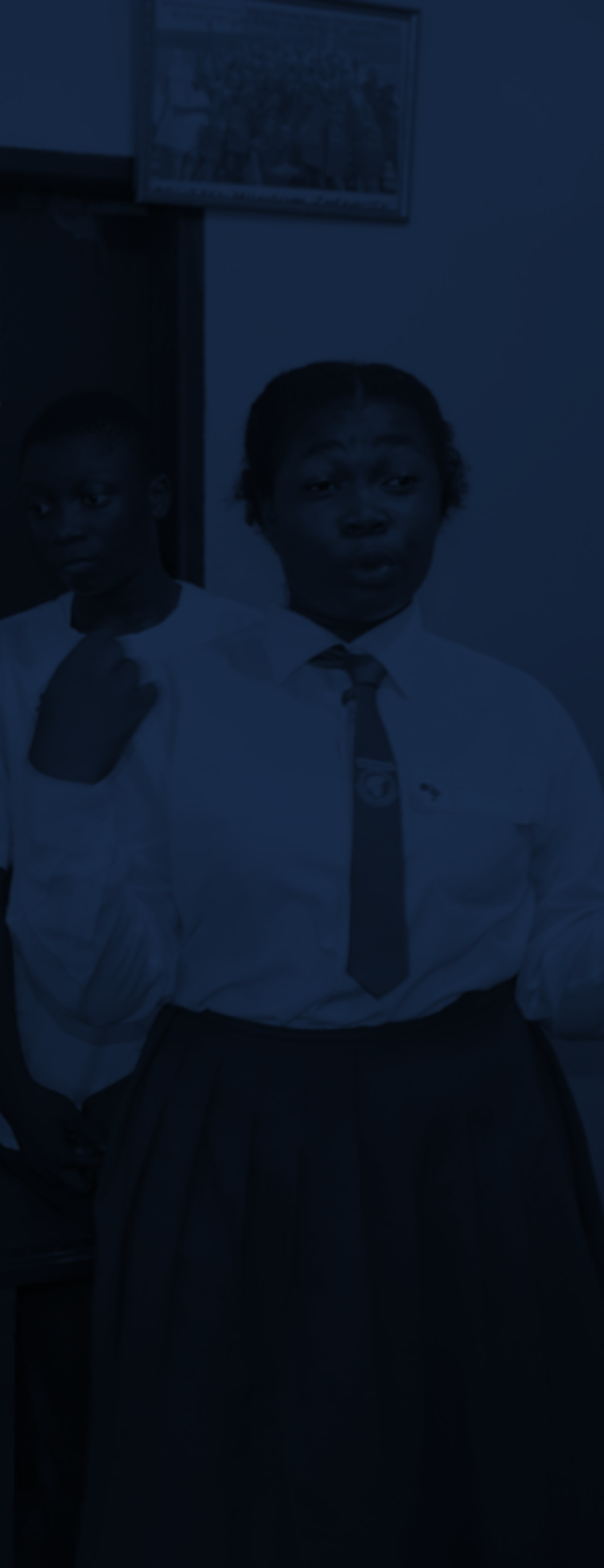
Contents

Progress in Numbers

42 Fellows

Representation

64% Females

36% Males

03 **Partner** Schools

11 **Internship** partners

03 Facilitators

16 Mentors

03 Co-facilitators
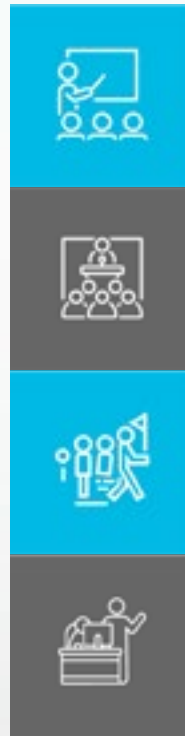
32 **Learning** workshops

04 Seminars

04 **Learning** excursions partners

02 **Average monthly** mentorship session per student
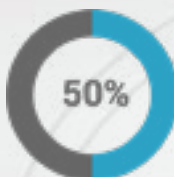
50% **of fellows obtained** paid internships

20% **of interns obtained** full-time jobs

Foreword

Growing up in Liberia, education was often sold as a promise of success in the real world. Yet, Liberia's education system still struggles to adequately prepare students to thrive beyond the classroom.

Many students are top performers but still struggle to express their thoughts clearly, provide independent analysis, and apply what is taught in the classroom to the real world.

The inadequate foundation we receive in Liberia is partly to blame. [TRIBE] discovered that Liberia's secondary education system—marked by rote memorization, test taking, and instructions—could be strengthened with alternative models focused on critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and innovation.
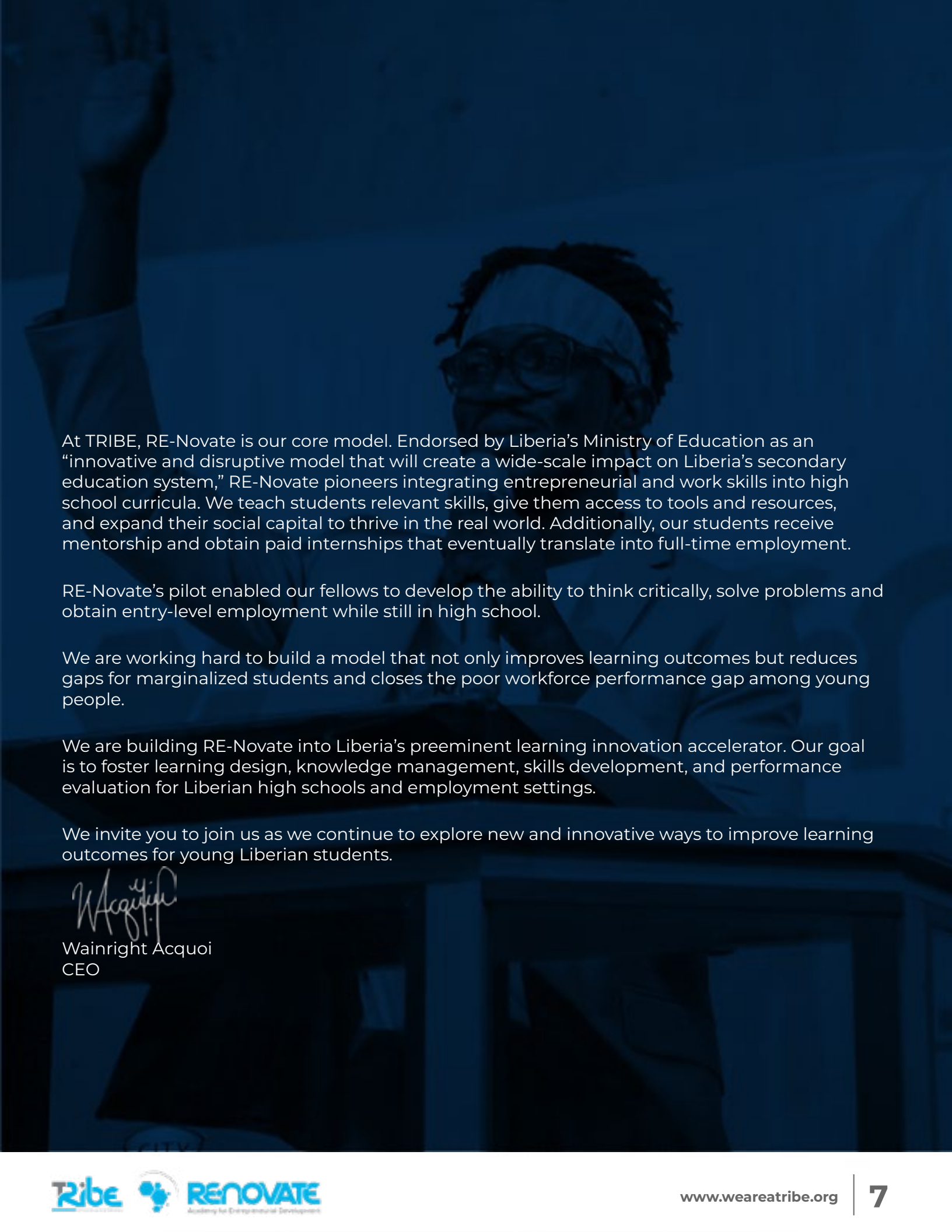
We designed and led an impact study for unemployed, vulnerable, and productively employed young Liberian college graduates - to understand why the gap existed between these groups who went to the same high schools.

The high-performing, productively employed young people reported benefiting from a number of enrichment programs during or immediately after high school, including study abroad, mentoring, access to professional development networks, and skills development, which the unemployed and vulnerable employed groups lacked.

These experiences were typically during or immediately after high school.

The difference between thriving and 'unsuccessful' young people is access to quality education, skills development, and opportunities – a missing piece in Liberia's secondary education. In response to this challenge, we created TRIBE, with a mission to design experiences and build alternative solutions that improve how we teach, learn, and employ.

At TRIBE, RE-Novate is our core model. Endorsed by Liberia's Ministry of Education as an "innovative and disruptive model that will create a wide-scale impact on Liberia's secondary education system," RE-Novate pioneers integrating entrepreneurial and work skills into high school curricula. We teach students relevant skills, give them access to tools and resources, and expand their social capital to thrive in the real world. Additionally, our students receive mentorship and obtain paid internships that eventually translate into full-time employment.

RE-Novate's pilot enabled our fellows to develop the ability to think critically, solve problems and obtain entry-level employment while still in high school.

We are working hard to build a model that not only improves learning outcomes but reduces gaps for marginalized students and closes the poor workforce performance gap among young people.

We are building RE-Novate into Liberia's preeminent learning innovation accelerator. Our goal is to foster learning design, knowledge management, skills development, and performance evaluation for Liberian high schools and employment settings.

We invite you to join us as we continue to explore new and innovative ways to improve learning outcomes for young Liberian students.

Wainright Acquoi
CEO

Chapter I:

Africa's State of Secondary Education: Liberia in Study

Our Education Challenge

Africa faces many challenges to its growth and economic sustainability: chief among them being equalizing access to secondary education. Secondary education is an essential part of building a modern society. **At its core, it equips students with the knowledge and skills needed to excel in the real world, allowing them to pursue higher education, enter the workforce, or become self-sufficient and productive citizens.** However, in Africa, this concept vastly differs from the reality that millions of young people across the continent face. There are many issues affecting the effectiveness and accessibility of secondary education in Africa, and they prevent young Africans from obtaining the quality education needed to thrive and succeed.

As of 2022, approximately 40% of Africa's population was 15 years-old or younger which is 15% higher than the global average of 25%[1]. There is a need for robust strategies that can tackle the major issues affecting education—from low funding to outdated curricula—to exploit the opportunities that having such a young population brings and not suffer grave consequences such as high rates of unemployment and economic stagnation. To capitalize on this potential demographic dividend, educational and entrepreneurial development initiatives must be used to prepare young people for the real world and capitalize on the market opportunities for economic development and growth.

As a low-income country, Liberia faces many challenges in delivering effective education services and improving learning outcomes: quality and accessibility. These challenges pose major limitations to Liberian youths' ability to compete and thrive in the local and global workforce. Such challenges also negatively impact the socio-economic development of the country and only exacerbate the challenge of eradicating poverty, promoting gender equality, and achieving sustainable development.

---

[1] ((2023, April 28). Population of Africa, Statista. https://www.statista.com/statistics/1226211/population-of-africa-by-age-group/).

Limited Access to Education: Poverty, lack of schools, and inadequate infrastructure preclude many children in Liberia from having access to education. According to UNICEF, the primary school enrollment rate was 44% for boys and 38% for girls in 2019 while secondary education enrollment rates were 16% for boys and 11% for girls. For context, during RE-Novate's Pilot, only 3% of fellows were classified as economically favorable[2] with the necessary resources and support needed to complete the pilot. Such conditions only underline how intensely the situation surrounding access and sustainability affects students at all levels of education.

Poor Quality of Education: For those fortunate enough to have access to education, the quality of education is often poor. There are shortages of qualified teachers, and many schools lack basic educational resources such as textbooks, classrooms, and teaching materials. Additionally, the curriculums in use are not relevant and are not designed to meet the needs of students within the modern dispensation. **During TRIBE's Map the System research, 85% of stakeholders including students, employers, professionals, schools, and public officials indicated that Liberian students are not learning the cardinal skills they need to succeed in the modern world.**

Inadequate Funding: The Liberian government's budget allocation to education is often insufficient, resulting in a lack of resources for schools, teachers, and students. According to the World Bank, in 2020, Education only accounted for 13.8% of overall government spending or 2.6% of GDP. This falls well short of the 20% recommended level (4-6% GDP) for countries pursuing SDG4 (UNESCO, 2022). This amount further dropped to 6.87% in 2021, which was a 6.85% decline from 2020. The need for more funding in education is further emphasized by the one billion dollars the Ministry of Education says it needs to implement the Education Sector Plan over the next five years[3].

---

[2] Discussed in more detail in subsequent sections, we categorized all fellows into three categories: economically favorable, moderate, and unfavorable, ranked at varying levels of access, ability and resources fellows need to succeed in the program. These include access to electricity, internet, smart devices, parents' willingness among others.

[3] Kasseh, Maximilian K. Jr . "Education Ministry Needs at Least 1 Billion USD." Liberia Broadcasting System, 3 Apr. 2023.)

What do we Need?

Addressing the huge education gap that exists in Liberia and other African countries requires a holistic approach from all major stakeholders in education. It is important that key players utilize unconventional approaches to yield the best results and improve learning outcomes across the education system. These strategies must cut across all major actors so as to bridge the gap between students' readiness and the modern workforce demands.

Investment in Education. Major public and private sector investments in education are vital. Effective capital investment in education will improve the quality of education and accessibility for students across Liberia. Access to such funding is necessary for schools to improve their quality of education, pay qualified teachers, and provide resources that stimulate the growth and development of students. Investments should not be made based on quick fixes but on long-term solutions that improve learning outcomes, the teaching and learning environments, and utilize programs and interventions outside of the traditional classroom setting.

Curriculum that works. Curriculum development is one of the most important factors affecting students' growth and learning outcomes. Quality assurance strategies must be developed to ensure that curricula meet modern and global standards while still being culturally relevant to students and their environment. The curriculum development process demands that key actors in education and the workforce—from teachers to parents and employers—are part of the process. This allows for the design of curricula that prepare students for the real world.
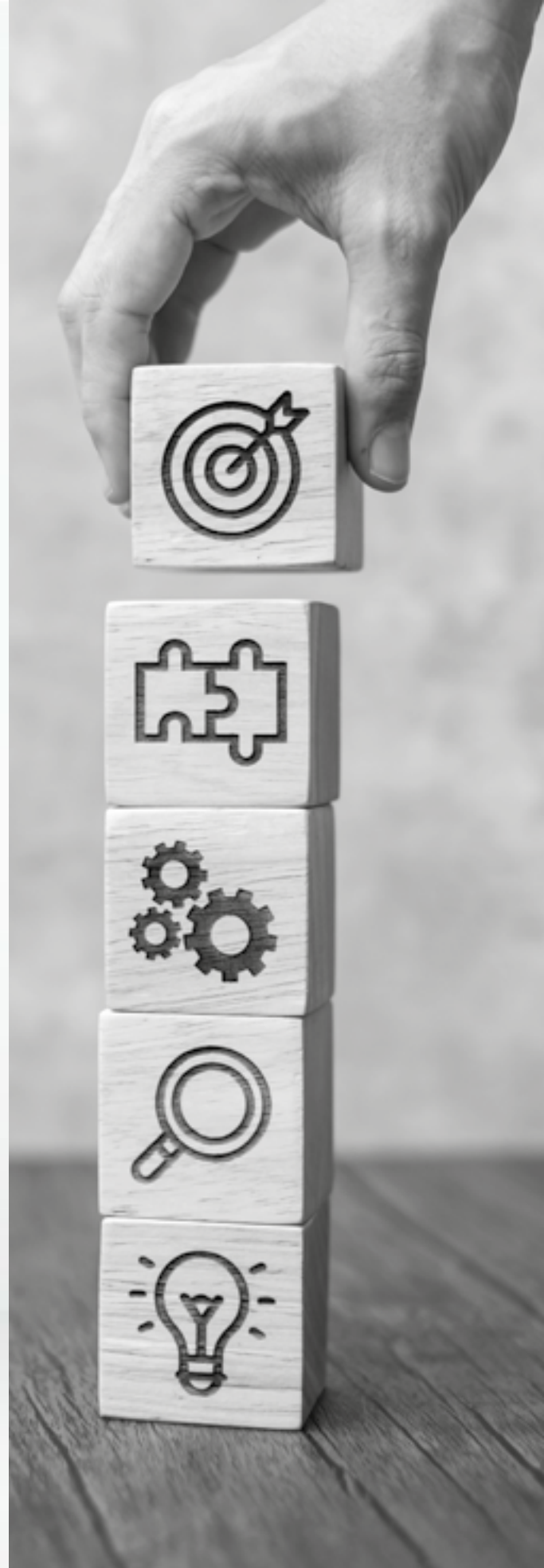
Technology Integration. Relevant technology integration in education in today's rapidly progressing world is an urgent and important priority. While there are limitations in national infrastructure and resourceful tools, applicable and relevant technologies and innovations can accelerate the expansion of the education system for the benefit of students and employers. Edtech tools offer a wide range of potential benefits – helping to increase education penetration and accessibility to improving quality. There is also huge potential for Edtech to improve learning outcomes by allowing students to learn at a pace that is effective for them, increasing interaction, providing engaging tools, and personalizing user experiences. However, it is important that such tools are relevant and adaptable to the local context or they undermine the essence of integration.

Secondary Students:
The Plan, The Future

Students in secondary schools who are transitioning into the workforce rely on the country's education system to prepare them to succeed in a rapidly-changing world. Liberia needs to utilize alternative solutions to harness the potential of its young population. This would stimulate socio-economic growth and improve the education system's capacity to produce competent individuals for the workforce. The future of the country is heavily dependent on the future of education because its impact cuts across all sectors of the economy.

The design of the future we want is influenced by the challenges we currently confront. Therefore the trends, strategies, and solutions that are used should reflect an understanding of the importance of education in driving socio-economic development and the need for innovative solutions to address age-old problems. The question then becomes, "What is the plan that gets us to the future we want?"

Use of Edtech and Blended Learning. Blended learning combines online with face-to-face learning using digital tools to increase education accessibility and provide students with a high-quality education. By exposing students to digital tools and the 'global community,' they have the opportunity to customize their learning experience, which ultimately can improve learning outcomes. As accessibility is a major problem confronting Liberia's education sector, using ed-tech can change the way we model schools across operations, learning experience, and teaching methodology.

Emphasize Skills and Relevance in Education: Incorporate Entrepreneurial Learning and Innovation. There needs to be a shift in the kind of learning that happens in secondary schools. This shift should move students away from traditional academic education that is rooted in rote learning and memorization and towards more skills-based learning that encourages creativity, innovation, and collaboration. This premise was important to define the approach we used in RE-Novate's Pilot: **utilizing unconventional approaches to stimulate students' creativity and enhance their understanding of real-world concepts while developing relevant skills.**

This also calls for the development of curricula that are culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of students and the realities of their societies while adapting to the realities of the larger workforce ecosystem. Based on results from RE-Novate's Pilot, over **85% of fellows reported that RE-Novate's case studies-based curriculum was either very effective or mostly effective in teaching them about entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial concepts.** They went on to further state that the concepts they learned were put into practice during their RE-Novate internships, and currently in their daily lives.

Entrepreneurial learning can be a valuable asset in teaching students the concepts needed to become solution-oriented and developing the skills they need to be innovative as they transition to the job market, prepare for college, or build their businesses.

Synergize Ecosystem Stakeholders. Creating an ecosystem in which major stakeholders in business, education, investment, and policy are connected and collaborating bodes well for the future of the education we need. This collaboration ensures constant knowledge sharing, trend identification, and newer opportunities optimization in a way that guarantees mutually beneficial results

An example of this is reflected in RE-Novate's internship program model where TRIBE invited employers to offer paid entry-level internship positions to students to practice the skills and knowledge they learned during RE-Novate programming in the real world while building experiences and embracing practical lessons.

All of RE-Novate's intern partners reported their satisfaction with the experience and reflected positively on students' performance. They recommended that skills and competencies be prioritized more during programming to ensure students continue to thrive. Additionally, these partners uniformly expressed their willingness to continue partnering in the future given the dual benefit of supporting students' transitioning to the workforce and leveraging their skills and abilities to support their business operations.

This scenario shows that building strong relationships and synergy among stakeholders across businesses, organizations, and educational institutions ensures that workforce demands and skills are constantly being assessed and aligned, while policies and systems can be designed to set students up for long-term success in the real world.
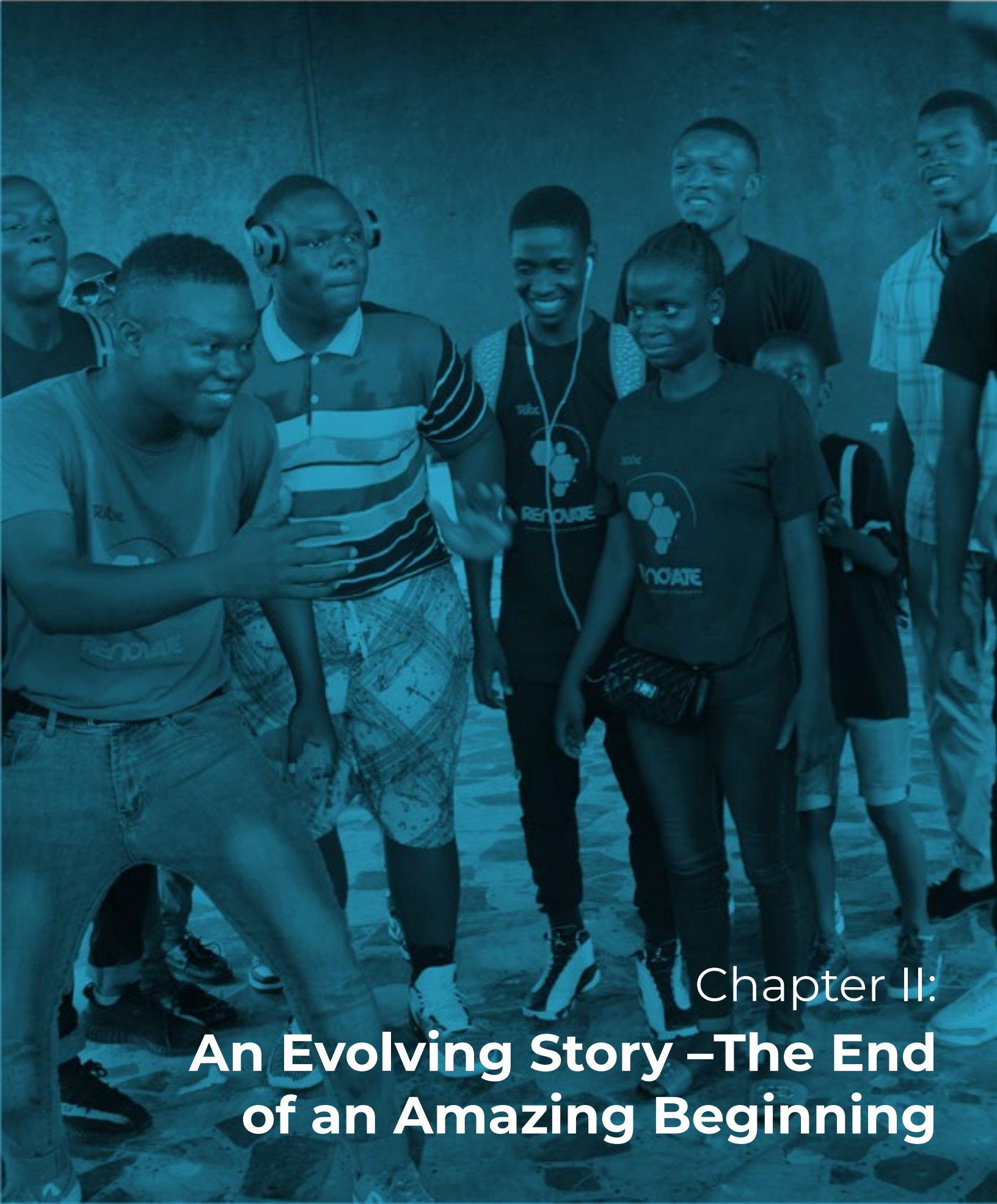
Chapter II:
An Evolving Story –The End of an Amazing Beginning

Letter from Madrid: I write this note from the comfort of a workgroup room at IE Business School in Madrid – the view overlooking a beautiful city and the room concealed from the outdoors by soundproof structures, cooling temperatures, and beautiful aesthetics. During the 'summer' of 2021, I remember being in the scorching sun, walking from one school to another in Monrovia and Paynesville with my colleague, Jallah Sumbo, who now attends the African Leadership University in Rwanda, pursuing a software engineering degree.

We were actively on the frontlines, crusading for schools to support RE-Novate by accepting our proposal to become a host partner for the pilot. It was a fond experience pitching RE-Novate and observing just how unreceptive some of our secondary schools were to our proposed model.

Many times we had to call school administrators, send reminder emails and often got frustrated with the lack of interest in our proposal. Eventually, we managed to present proposals to 19 schools. Six schools followed through to our partner recruitment interview phase after a series of assessments. We finally completed our recruitment with only three schools as pilot school partners for RE-Novate. Throughout our school pre-assessment journey, one moment stood out the most: our encounter with a particular school administrator.

This administrator asked the toughest questions. He came across as knowledgeable and very impressive with his inquiries. I was thrilled every time we met and looked forward to sealing the partnership with his school. Unfortunately, all of our attempts to secure a partnership with his school failed. At first, we thought it might be due to his busy schedule but soon realized that even though the administrator understood the importance of RE-Novate, he was not willing to take the plunge and bet on us. He was not willing to go the extra mile in convincing his board to accept RE-Novate in the school.

When I return to Liberia upon my graduation in August 2023, I will meet this administrator again with an even greater proposal. I will share a hard copy of this report with him and tell him about the work we did. I will tell him that he inspired us to push forward and that, since the last time we met, we mobilized **3 high schools**, **16 professional mentors**, recruited **3 facilitators**, and provided an immersive experience for **42 high school students** in Monrovia

and Paynesville. I will show him that we garnered the support of **10 ecosystem** partners to provide internships for **20 of our Fellows**, and 4 of our Fellows secured **full-time employment** after their internship. But I am sure he will still have some thought-provoking questions: "So what's next? How do you sustain the program? What is your new model?" And maybe, "So what?"

This report is a chapter of an evolving story. We share our struggles, feats, and vision for our next chapter. Even though we celebrate the gains and draw from the insights, more needs to be done to disrupt conventions and prepare students for the uncertainty of the future. Our schools are deeply challenged to live up to the promise of equipping students for the real world. Our government falls short of the resources and disruptive character to reimagine secondary education and even though parents want the best for their children, they mostly are not aware of the severe limitations within our school system – and if they do, are hamstrung by its magnitude and complexities.

As you read this report, you will be wowed by many things. First, the incredible work that our team invested in testing this model. Second, the experiential activity our students participated in. Third, the qualified foot soldiers we mobilized to support this pilot. And fourth, the depth of insights we discovered about secondary education in Liberia.

However, we challenge you to ask us the same questions the administrator may ask, or even more difficult questions. "What's next, where do we go from here, and how do we sustain this momentum?"

It cost us **350 USD per student**[4] to run the pilot program. Our design and finance teams project that it would cost **3000 USD per student** to run the program at full quality – operational and programmatic investments. Based on our results from our economic tier[5] analysis, only 3% of

---

[4] This was done by minimizing the scale of the program's model, making the most of limited tools, and operating with an understaffed and underpaid team. The process caused high stress and burnout for our team, resulting in the loss of the team's mental health and emotional well-being and caused significant unproductiveness.

[5] We created an economic tier system for students in the pilot, categorizing them as favorable, moderate, and unfavorable to succeed in the program and beyond based on their existing abilities (academic performance, prior personal development experiences, extraordinary skills or ability), resources (devices, parents' support and time), and access (internet, electricity, entrepreneurial parents or family members).

RE-Novate Fellows were favorable to succeed in the program without supplemental assistance with 47% being moderate and 50% being unfavorable. However, even the 3% who are favorable can not afford the full cost of the program. And based on our interaction with schools, it would require an incredible amount of effort to galvanize the support of schools to financially contribute to RE-Novate.

Nevertheless, we are relentless like never before, and even more confident that with your support we will have greater accomplishments for the next chapter. This story remains incomplete without a paradigm shift in the way we teach, learn and employ young people in the modern workforce.

Over the next three years, we are building RE-Novate as a replicable and scalable school-to-work model for high school students and conducting advocacy and shareholder engagements to integrate entrepreneurial and work skills into the national curriculum.

Specifically, we want to develop 300 purpose-driven problem solvers, transition 50% of our students into paid internships, facilitate 5% enrollment into college abroad, convert 25% into full-time entry-level employment, and create 10 social ventures. We are expanding local content and context to strengthen the curriculum we teach our students, making intentional efforts to improve our students' job readiness skills, and exposing and preparing them for numerous international opportunities.

To ensure we achieve our three-year plan, we are raising multi-year funding of USD 1.5 million for RE-Novate until 2026, leveraging the support of our partners, friends, and corporate institutions.

I am excited to share, in the subsequent years' reports, the ventures RE-Novate fellows will establish and the number of jobs they will create, the impact of their graduate school research projects, and their continuous growth in the corporate or social impact employment spaces.

I look with even more excitement and hope, to share the number of schools that will adopt our model across Liberia, and that we are scaling RE-Novate to other African countries.

But until then, this is just the beginning of a beautiful journey, and we hope that you will come along with us as we explore it.

Elvis M. D. Browne
Inaugural Team Lead, RE-Novate

The RE-Novate Formula

Behind the Scenes:
Conceptualizing an alternative model

We spent hundreds of hours designing RE-Novate, in anticipation of introducing entrepreneurship education to Liberian high schools, beginning in Monrovia and Paynesville Cities. The design and conceptualization process included **concept development, interviews with multiple stakeholder groups, ecosystem research, school engagements, strategic planning, design, partner schools pre-assessment, marketing and storytelling, fundraising, programming,** and **execution** – all aimed at understanding the key stakeholders, barriers, and success factors for the model. We employed a design thinking approach to school engagement exercises and kept our execution lean. Although we had an idea of the vision we wanted to achieve, acquiring resources, gaining deep insights into the education landscape, and perfecting our model required much more. In subsequent sections, we present our key learnings, failures, and successes, and provide an exploratory overview of each engagement and process we employed.

Our Vision

Our long-term vision for RE-Novate is to build an ecosystem that develops young people and facilitates their continuous growth and personal development, by combining human-centered design and technology to accelerate learning, and to close the poor workforce performance gap among Liberia's young people.

In 2023 and beyond, we are building a high school entrepreneurial academy to integrate entrepreneurial and work skills into high school curricula and establish a school-to-work pathway that connects ecosystem stakeholders to transition young people into employment and self-employment.

When we unveiled the pilot in late 2021 and launched programming in February 2022, we held a strong belief that the outputs, learnings, and results would inform the development and expansion of RE-Novate as a preeminent entrepreneurial academy for high school students.

We targeted the following key objectives:

To build and validate the framework for an annual entrepreneurial academy for students and design a workforce development institute model for educators and employers.

To design a model that facilitates the integration of entrepreneurial and digital literacy skills into the high school curriculum.

To build synergy among educators, policy-makers, employers, and development stakeholders to form partnerships to achieve the above objectives.

We were working to achieve these desired outcomes:

Recruit fifty students and train ten school administrators.

Develop a guide for Liberian high schools to design and teach entrepreneurship.

Provide twenty students with internships at local institutions.

Establish and validate a model for teaching entrepreneurship to high school students and its long-term impact.

The Model

To deliver an entrepreneurial education that adequately prepares students for the real world, we focused on four areas of development.

Entrepreneurial development: Nurtures students' entrepreneurial potential and provides them with tools to drive their success. We developed activities, conducted workshops and seminars to nurture our fellows' creativity and entrepreneurial skills. This allows them to gain the confidence and capability to develop and nurture innovative ideas. Additionally, we provided access to mentors and coaches to guide them through their learning experiences and project developments.

Socio-emotional growth: Promoting and developing self-awareness and purpose to support leadership and entrepreneurial growth. We conducted activities and workshops that emphasized the importance of self-esteem, communications, problem-solving, collaboration, and empathy as part of their entrepreneurial journey.

Cognitive abilities: Improving students' critical thinking, problem-solving, and cognitive abilities is an essential part of RE-Novate's model. We provided resources that help students learn how to analyze problems, develop creative solutions, and think critically. We aim to break away from rote memorization and instructions, which is often the focus of traditional education, and instead promote experiential and project-based learning to increase understanding and application of knowledge.

Character Development: Behavior skills are an essential part of personal development, leadership, and entrepreneurship. We fostered experiences that build strong character to help students learn essential skills such as self-discipline, community, integrity, resilience, communication, and collaboration. Through our program, they gained the confidence and knowledge to learn how to become responsible and successful problem solvers.

Experiential learning activities through which the program model and key focus were channeled:

Learning workshops: Weekly entrepreneurship workshops were held at partner schools. The weekly learning workshop introduced entrepreneurial concepts and themes to students through case studies to improve their public speaking, entrepreneurial knowledge, and cognitive skills.

Mentorship: Students were paired with mentors in their career track (Arts, STEM, and Entrepreneurship). Mentors provided academic support and career guidance.

Internship: We developed the internship program to give students practical experience in the workforce.

Learning excursion: Learning excursions were integral to the program, as they allowed students to gain an understanding of the inner workings of social enterprises and corporate institutions by visiting them and interacting with founders and leaders

Digital Literacy: To promote digital literacy, we launched an online application for student recruitment and used Google Classroom to share lessons and case studies. Additionally, we created a Google Garage to enable students to complete foundational digital courses with Google.

Seminar: We convened our fellows with professionals to network and discuss issues relating to entrepreneurship, academic advancement, and career development.

Student project: RE-Novate fellows developed and pitched their entrepreneurship projects.

Two years after completing our intensive entrepreneurial development program, students will set out on a path to achieve the following:

Launch an entrepreneurial venture: Build a toolkit to transform their ideas into concrete solutions and contribute to expanding our local entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Obtain quality employment: By developing the skills relevant to the workforce, we are confident that our students will obtain productive employment, preparing them for career growth and financial stability.

The Academic pursuit of entrepreneurship: For students who plan to pursue further academic qualifications, our model will prepare them to succeed in college and beyond with an entrepreneurial mindset as their guiding principle and a goal to formalize the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tertiary education.

Chapter IV:

Integrating Entrepreneurship and Work Skills into High Schools

Pre-assessment

We launched the school partnership process with a pre-assessment exercise from July 2021 to September 2021. The RE-Novate pre-assessment exercise was designed to engage high schools and study the possibility and process of partnering with five high schools in Paynesville and Monrovia for the pilot. The pre-assessment was conducted to inform TRIBE's program design by engaging with school structures and gathering insights from school administrators and teachers to understand schools' specific needs and their readiness for potential partnerships with a new model such as RE-Novate.

The pre-assessment exercise began with the internal conceptualization of the engagement framework, followed by impromptu meetings at high schools in Paynesville, Central Monrovia, and Sinkor. The pre-assessment process aimed to assess the schools' partnership history, capacity, willingness to partner with TRIBE for RE-Novate, ability to support the program, flexibility in adjusting the academic calendar to incorporate the activities of RE-Novate, and readiness to acquire further advisory services from TRIBE to help strengthen their learning models.

The pre-assessment involved two initial methods: impromptu meetings and in-person interviews with school administrators. The impromptu meetings were conducted to test for early adopters, gauge the administrators' embrace of new ideas, and assess the physical structure of the schools. The in-person interviews were designed to evaluate the potential of establishing partnerships with selected schools, providing insights into their infrastructure, operations, thought processes, and professional behaviors among administrators and teachers.

The outreach team engaged nineteen schools and invited their administrators to in-person interviews to explore the full partnership process. Thirteen schools did not progress to the interview stage due to varying reasons: lack of interest, internal school bureaucracies, restructuring of school academic model and operations, and poor professional etiquette from some school administrators that resulted in limited to no communication, clarity, and direction.

Six schools progressed to the interview stage. The interview process was insightful and informative. One hundred percent of the schools interviewed showed interest in RE-Novate and the next stage of the partnership process.

Experiences and outcomes from the pre-assessment

School sample size and other considerations

Initially, ten schools were identified for engagement. However, only two schools progressed to the in-person interview phase due to various reasons, such as the lack of interest and unwillingness of the remaining eight schools to further engage with the school partnerships team despite multiple follow-ups via phone calls, emails, and visits.

As a result, the partnership team had to identify and engage an additional ten schools in order to complete the targeted number of schools for participation.

Impromptu meeting

The partnership team used impromptu meetings to build relationships with school administrators and gain further insight into the conditions and states of the schools. Only one school declined to participate in the impromptu meeting, requesting a copy of the concept note and formal communication from the school partnership team. The school partnership team follow-up with the school's demand but all efforts for additional communication with the school failed. However, the other schools listened to the team's proposal and opted for sending letters and written proposals as a form of engagement. Through discussions with administrators, the team acquired information about challenges, the academic calendar, and interest in the program. These questions were embedded in a pre-assessment and partnership manual provided by TRIBE, covering topics such as program design, partnership process, policies, and expectations for schools – resource support and commitment.

Email messaging

Of the 19 communications sent out to school administrators inviting them to pre-assessment meetings, only three sent direct replies, even with multiple email and phone follow-ups. Another three responded after weeks of follow-ups.

In-person interview

Six schools were interviewed after numerous back-and-forth engagements with school administrators and a reevaluation of our school engagement strategy.

School interview

The school interview process provided a learning experience for the partnership team, as they gained insights into questionnaire development, effective interview techniques, and school operations. These insights were gathered during the interviews:

Sample schools were responsive

The interviews with each school lasted around 30 to 45 minutes, with all the schools showing initial interest in RE-Novate. The educators answered questions enthusiastically and optimistically, while the partnership team gained further information on the schools' operations, infrastructure deficiencies, and bureaucratic challenges hindering academic and developmental activities. The final approval was determined during the partnership review stage.

Sample schools operate a paper-based system

All the schools interviewed used a paper-based system with no immediate plan for digital migration or integration. One administrator did not have an email and only two of the schools had official school email accounts, which did not prove to be effective throughout the engagement process. This gap highlighted the need for continued engagements to help partner schools update their school management operations to 21st-century standards in order to increase productivity and efficiency.

School pre-assessment insights

The pre-assessment for school partnerships was conducted using a questionnaire to determine the sample schools' willingness to participate, past program experience, extracurricular activities integration, interest in entrepreneurship, input on program design, and flexibility to adopting our model.

Willingness to participate

The pre-assessment of the sample schools found that 83.3% of them expressed willingness to partner with TRIBE for RE-Novate, while 16.7% were somewhat willing with a conditional response from one school. 66.7% of the respondents had a partnership history for a school-based non-entrepreneurial program. All of the respondents expressed concerns about the cost, responsibilities, and benefits of the partnership, and one respondent mentioned that a previous school-based program did not meet their expectations, which made the school skeptical to venture into future partnerships. Schools were concerned about whether the partnership required them to pay for RE-Novate, as it posed several challenges for them to take on financial responsibilities in addition to their operating costs. Additionally, some administrators were concerned about the program's funding and its long-term sustainability, expressing their fears about our promised commitment to ensuring quality program outcomes.

Extracurricular integration

All the sample schools have extracurricular activities and were open to integrating new programs. About 40% of respondents recommended RE-Novate be an elective, while 30% suggested it be a business-related subject. Twenty percent said that integration should meet board/education committee approval while 10% suggested it should be part of the regular academic program. Most extracurricular activities are sports-related, but all agreed that entrepreneurship should be taught in high schools. The average time commitment recommended for weekly teaching sessions was 3 hours.

Program design

All respondents were willing to integrate RE-Novate through elective programs and have designated staff members coordinate activities with TRIBE's program team. They recommended informing high school students about the program and having a one-day info session for interested students. They also agreed for TRIBE to solely lead the students' recruitment process, which included independently evaluating students that were interested in the program. From our experience as students and professionals working with high schools in Libera, school-based opportunities like RE-Novate are often left to the discretion of school administrators to recruit students with the best grade point averages. We wanted to engage the students directly to do a holistic evaluation of their skills, experiences, and entrepreneurial character considering that test scores are often not the perfect determinant for thriving in real-world or entrepreneurial settings.

Capacity and Infrastructure

All the schools interviewed have basic capacity and infrastructure, such as electricity, computer labs, auditoriums, and libraries. However, they do not have on-campus Wi-Fi and have a strict no-phone policy that could hinder program implementation when integrating digital literacy components into RE-Novate. Maintenance of infrastructure and sanitation remain key challenges.

Flexibility

Schools were willing to be flexible and adjust their academic calendar, depending on approval from boards, principals, or education conferences[6]. Respondents welcomed field trips and learning excursions and advised TRIBE to engage parents of the students recruited for the program.

---

[6] Secretariat

Challenges and Limitations

The pre-assessment process was limited to Montserrado[7] due to TRIBE's limited resources, timeline, and partner schools' target. Challenges encountered during the pre-assessment included financial and human capital limitations.

It is systematically difficult to work with schools

The need to make unconventional interventions to improve Liberia's secondary school learning environment is of us most importance, but educators and administrators are needed to support alternative models. Though some schools and administrators expressed interest and willingness, the pre-assessment found schools to be overall difficult to work with due to internal bureaucracies and existing structures that resist change or new innovations. The school partnership process, originally designed for three weeks, lasted two months due to the partnership team's efforts in pursuing engagements with school administrations amidst unresponsiveness, low engagements or bureaucracies.

Resources constraints

Our small, stretched team and limited financial resources prevented our outreach from expanding to as many schools as targeted in the available time frame. Competing priorities with shared responsibility on other projects also hindered the team's ability to fully commit to the partnership engagement process beyond the target we achieved.

Lack of Internet and inability of administrators to effectively communicate using digital platforms

One of the primary challenges was the lack of Internet at the schools, as well as emails to administrators not being read due to lack of connection and limited digital knowledge or access.

Sealing the school partnerships

After a thorough pre-assessment process, we developed a partnership manual and invited six schools to the partnership review stage. Only three schools participated in the partnership review. We signed school partnerships with **BW Harris Episcopal School, ELWA Academy High School,** and **Paynesville SDA High School**. Later in the report, we detailed our school partnership experience during RE-Novate's pilot implementation.

---

[7] Montserrado County is one of Liberia's fifteen counties, and the largest by population, consisting of the Capital City, Monrovia. Unlike Montserrado where there are some exceptions, other counties are grossly challenged across school quality, qualified teachers, infrastructure and learning environments.

Recruiting the pilot fellows

Student recruitment process

RE-Novate's student recruitment process included hosting information sessions, online applications, group assessments, one-on-one interviews, and obtaining parental consent. We designed the recruitment exercise to evaluate students' **cognitive abilities, socio-emotional skills, entrepreneurial mindset,** and **communication skills**. We wanted to have direct interactions with the students, with minimal influence from the administrators because we sought students who were eager to learn, willing to challenge themselves, and ready to take risks.

Fellows application eligibility:

Be currently enrolled at one of TRIBE's partner high schools.

Be in the tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade on the date of application.

Demonstrate strong leadership qualities both within school and community.

Possess acceptable reading, comprehension and composition skills.

Be of recommendable character both within school and community.

Be flexible with time and movement and dedicated to the rigors of the program.

Information sessions

After RE-Novate Fellows' evaluation framework was designed and approved, our team scheduled announcements at each partner school, followed by a series of information sessions. We designed a user-friendly application webpage and discussed each stage of the application process during the sessions. We enjoyed interacting with the students and found their questions to be insightful and thought-provoking .

Online application

We introduced online applications in the partner schools. The online form consisted of five sections: **general information, cognitive ability assessment, socio-emotional skills assessment, character development assessment,** and **personal statement.**

General Information. General bio and family-related information from each applicant. Additional information on the student's school, grade, and academic year was collected.

Cognitive Ability Assessment. An initial test to assess the applicant's abilities involved critical thinking and decision-making (reasoning, perception, memory, verbal and mathematical abilities, problem-solving). The assessment posed questions to measure applicants' potential to use mental processes to solve real-world problems or their potential to acquire new skills and knowledge.

Socio-Emotional Skills Assessment. An initial test to assess each applicant's initial social and emotional skills and behavior. This paints a robust picture of the social-emotional well-being of students in the program.

Character Development Assessment. An initial test to assess the applicant's understanding of core ethical values such as respect, justice, civic virtue and citizenship, and responsibility for self and others.

Personal Statement. We asked applicants to write a 500-word personal statement that highlights their motivations for applying, the relevance of the program to their future aspirations, and how they intend to use the knowledge gained from the program. We assessed applicants on language, research, comprehension, and effort put into writing their personal statements.

Fifty-nine candidates applied overall: **30 from ELWA Academy, 11 from Paynesville SDA High School,** and **18 from B.W. Harris High School.** For the in-person assessment, 20 students were invited from ELWA Academy, **10 from Paynesville SDA High School,** and **18 from B.W. Harris High School**. Team members and RE-Novate facilitators who were recruited formed part of the evaluation team. To reduce bias in the application process, each applicant was assigned a code and three evaluators reviewed their assessment. Initially, we set the criteria to select candidates with an average score of 80% or above to proceed to the in-person assessment. Unfortunately, none of the candidates met this benchmark. The highest score achieved among the candidates from the three schools was 78%. The average score for all fifty-nine candidates who participated in the online assessment was 60.20%. Considering the circumstances, the team decided to select the top-performing students from grades 10, 11, and 12 to ensure a diverse representation of students in the program. It is worth noting that we did not observe a significant difference in performance between students in lower grades compared to those in higher grades.

The evaluators had mixed reactions to the applications, appreciating the effort of some applicants while noting that other applicants did not put in their best effort. Overall, the team understood we needed to do a lot of work to bring our selected fellows to a point of confidence and growth during the program.

In-person assessment. The in-person assessment consisted of group assessment and one-on-one interviews with the students. Because of time constraints, we conducted both activities at the same time at each partner school.

Group assessment. The group assessment convened selected students from each partner school with students placed into groups based on complementary skill sets in order to solve the provided prompt. The evaluation team created three prompts, assigning one to each team. A team of three or four evaluators monitored each group for 10 minutes and evaluated each team member on their contributions[8] and teamwork skills[9].

One-on-one interview. Our evaluation team met with every student in the program. The one-on-one interview was done to have a personal encounter with the students, understand their interests and alignment with the program, listen to what they care deeply about, and challenge their initial assumptions.

On February 14, 2022, we invited **42 students** to our Pioneer RE-Novate cohort launch. **18 students from ELWA Academy, 16 students from B.W. Harris Episcopal School**, and **8 students from Paynesville SDA High School.** Although we opted for 50 students, we could not get the required number of students with acceptable standards from the three partner schools.

Parental Consent. We received parental consent from all of the accepted students.

---

[8] Team member's contributions: effort, participation, cooperativeness, communications

[9] Individual teamwork skills. Listening and considering opposing views or minority opinions. Effectively managing conflict around ideas and approaches. Keeping the group on track both during and between meetings. Promptness in meeting deadlines. Distribution of work.

RE-Novate Facilitator's recruitment process

Following the school partnership process, we faced another challenge: recruiting skilled facilitators to help us deliver the program at high quality. We sought competent disruptors: creative and unconventional teachers who were passionate about nurturing students' entrepreneurial mindset. The goal for facilitators was to lead RE-Novate at our partner schools and facilitate learning workshops.

In December 2021, we launched RE-Novate Facilitators' recruitment as a part-time role with TRIBE. We received six applications for three roles, four of them men and two women. We recruited one of the women as a program intern and selected the three men with proven experience in entrepreneurship, education, and youth development to serve as facilitators. The other female candidate subsequently withdrew from the process..

The call for facilitators asked candidates to send in their resumes and respond to a prompt on their vision for education. Applicants were then called in for interviews to assess culture fit, availability, and experience. Additionally, applicants were invited to develop and present a presentation on entrepreneurship to a panel. This was followed by a one-day intensive workshop and onboarding exercise.

RE-Novate Launch

We officially launched RE-Novate in February 2022. We invited the Vice President of Liberia, **H. E. Jewel Howard-Taylor**[10], to serve as the Chief Launcher, and the former Minister of Education, Hon. **George K. Werner**, delivered the keynote address. Other key stakeholders, including the Deputy Education Minister, **Hon. Latim Da-thong**, and representatives from the **US Embassy, USAID, UNDP**, and a host of other private-sector institutions attended the ceremony. We printed and sold t-shirts, and offered donation cards, from which we raised over **$2,000** to defray operational expenses for the ceremony.

---

[10] The Vice President was unable to join at a last-minute notice due to other national competing priorities, and the Deputy Education Minister launched the program.

Learning workshops

Partner schools allowed TRIBE to use their campuses two days a week for our weekly learning workshops, where facilitators met students for one hour a day to teach RE-Novate's curriculum. Over the course of the academic semester, facilitators completed an average of **28 learning workshops**, covering topics in entrepreneurship, communications, marketing, business management, operations, and other critical human skills such as empathy and character building. We used the case study method to stimulate the discussions and improve student's critical thinking and communication skills. Students were given weekly assignments about the case studies and challenged to express themselves through group discussions, essays and presentations.

Seminars

We hosted monthly seminars at partner schools to convene and connect RE-Novate fellows with influential individuals who could inspire and guide them to the real-world through personal engagements and interactions. The event consisted of a keynote address, a panel discussion, and a networking session. We rotated the monthly seminar across each of the schools. Each host school convened fellows from RE-Novate other partner schools to strengthen connection, collaboration and foster relationships. We completed three seminars, which convened **300** participants across partner schools – representing classes RE-Novate covered and below. The seminars also provided a platform for all our 42 RE-Novate Fellows to rotationally co-design and lead the events as a learning and skills development experience

Seminar I: The Transition from Secondary School to the Real World

Held on March 22, 2022 at ELWA Academy's gymnasium, the seminar convened 50 participants from our partner schools. The opening act was performed by one of our Facilitators, **Samuel Kpator**. Samuel spoke about his experience as a young professional and what it meant to him to work in the entrepreneurship and youth development space in Liberia. This was followed by a panel discussion on the theme: the transition from secondary school to the real world. The seminar was hosted by **Amylyn Budoen**, a **RE-Novate Fellow from ELWA Academy.**

> 66
>
> *Serving as the host for the first RE-Novate seminar was scary for me. I did not want to make any mistakes for fear of messing up the entire program. However, I felt calm after seeing the warm reception from the audience. I felt reassured and confident. The seminar was an amazing experience for me especially as host and I learned a lot."*
>
> -Amylyn Budoen

The panel was moderated and co-moderated by **Acquazious Zurbah**, a **RE-Novate Facilitator**, and **Adolphus Walker**, a **RE-Novate Fellow from B.W. Harris Episcopal High School**, respectively. The panel included **Wainright Acquoi**, the **CEO of TRIBE; Dieudonne Perry**, the **Executive Director of SMART Liberia**; and **Cornelia Kruah-Togba**, an **Amujae Leader from the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Center for Women and Development**. The panelists spoke passionately about their experiences, highlighting their perceptions of the real world, key moments, and mistakes they had made in high school. They further urged students to be prepared for future challenges and opportunities, placing a key emphasis on the brutal realities of the real world. Their discussion was engaging, unpolished, and heartfelt as the panelists deeply reflected on their journeys from high school to university and the workforce.

> *In the 21st century, our school systems are graduating into the workforce, more students than the workforce can absorb. Beyond this anomaly, finding students that are adequately prepared to thrive in the workforce can also be akin to finding needles in haystacks. RE-Novate's model is integrating entrepreneurial development education into Liberian high schools and preparing students with relevant skills for the workforce. This is disruptive, revolutionary and it changes everything - for the better. It was an absolute joy serving on one of the panels during the first phase of the program and I can't wait for the next phase."*

Diuedonne K. Perry

The panel was followed by a networking session, during which students had the opportunity to ask questions and have one-on-one engagements with the panelists.

Seminar II: The Ideal Entrepreneurial Journey: Case Study of Liberia

On April 29, 2022, at 2:30 PM, we kicked-off the second seminar hosted at the BW Harris Episcopal High School. Fellows **Mygela Swen** and **Abraham Kamara** from B. W. Harris hosted the event. The seminar began with a tik tok performance, tagged "one-legged", a dance they practiced and learned after their case on cyberbullying and tik tok. The performance was received with a round of applause.

> **"I had a very good experience during the seminar at BW Harris. The seminar went on as was expected and the atmosphere was quite overwhelming. It was my first time hosting a program and I am so proud of myself and the entire team. We did extremely well in the planning and execution of the seminar overall."**
>
> **-Mygela Swen**

Mr. Ahmed Konneh, Co-founder of SMART Liberia, delivered the opening act. Ahmed Konneh's message focused on the 10 lessons of leadership. He highlighted his personal experience as a student leader and serial entrepreneur.

The opening act was followed by the panel discussion on the theme: **The Ideal Entrepreneurial Journey: Case Study of Liberia**. Fellows **Victory Oguntemehin** and **Success A.B Tue**, facilitated the panel discussion. The panelist included **Mr. James Mulbah**, the **CEO of Green Cities, Ms. Michaelyn E.Z. George, CEO of Creamy Crunch Delights**, and **Mr. Ahmed Konneh, Co-Founder of Smart Liberia**. The panelists shared their entrepreneurial stories with the Fellows, emphasizing their highs and lows, best mistakes, and most exciting moments of being entrepreneurs.

After the panel discussion, the fellows networked with the panelists and extended the conversations.

Seminar III: Human Capital Development: Preparing for the Workforce

On May 28, 2022, we hosted our third RE-Novate Seminar at SMART Liberia's Change Makers Village. The Seminar was led by Paynesville SDA High School under the theme: **"Human Capital Development: Preparing for the Workforce"**

Fellows **Chris Tiaquicyl** and **Sumah Sheriff** from **Paynesville SDA High School** hosted the seminar. **Monique Cooper-Liverpool, Managing Director of Petra Resources Incorporated** did the opening act. Monique spoke passionately about professional and career development and the importance of honesty. She told her story as a young professional and highlighted the importance of preparation and honesty in the workforce. After the opening act, a panel discussion was moderated by Fellow **Praise Joel**. The panel drew in key insights from **Roland Washington, CEO of Kreative Zone**, and **Monique Cooper-Liverpool**. Both panelists shared passionate stories about their first jobs and discussed essential skill sets they developed as young entrepreneurs and what they now require from their team members in the workforce.

Mentorships

We designed the mentorship component to match each fellow with a professional for academic guidance, career counseling, and personal development. Sixteen mentors, including entrepreneurs, engineers, lawyers, doctors, managers, and technocrats, joined our inaugural program and worked with our 42 fellows across **110 mentorship sessions**. TRIBE facilitated the mentorship meetings by providing the space and covering students' communications and transportation needs.

Learning excursions

RE-Novate Learning Excursion was designed to connect, convene, and inspire RE-Novate Fellows through storytelling and workforce development exposure. The excursion was implemented under the theme '**Cultivating Entrepreneurial Mindsets Through Workforce Exposure and Historical Insights.'** It was created to serve four main objectives:

1. **Expose RE-Novate Fellows to current events of the workforce:** RE-Novate Fellows visited **Orange Digital Center Liberia, Royal Grand Hotel**, and toured the **National Museum.**

> *The learning excursion was an enjoyable experience. It was an innovative event that gave us the chance to have fun, play games, and learn together. This experience was exciting because I learned a lot of things about my country's history and the workforce. During the excursion I got to network with other RE-Novate fellows from different schools and we bonded and shared interesting stories about ourselves.*
>
> **-Josie Bealdeh**

2. **Inspire RE-Novate Fellows to innovate:**

> *RE-Novate's learning excursion that I participated in was an amazing experience that provided me so much fun. It made me realize that practical experiences are one of the fastest ways to learn. It was memorable and allowed us to connect to most of what we learned. The excursion made learning to be fun more than regular classroom learning and made me eager to want to learn more.*
>
> **-Praise Joel**

3. **Create a memorable experience for RE-Novate Fellows:**

> *When we arrived at Orange Digital Center during the excursion, I was amazed that many Liberians were getting exposure to the outside world, evident by the tech equipment we saw in the Fab Lab that was used to train students. I also visited the famous Providence island which is a historical site in Liberian history. Overall, by experiencing education practically, I can look forward to what the future holds for Liberia."*
>
> **-Victory Oguntimehin**

4. **Create a safe space for bonding, reflection, and growth assessment.** A post-pilot program road trip will be planned for fellows to reconnect and reflect on the program's impact on their lives and professional journey.

Student social impact project

RE-Novate Fellows were required to develop a project before completing the program, challenging them to utilize learnings and lessons from their program experience to create real-world solutions. Students were grouped based on strengths, passion, and career interests: **Arts, STEM**, and **Entrepreneurship**. TRIBE facilitated weekend project development sessions by covering students' feeding and transportation.

Team Project Description

Eddelva Fire Management Service
School: ELWA Academy
Category: Arts

Concept: There are lots of fire cases that endangered the lives of citizens because of the absence of fire safety equipment, lack of prevention and warning, and late response to fire incidents. Eddelva is solving these problems through fire prevention, early detection and warning, sale of fire prevention equipment, mitigation training, and providing first aid kits.

Marvel Solid Waste Recycling Company
School: ELWA Academy
Category: Entrepreneurship

Concept: Marvel solid waste is a recycling company that provides solutions to household waste separation, collection, disposal, distribution, and recycling as well as converting organic waste into cooking gas and fertilizers. The company believes that the current state of waste management is ineffective due to limited waste collection options, lack of a coordinated waste disposal system, lack of care for the environment, and limited community knowledge.

Pure Pro Filtered Drinking Water
School: ELWA Academy
Category: STEM

Concept: Pure Pro Filtered Drinking Water aims to establish a water purification system in communities in Liberia that lack access to clean drinking water, particularly in slum communities. The company's model involves taking water from existing sources such as rivers, rainwater, and underground water. Filtration and purification will be done before storing the water in purification tanks. The purified water will then be distributed to the inhabitants of these communities at affordable prices.

McPriss Eco-Storage Facility
School: Paynesville SDA
Category: STEM/Arts

Concept: According to the World Health Organization (WHO) 3.9 million deaths worldwide in 2017 were attributable to not eating enough fruits and vegetables. To address this issue, McPriss seeks to open an eco-storage facility that uses solar energy for electricity and offers very cheap service costs. The facility will preserve fruits and vegetables, provide non-perishable produce, and create a direct link between producers and consumers.

SaniStruct

School: B.W. Harris Episcopal High School
Category: Arts

Concept: Unsafe drinking water, lack of sanitation, and poor hygiene are leading causes of death globally for children under five years - contributing to nearly 1,000 deaths per day. To address this issue, SaniStruct is providing access to safe sanitation through the construction of high-quality, low-cost toilets for impoverished residents of West Point community - one of the largest slum communities in Liberia. Additionally, SaniStruct will collect manure from toilets and convert it into fertilizers that will be sold to commercial agriculturists and the profit will be used for toilet maintenance.
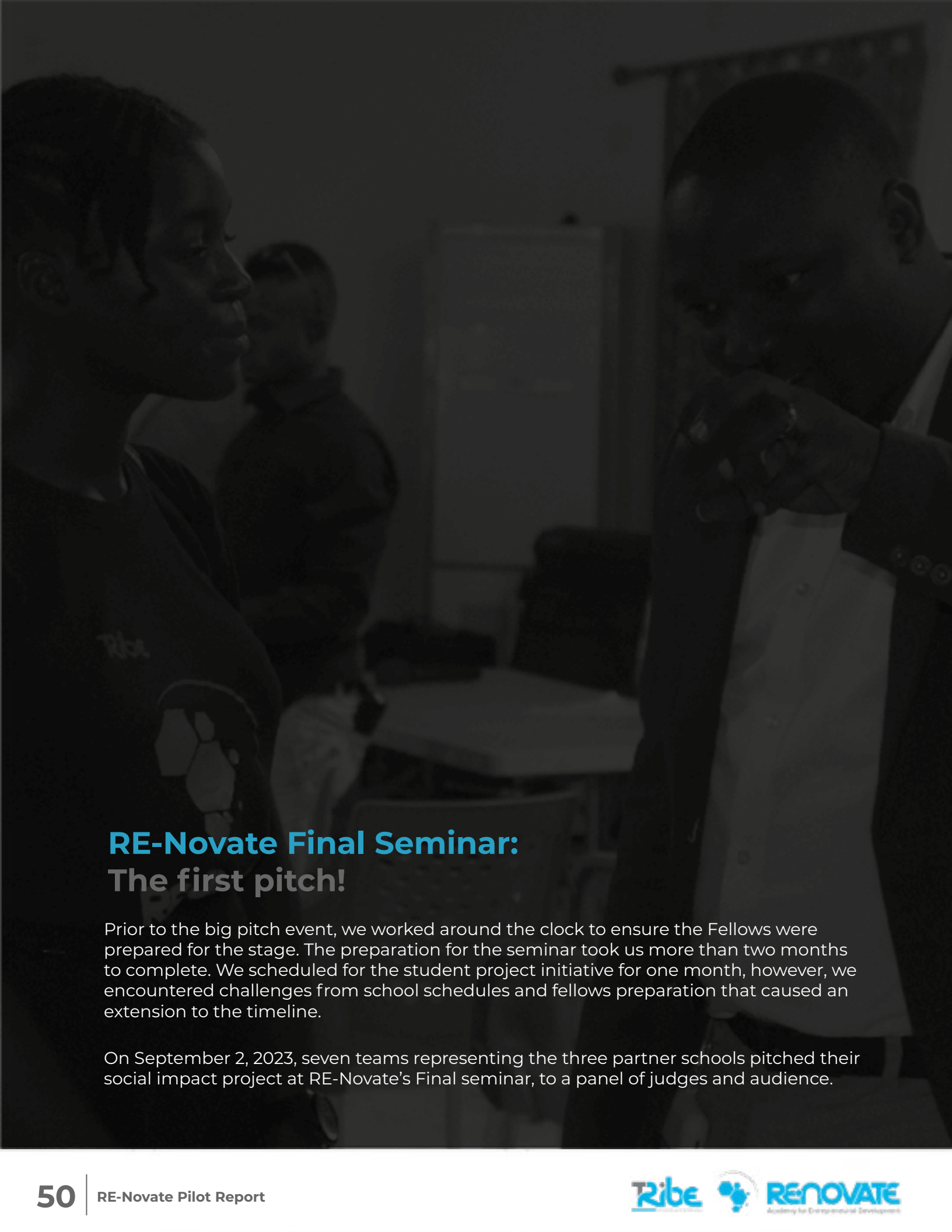
Happy Helpers Haven (Triple H)

School: B.W. Harris Episcopal High School
Category: Entrepreneurship

Concept: A survey of people aged between 21-65 by the investment of Scottish widow showed that nine out of ten people regret their career choice. To address this issue, Triple H is developing a mobile application designed for secondary school students to help them make informed decisions about their desired career paths, enabling them to be the best versions of themselves.

RE-Novate Final Seminar:
The first pitch!

Prior to the big pitch event, we worked around the clock to ensure the Fellows were prepared for the stage. The preparation for the seminar took us more than two months to complete. We scheduled for the student project initiative for one month, however, we encountered challenges from school schedules and fellows preparation that caused an extension to the timeline.

On September 2, 2023, seven teams representing the three partner schools pitched their social impact project at RE-Novate's Final seminar, to a panel of judges and audience.

Internship

RE-Novate's Demo Internship was designed to give **20 fellows** exposure to the workforce through real-world experiences.

Before securing an internship, fellows participated in a rigorous recruitment process and were assigned to an institution based on their academic performance and career interest. Fellows were evaluated based on their performance during the internship and reflections were documented to inform RE-Novate's redesign post-pilot.

Recruitment Process

The internship was the only segment of RE-Novate that was not open to all fellows exclusively. The intent was to provide a realistic job application experience for fellows. The recruitment process consisted of three stages:

Online Application: Fellows had to complete and submit a comprehensive online application form. The form collected bio-data along with details concerning their school, academic category, reasons for applying for an internship, along with essays. The process also required fellows to develop a resume and submit along with their application. The program team and facilitators reviewed and evaluated each application across defined metrics - Character, Career Prospects, and Skills and Experiences - and selected the top performers.

Interview: Fellows whose applications passed the evaluation threshold progressed to the interview stage of the recruitment process. They were notified by email of their progression and invited to a scheduled interview at TRIBE Campus. Four interviewers were positioned at different locations to exclusively interview selected fellows.

Final Evaluation: All fellows who successfully completed the application and interview process were evaluated based on their overall performance in RE-Novate. This considered their attendance and performance evaluation scores across all RE-Novate segments along with their evaluation scores from their application and interview. These average scores were used to select successful candidates, and the top 20 fellows with the highest scores were selected for paid internships at various local enterprises and organizations.

> *During the internship application and evaluation, I was really excited that I made it that far in the program. I was also a bit nervous about the entire process because passing the application and evaluation meant that I would be granted the opportunity to have working experience and improve on some skills as well as develop new ones. Had I not been successful during the application and evaluation, I would have lost that chance. However, I was super grateful that I was able to participate in it and also get a glimpse of what an internship interview process and an actual job are like."*
>
> **-Leetra Gibson, Program Intern, TRIBE**

Internship Partners

TRIBE partnered with leading institutions and companies across a wide range of fields to deliver a diverse and educative internship experience for fellows. Our intern partners comprised a luxury hotel, **Royal Grand Hotel**, a leading Liberian company, **J-Palm Liberia**, a renowned social enterprise, **iCampus Liberia** and a public institution, **The Commercial Court of Liberia.**

TRIBE and each internship partner signed an MoU that defined the scope of the internship for each fellow from supervision, to job role and stipend. All intern partners were encouraged to provide stipends that would guarantee fellows had the resources needed to cover their transportation and feeding. Internship partners could cover the full cost of the stipend, which was a minimum of **USD 75** depending on home-to-work distance, or partially cover the stipend of interns while TRIBE covered the remaining cost.

Internship Parameters

Fellows participated in orientation sessions to acquaint themselves with the internship experiences, understand their roles and responsibilities, and commit to the internship guidelines.
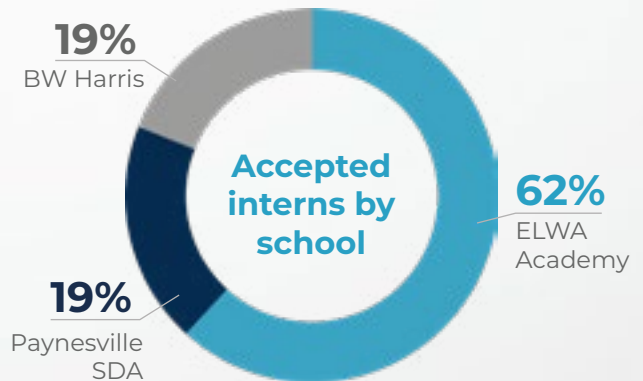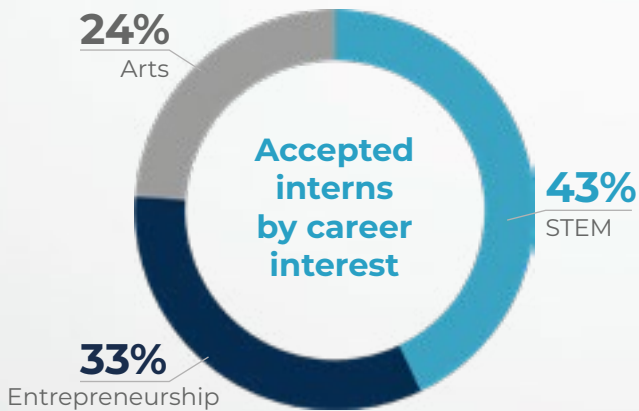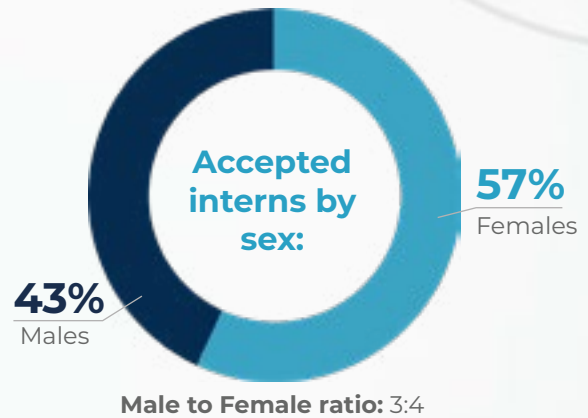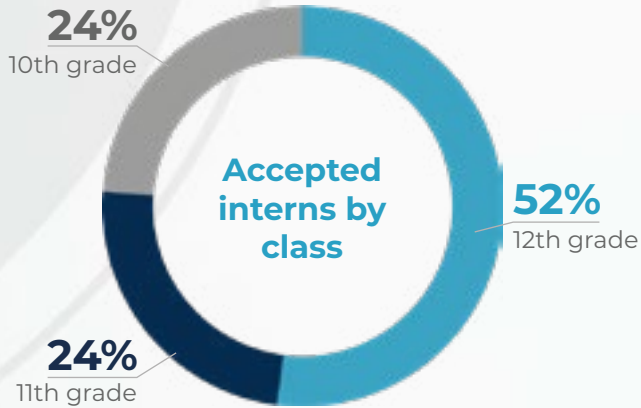
Parameters:

- Minimum six-hour workday.
- A designated supervisor at each institution to manage the intern's experience.
- A minimum stipend of **USD 75** provided to each intern to cover transportation and feeding.
- Minimum of **four weeks per individual internship.**
- Interns would have to provide an internship report at the climax of their internship

Insights

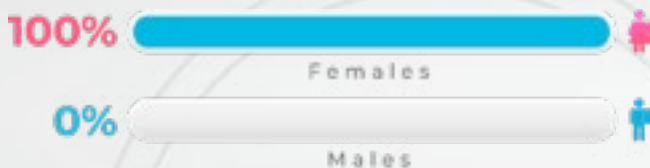**Internship acceptance** rate across all fellows:

66%

Accepted interns by class

- **24%** 10th grade
- **52%** 12th grade
- **24%** 11th grade

Accepted interns by sex:

- **57%** Females
- **43%** Males

Male to Female ratio: 3:4

Accepted interns by career interest

- **24%** Arts
- **43%** STEM
- **33%** Entrepreneurship

Accepted interns by school

- **19%** BW Harris
- **62%** ELWA Academy
- **19%** Paynesville SDA

30 Total Applicants

20 Accepted Interns

STEM Interns by sex:

- **22%** Females
- **78%** Males

Arts Interns by sex:

- **100%** Females
- **0%** Males

Entrepreneurship Interns by sex:

- **29%** Males
- **71%** Females

Accepted interns by economic tier

23% Favorable

48% Unfavorable

29% Moderate

Stipend coverage by internship partnership[11]

6% None

47% Full coverage

47% Partial
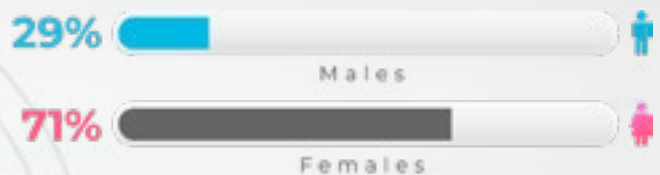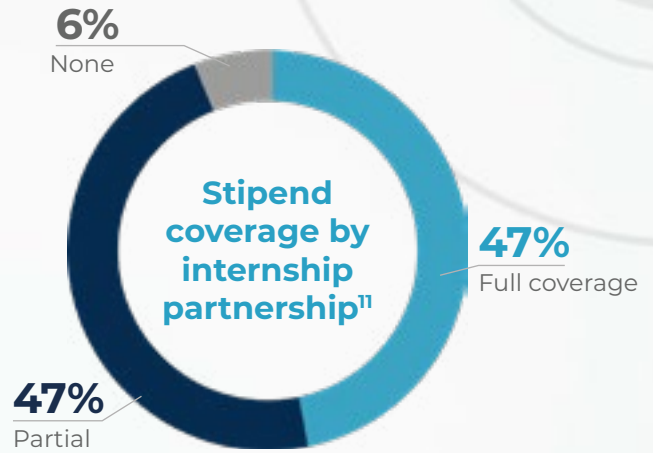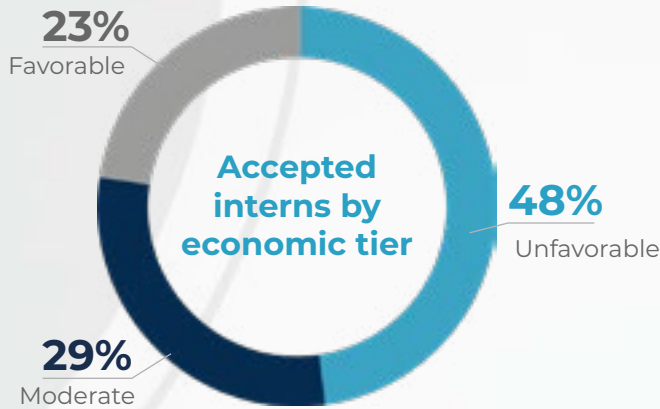
Stipend provision by level[12]

Maximum

Minimum

Average

USD 150.00   USD 75.00   USD 90.00

Post-internship employment:

20% Students employed full-time after completing internship

20% Students whose employment were hindered by their return to school

15% Students whose employment were not secured for other reasons

---

[11] In instances of partial or no coverage, TRIBE provided the interns with stipend.

[12] RE-Novate fellows earned on average 51% more than the national average. The World Bank reported Liberia's GDP per capita in 2021 as USD 675.7 - calculated at USD 54.8 monthly income.

RE-Novate Pioneers

Program Management Team

Elvis M.D. Browne
RE-Novate Team Lead / School Partnerships

Wainright Acquoi
CEO

Kweeta F. Kolleh
Program Assistant / Co-Facilitator

Wesleyan Wende
Executive Assistant /Co-Facilitator

Lexanndine Taylor
COO

Randolphlyn Johnson
Finance Admin. /Co-Facilitator

Jallah Sumbo
Technical Operation Associate / Student Support Services

Moore Johnson
Program Intern

Jee-Won Akoi
Program Intern / RE-Novate Launch

Solomon G. Mahn
Director of Programs and Evaluation

Facilitators

Joshua Lincoln Alston
ELWA Academy
Program Facilitator

Samuel J. Kpartor
BW Harris
Program Facilitator

Acaquious Zur-Bah
SDA
Program Facilitator

School partners

ELWA Academy
# of Fellows: 15
Focal Person:
Mr. Stanley G. Bono

B. W. Harris
# of Fellows: 16
Focal Person:
Mr. Benjamin G. Hardy

SDA High School
# of Fellows: 8
Focal Person:
Ms. Fiorella G. Hardy

Fellows
B.W. Harris Fellows

Gerald O. Johnson
10th Grade
Arts

Abraham Kromah
10th Grade
Entrepreneurship

Jamita Togba
10th Grade
Arts

Jonathan Doe
10th Grade
Entrepreneurship

Isatu Kiawu
11th Grade
STEM

Kaee Brown
11th Grade
Arts

Success Tue
11th Grade
STEM

Samstina Howbott
11th Grade
Arts

Maude Talery
12th Grade
Entrepreneurship

Mygela Swen
12th Grade
Entrepreneurship

Christopher Pabai Jr.
12th Grade
STEM

Peculiar Makor
12th Grade
Arts

Benetta A. Kollie
12th Grade
Arts

Adolphus Walker
12th Grade
Arts

J.Milton Shain
12th Grade
Entrepreneurship

Tekai Gekpoah
12th Grade
Arts

ELWA Academy Fellows

Nadia Mulbah
10th Grade
Arts

Morris Sangai
10th Grade
STEM

Yark Kolva
10th Grade
STEM

Esther Wenk Kolva
10th Grade
Entrepreneurship

Almma Fayiah
11th Grade
Entrepreneurship

Leetra Gibson
11th Grade
Entrepreneurship

Michael Krug Sawyer
11th Grade
Entrepreneurship

Delvi F. Momo
11th Grade
-

Josie Bealdeh
11th Grade
STEM

Victory Oguntimehin
11th Grade
Entrepreneurship

Praise Thomas
12th Grade
Arts

Ranita Ann Wisseh
12th Grade
Arts

Amy Lyn Budeon
12th Grade
Arts

Joyce Clinton
12th Grade
STEM

John Pearson
12th Grade
STEM

Process Woryonwon
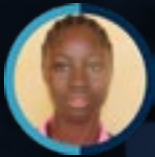12th Grade
STEM

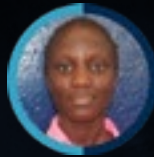**Ashante B. Kaindoli**
12th Grade
-

Beryl Wankollie
12th Grade
-

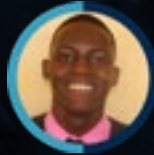SDA High School

Praise Joel
11th Grade
Entrepreneurship

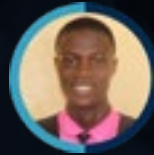**Miatta Massaquoi**
11th Grade
STEM

Ruth Mansaray
11th Grade
STEM

Promise Kiazolu
12th Grade
STEM

Salome Nyong
12th Grade
STEM

Sumah Sheriff
12th Grade
STEM

Chris Tiaquicyl
12th Grade
STEM

Issac Quemue
12th Grade
STEM

Mentors

Samuella Hare-King
# of Mentees: 3
Attorney at Law / Heritage Partners & Associates

Sandra Sabatella
# of Mentees: 1
-

Hennistta Nyangbe
# of Mentees: 3
Jr. Environmentalist / Liberia Maritime Authority

Blessing L. M. Caine
# of Mentees: 2
Investment Analyst/ Bestseller Foundation

Catherine Harris Karmo
# of Mentees: 2
Secretary General / Liberia Chamber of Commerce

Immanuel B.K. Freeman
# of Mentees: 2
Lecturer / University Of Liberia

James Kiawion
# of Mentees: 2
Country Manager / Luminos Fund

Philip Bargin
# of Mentees: 2
Executive Director / Innovation Hub Liberia

Shari Raji
# of Mentees: 2
Graduate Consultant / Plan International/ Co-Founder & CEO/ Sleepless in Monrovia

Sammie Nyanfor
# of Mentees: 2
Private Health Sector Advisor / USAID

Yah Parwon
# of Mentees: 1
Country Director / Medica Liberia

Andrew Greaves
# of Mentees: 3
Founder/CEO Yoner Liberia

Finney Ojong
# of Mentees: 4
Chief Executive Director / Mertu Diagnostic Laboratory

Romeo Quoi
# of Mentees: 2
Lecturer In Computer Science / Starz University

Gerald Hodges
# of Mentees: 2
Director Of Growth / Hilltop Schools Inc

Lekpele Nymalon
# of Mentees: 3
Consumer Manager / Liberia Telecommunications Authority

Intern Partners

KEEP
# of Interns: 1
Location: AB Tolbert Road, Paynesville

Champions Designs
# of Interns: 1
Location: Broad Street, Monrovia

iCampus
# of Interns: 1
Location: Carey Street Monrovia

TRIBE
# of Interns: 1
Location: 1st Street, Sinkor

Mertu Diagnostic Laboratory
# of Interns: 2
Location: Jacob Town

Royal Hotel
# of Interns: 5
Location: 14th Street Sinkor, Monrovia

Tete's Afro Interiors
# of Interns: 1
Location: Duport Road, Paynesville, Liberia

Cachelle International/ KPTwists Braids & Locs
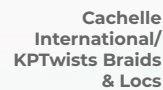
Cachelle Center
# of Interns: 2
Location: Airfield Sinkor

Commercial Court
# of Interns: 1
Location: Capitol Hill, Monrovia

J Palm Liberia
# of Interns: 1
Location: Duport Road, Paynesville

Daniel Sennah

Daniel Sennah
# of Interns: 2
Location: Monrovia

Guest speakers

Dieudonne Perry
Seminar I / ELWA Academy
Executive Director / SMART
Liberia

Cornelia Kruah-Togba
Seminar I / ELWA Academy
Amujae Leader, EJS Center for
Women

Wainright Acquoi
Seminar I / ELWA Academy
CEO, TRIBE

James Mulbah
Seminar II / BW Harris
CEO, Green Cities Inc

**Michaelyn E.Z. George
Johnson**
Seminar II / BW Harris
CEO, Creamy Crunchy

Ahmed Konneh
Seminar II / BW Harris
Co-Founder, SMART Liberia

**Monique Cooper-
Liverpool**
Seminar III / SDA
Managing Partner, Petra
Resources

Roland Washington
Seminar III / SDA
CEO, The Kreative Zone6

Judges at RE-Novate Final Seminar

'Dimej Falana
Final Seminar
CEO, Edves

Gerald Hodges
Final Seminar
Director of Growth, Hilltop Schools
Inc

Ciata Stevens d'Almeida
Final Seminar
Executive Director, President's
Young Professional Program

TRibe RENOVATE
Academy for Entrepreneurial Development

Letters from the Odyssey
Stories that matter
Mentors

> *In my experience, TRIBE is a vibrant organization with [a team that is] enthusiastic about their work and has the set of skills for it. I was more than happy to contribute my skills as a mentor in the RE-Novate program to be able to support young minds in their daily quest and challenges. With the RE-Novate program, TRIBE spotted a gap and is addressing it accurately and professionally. By adding a mentorship component this program is well rounded up. I had regular meetings with my mentees and the team at TRIBE was always available for any questions or concerns."*
>
> **-Sandra Sabatela**

> *RE-Novate is taking the right step when it comes to reimagining [secondary] education. When I was in high school, I wished some of these programs existed. I can only imagine how much further along in my journey I would be right now. RE-Novate is helping students answer major questions such as, Who am I? How do I want to show up in this world? What impact/imprint do I want to leave?' These are questions that even individuals in their 30s still struggle with. Students through RE-Novate now get the opportunity to answer them, whether that be through entrepreneurship or something else."*
>
> **-Blessing L.M. Caine**

> *RE-Novate is a well-designed program that has the potential to empower young Liberians with the skills, knowledge, and network they need to succeed in their desired careers. As a mentor, I admired the effort put into developing a program that catered to both mentors and mentees, and I was pleased to be a part of such an impactful initiative."*
>
> **-Philip Bargain**

> *RE-Novate is a game changer for Liberian students. I was impressed by how many activities and engagements were packed into the program to ensure students succeed. Students who benefited from this program were building superpowers that will propel them to make a real impact in their communities. My only regret is that I didn't have a program like RE-Novate as a high school student in Liberia."*
>
> **-James Kaiwoin**

Fellows

Leetra Gibson is a senior student at the ELWA Academy and an inaugural RE-Novate Fellow. She joined RE-Novate while she was in 11th grade and completed a one-month internship at TRIBE before her senior year.

After completing RE-Novate, she wrote an excerpt to reflect on her journey through RE-Novate and how it has impacted her growth.

"Re-Novate was really an amazing program. It was a very educational and fun experience. I learned a lot of new things during the program and I'm extremely grateful that I was able to participate.

When I learned what TRIBE was about, I was amazed because it was new for me to see people doing or even thinking about what they intended to do. The RE-Novate program was such an innovative idea. They have a strong desire to strengthen the future generation of the country by providing lessons that teach us to be problem solvers. They conducted seminars for us to meet and interact with successful entrepreneurs who can inspire us and expand our network. Overall, I was awestruck by TRIBE.

I applied to RE-Novate because I was curious to understand what it was about, and how it could help me expand my knowledge, develop skills, and stimulate my personal growth.

RE-Novate was really amazing. The lessons we were provided taught us to be solution-oriented and innovative. I met inspirational people and went to places I wouldn't have had the opportunity to go outside of RE-Novate. The people I met and the teams I worked with were all part of the remarkable experiences that I am grateful I had as a fellow of this incredible program.

I learned many major lessons as a RE-Novate fellow. One of these lessons was: as an aspiring entrepreneur, failure will be a major part of my journey because I won't always ace everything that I do. I should understand that I may fail at times, but rather than being content with failure, I should persevere until I achieve my goals. I also learned that honesty is the best policy because if you're an honest person, it'll enable others to trust you, it'll make your opinion more valuable, and enable you to be more confident in yourself. Another major lesson I learned is that I should be an innovative thinker. I should be able to develop new ideas that differ from the traditional way of thinking and solving problems.

RE-Novate has helped me to grow my sense of self-confidence that I lacked before joining the program. It has also enabled me to step out of my comfort zone, thereby improving my adaptability skills."

Sumah Sheriff is an inaugural RE-Novate fellow and a graduate of Paynesville SDA High School.

During RE-Novate, he was the leader of his team from SDA during the Student Project segment of RE-Novate. He also secured an internship at KEEP Liberia for a month prior to his graduation.

Our Program Assistant, Kweeta Kolleh, reached out to Sumah to gather feedback from him about his RE-Novate experience.

Kweeta: *What was your first impression of TRIBE?*

Sumah: *I felt that TRIBE was a unique entity that helps young people realize their goals and expose them to the practicalities of the real world. Being a part of RE-Novate was a very great experience for me. I am especially grateful to the CEO of TRIBE and his team for the time and patience given to us during RE-Novate.*

Kweeta: *Why did you apply to RE-Novate?*

Sumah: *I applied to RE-Novate because of how the program was presented during the time of recruitment. I was intrigued by the sophistication of the application process because it was unlike anything I had seen before. I was also impressed by the young people I met and the distinct way that they carried out their presentations. The team motivated me to apply and assured me that it was going to be a great place to learn and grow."*

Kweeta: *How would you describe your RE-Novate experience?*

Sumah: *"My RE-Novate experience was very educative. A major highlight of my RE-Novate experience was the*

internship which enabled me to know what the workforce needs and how to handle real-world challenges. During the course of the program, I was also able to experience many different things with one of the highlights being the mentorship. I was assigned to a mentor that helped mentor my activities in and out of RE-Novate which was a new and helpful experience."

Kweeta: *What were the major lessons or concepts you learned during RE-Novate?*

Sumah: *"Major concepts I learned from RE-Novate were that everything is possible if only you dedicate your time to it. This concept was demonstrated at my first working session at TRIBE Campus when my team was asked to put 13 nails over a single nail.*

RE-Novate taught me that being a leader/part of a team requires a lot of patience. This was particularly demonstrated during the Student Projects which required me to lead my peers by example while ensuring that our goals and objectives were met."

Kweeta: *Describe RE-Novate's impact on your personal and professional development.*

Sumah: *"RE-Novate impacted me academically by providing me access to interesting and relevant information while improving my research skills. It had a social impact on me, demonstrated by my ability to work and communicate with others.*

RE-Novate has helped me to become much more critical and intentional about challenges or ideas I encounter. The three 'Whys' was a major concept that I learned which has improved my critical thinking abilities and rationalization skills."

Parents

"

Parent Name: Magretta Krayee
Child's Name: Ranita Ann Wisseh

When Ranita first told me about the program, I told her to seize the opportunity and apply. After she applied and got accepted, transportation became a major concern but Ranita assured me that TRIBE could assist with transportation. During Ranita's involvement in the program, I observed a remarkable transformation in her mindset, academic performance, and RE-Novate activities. She kept me informed about every aspect of the program from learning workshops to students project which I attended and was impressed with Ranita's confidence and pitching abilities. My pride grew further when she secured her first internship with TRIBE."

-Magrette Krayee

"

Parent Name: Nyemady Favor Clinton
Child's Name: Joyce N. Clinton

Through Joyce's participation in the program, she became more inquisitive about exploring her career path and entrepreneurial ambitions. She acquired new skills and perspectives on problem-solving and innovation. Since completing the program, Joyce's growth has been huge. She is curious about forwarding her education, acquiring her undergraduate degree, and starting her own business because of the entrepreneurial mindset that has been cultivated during her time in RE-Novate."

-Nyemady Favor Clinton

Facilitators

"

RE-Novate is more than just a program that high school students pass through to prepare themselves for the future of work. It is an experience that leaves them with profound and long-lasting memories. It is exactly the kind of experience I would have dreamt of having when I was in high school. However, I am grateful that I was able to be a core part of shaping the experience for so many brilliant young minds. RE-Novate distinguishes itself by ensuring that young people have the relevant tools, access to resources, courage, and the network that gives them the opportunity to forge their own paths and not have to navigate predetermined routes created by others."

-Joshua L. Alston

"

RE-Novate was an eye opener for students in Liberia and in our overall entrepreneurial ecosystem. Equipping high school students with the skills needed to thrive in the workforce is something entirely new in Liberia. My overall journey as a facilitator helped me learn a great deal from TRIBE's team and from other facilitators. I saw the need to improve my skills and sought to utilize available resources to enhance my skills and competencies. When I see most fellows excelling today, I am assured of a brighter future for the youths of Liberia. If the RE-Novate model can be integrated into the current secondary school curriculum, we can look forward to a competitive society and one that accommodates young people with vast potential. RE-Novate is one of a kind. I look forward to continuing the journey with TRIBE."

-Samuel J. Kpartor

Intern Partners

"

The RE-Novate initiative by TRIBE is a noble cause in equipping the next generation of workers—employers and employees combined—with today's skills in meandering the rough seas of the 21st-century job market."

-Wilcom Duncan, CEO, Tenacity Group of Companies Wilcom Duncan

School Partners

"

Our school is willing to continue to collaborate with TRIBE because we want to continue to be partners. Once we have accepted you, we have to work along with you and we will be ready. Furthermore, RE-Novate is adding value to our school because the students benefiting from this program are reflecting a positive image of our school in society. They serve as a motivation for other parents and kids to want to come to our school and take advantage of a program like RE-Novate."

-Mr. Stanley Bono, Vice-Principal for Senior High Division, ELWA Academy

"

TRIBE did extremely well in educating and providing training to our students through RE-Novate. This helped in developing our students, improving their intelligence, and making them become better leaders. As they went through an entrepreneurship program like RE-Novate, they could learn the skills needed to be better managers of their own businesses and of other activities that they are involved in.

-Ms. Fiorella Hardy, Vice-Principal for Student Affairs, Paynesville SDA

Program Team

"

From my experience with the RE-Novate Pilot Program, I know it was indeed a safe space that could breed the next generation of entrepreneurs with the right skills and mindset. As the Finance and Administrative Assistant at TRIBE, I had the opportunity to manage the operational activities of RE-Novate along with Lexanndine Taylor, the Chief Operations Officer. We helped to ensure the success of the program in meeting its goals by managing operational and financial processes. My experience in this role gave me a sense of fulfillment knowing that I am part of a solution that is solving important societal problems.

-Randolphlyn D. Johnson

"

After running over three pilot programs, and brainstorming about RE-Novate in TRIBE's formative years, we formally launched RE-Novate in February 2022. RE-Novate had so many facets to ensure the full development of each fellow, this meant there would be student engagement virtually every day. Although not on the frontline, I watched our team pour themselves into execution – including team members whose TOR did not directly involve programming. During one-on-ones with them, some of them made me understand that getting involved with the core activities of TRIBE helped them view and understand the essence of their role and overall support of TRIBE. This was an eye-opener and a challenge to the team's experience and workload in a way that did not silo them from programming and consulting which were ways to understand and continuously buy into TRIBE's overall vision.

Overall, RE-Novate was an exciting learning experience, and based on the findings from the impact report, we are already finding new and improved ways to do this again – giving the team more leverage and the students a fuller and much more exciting experience.

-Lexanndine Taylor

"

RE-Novate is not just redefining basic education in Liberia but also daring to change the status quo and shifting society's mindset on how education is perceived in high schools. Working in a small team with an audacious plan to change the traditional narrative on education in Liberia was mind-blowing. I worked in a team that had distinct skills and matching synergies that helped me to be productive, creative, and efficient in my role. I was proud to see students displaying what they learned from the case studies through their project development and internships. I was impressed by how they challenged their academics by excelling both in their school and RE-Novate activities. I felt even more fulfilled when I listened to the stories parents of these fellows shared about the great impact RE-Novate made on their children and the changes they have seen so far.

-Kweeta F. Kolleh

Challenges

Throughout RE-Novate, we endeavored to resolve issues confronting the program design, students, and partners as effectively and efficiently as possible. Our strategy was centered on being as flexible to the needs of the program while addressing challenges and obstacles as they emerged.

During the implementation of RE-Novate, we experienced numerous challenges. Some of these required us to readjust our processes to ensure efficiency, while others were challenges that impacted overall program execution.

RE-Novate, unlike traditional school models, placed emphasis on using otherwise unconventional methods to deliver a unique and impactful experience. It was unsurprising that fellows needed time to adapt to such a new learning environment at varying paces. Secondly, digital literacy was a key component of the program that required fellows to learn how to effectively use digital tools to interact with their facilitators, lessons, and fulfill assessment requirements. Many fellows faced difficulties in using these digital tools effectively because of a lack of knowledge and unavailability of resources such as smartphones, computers, the internet, and electricity.

A lot of learning had to occur during RE-Novate. These varied from understanding how to increase student engagement, developing centralized data collection systems, improving knowledge management, effectively managing financial processes, coordinating with partners, and designing lean standardized evaluation tools for constant iteration of the model. The team had to juggle other projects and programs simultaneously, manage their time effectively, and improve efficiency while still delivering quality outcomes. This multifaceted demand on many occasions exhausted, stressed, and burned out our small team.

General

Academic/School Calendar: RE-Novate implementation began right in the midst of the academic year. It was difficult to sync RE-Novate's activities with partner schools due to their academic calendar and lessons that were ongoing. During learning workshops, there were constant interruptions and breaks due to exams, school closures, and other school activities.

Fellows in 12th grade faced additional challenges due to extra classes and activities that were preparing them for the WASSCE[13]. This impacted fellows' availability and attendance. Twelfth graders were significantly affected when their WASSCE exams began, ruling them out of RE-Novate activities within that period and leading to their absence during the latter stages of the learning workshops, seminars, and the initial phase of the student projects. Their absence also significantly impacted the program given that 12th graders accounted for 48% of all fellows. The need to adjust to the academic calendar also affected RE-Novate's timeline and extended it. This extension had a major financial impact and affected cash flow: from needing to extend facilitators' contracts, to covering additional operational and programmatic expenses.

The extension of RE-Novate's timeline also led to our team having a significantly increased workload. Our team is small, therefore, we had to balance working on RE-Novate while also working on other demanding projects, but maintaining quality and efficiency. This eventually led to high stress and burnout.

Limited Access to Resources: Many fellows across RE-Novate faced challenges in having access to resources needed to guarantee their success in the program. Through our economic tier model, we discovered that only 3% of our fellows had the necessary criteria needed to be successful in the program (resource, access, ability).

Fellows faced difficulties in conducting their research online, submitting assignments and assessments, reviewing lessons, and completing their digital literacy courses due to a lack of access to smartphones, computers, electricity, and internet data. This hampered their ability to keep up with the requirements of the program throughout its various stages. Other fellows faced difficulties in commuting to TRIBE Campus for activities, especially during the Student Project segment because of some parents' disapproval, and others' refusal or inability to provide funds for students' transportation from home to TRIBE space.

We offset these obstacles fellows faced, with emphasis on fellows in lower economic tiers, by providing the tools and means (we expanded our office and set up workstations with computers for fellows to utilize, covered transportation, and provided meals) necessary for their success and being flexible enough to utilize alternative strategies (personalized engagement and parents involvement) to ensure their success[14].

---

[13] The West African Senior School Certificate Examination is required for all senior high students to complete before graduating high school.

[14] Despite only 3% of RE-Novate fellows having the needed resources to succeed in the program, RE-Novate had a successful completion rate above 85%.

Finance: We incurred significant additional costs which resulted in financial constraints due to other challenges, especially the program's extension. We had to adjust our finances to cover transportation and feeding of fellows to major RE-Novate activities in order to boost participation, facilitate student project sessions, and ensure that the resources fellows needed were available.

RE-Novate needs highly-skilled team members to cover a wide array of roles and responsibilities from fundraising to impact measurement.

Communication: The communication channels that existed were not very effective in disseminating information between TRIBE, RE-Novate Fellows, School Partners, and Parents. There were communication gaps that existed, especially in the dispersal of information about fellows' progress, evaluation, along with RE-Novate's activities and their timelines.

Inefficient communications were a factor in the low engagement rates between TRIBE and the parents of RE-Novate Fellows throughout the program. Robust communication channels must be created to guarantee the timely sharing of accurate information between TRIBE and all major stakeholders of RE-Novate. This will be essential in building sustainable relationships and ensuring full knowledge-sharing and participation of all major stakeholders.

Knowledge Management: Much learning occurred during the early stages of RE-Novate's implementation. As the program progressed, we had to develop systems and metrics for data collection that form the parameters for performance evaluation and gathering of insights. There was not a centralized system pre-developed for the collection, storage, and analysis of data collected across RE-Novate's segments and stakeholders until months into the program.

This led to the loss of knowledge and insights and disrupted knowledge sharing during the program. While the systems we eventually developed were instrumental in gathering significant data, these processes must be optimized to guarantee efficiency, accessibility, and quality.

Learning Workshops

Misalignment of School Calendar with RE-Novate calendar: Due to examinations and other school activities, fellows' attendance at learning workshops was significantly affected. Senior students were most affected by this due to their WASSCE preparation and other senior class activities.

Fellows Fatigue: Fellows were worn out and exhausted from the combination of both school and RE-Novate activities.

Learning Environment: Spaces allocated for RE-Novate learning workshops at some partner schools were not optimal. They suffered from poor ventilation, heat, and noise pollution from other classes/students.

Mentorships

Conflicting Mentor/Mentee Schedules: Fellows faced challenges in having mentorship sessions with their mentors due to vast differences in their schedules. These differences resulted in irregular mentorship sessions and affected the flow of communication between mentors and their mentees.

Managing Mentorship Experience: For most fellows, this was their first mentorship experience, therefore they struggled in managing their experience. They had difficulties scheduling their meetings, maintaining constant communication, and building relationships with their mentors.

Time: There were a lot of ongoing activities that fellows had to participate in while balancing their school activities. The time span of the mentorship program—lasting a maximum of 3 months—was inadequate for fellows to fully immerse themselves and for mentors to have the ample time needed to support and help develop their mentees.

Fellows' understanding of mentorship - Many fellows did not understand the concept of mentorship. This was a new experience for the majority of fellows; therefore, they struggled to manage their experience and use the wealth of knowledge and opportunities available to them through their mentors.

Seminar

Venue: The venues that hosted the monthly seminars at partner schools were not fully equipped with the resources required to deliver the best seminar experience. Some venues suffered from noise pollution and the absence of communication equipment or electricity while other partner schools' seminars had to be outsourced to external venues at extra cost. All these factors impacted the planning and quality of the seminars.

Schedule: The seminars are held on school days at one of the partner schools once a month. It created conflict for fellows who would have to be excused from their regular class sessions to attend them. This conflict led to some fellows not participating in the seminars due to major school commitments that precluded them from being available.

Student Project

Venue: The location of TRIBE Campus on 1st Street was less than optimal for some fellows, particularly those who lived far distances. The need to show up constantly for over six weeks at TRIBE Campus placed a physical and financial strain on fellows and affected their attendance rates. We provided fellows with funds for transportation and food to offset the effects of this strain.

Schedule: The student project sessions were held weekly on Saturdays for almost two months. These sessions lasted on average for about six hours a day. It caused a disruption in the routines of some fellows, especially since some of them had household responsibilities to cover at home on Saturdays. The student project's schedule also coincided with other major activities at TRIBE and final exams for fellows.

Internship

Length of Internship: The short length of internships meant that fellows did not have enough time to fully experience and understand the nuances involved with working in a professional environment. Institutions did not have the time to really hone the interns' skills and test the full range of competencies interns brought to their roles.

Monitoring - The monitoring of interns during the internship program was ineffective. We failed to follow up with a robust system designed to monitor fellows, track their progress, and provide support during the internship. This made it difficult to assess fellows' growth during the internship and maintain a healthy level of engagement with intern partners.

Key Insights

RE-Novate uses an integrated approach to deliver entrepreneurial education that prepares students for the future of work. This approach exposes them to competencies that are relevant for them to succeed in their careers. Throughout RE-Novate, we have learned and gathered important insights that will inform and improve the program model. Below is an overview of these major learnings:

RE-Novate is a School-to-Employment Pathway. RE-Novate utilizes four areas of development necessary for fellows' growth and preparation for the workforce. These four areas are **entrepreneurial development, socio-emotional growth, cognitive skills**, and **character/behavioral development**. The positive feedback received from intern partners during the internship suggests that they have the potential to be effective long-term. Over 50% of fellows successfully secured paid internships and about 20% of these interns received permanent offers following the completion of their internship. Additionally, all intern partners interviewed expressed their interest and willingness to partner with TRIBE continually in the future. Therefore, RE-Novate is a potential pipeline for students to develop the necessary skills and competencies for entry-level employment. They would also have a network that supports their growth and supervises their development

RE-Novate requires huge Capital Investment. Long-term large-scale investments are essential to ensure the sustainability of RE-Novate. This is necessary because securing payments from fellows is basically unrealistic given the cost of the program. The pilot of RE-Novate costs on average about $350 United States Dollars per fellow. However, this USD 350 program cost per fellow is at a minimized rate. The program's model was scaled down and the team worked through limitations in resources and capacity to deliver the program outcomes. At full potential, the programmatic unit cost of the program is about USD 3,000 per fellow. This only demonstrates the need for capital investments that would guarantee the full utilization of RE-Novate's model and efficient implementation of the program for quality outcomes.
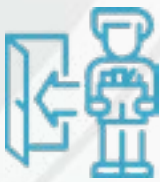
Other Learnings

We have compiled insights gathered across all segments of RE-Novate to shed light on the lessons learned and data gathered during the program:

Learning Workshops
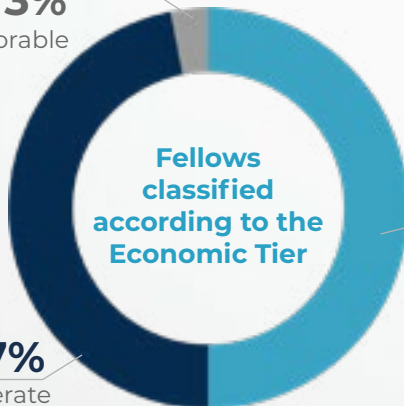
The average attendance rate of RE-Novate Fellows was

58.29%

Female females made up more than 60% of all RE-Novate Fellows

60% Females

About

7%

of Fellows withdrew from RE-Novate due to varying personal reasons

Over 42% of RE-Novate Fellows were classified in STEM, while Entrepreneurship and Arts both accounted for 28% of Fellows each

42% STEM

28% Entrepreneurship

28% Arts

3% Favorable

Fellows classified according to the Economic Tier

50% Unfavorable

47% Moderate

Female fellows performed higher in socio-emotional skills (64.44) than male fellows (62.89)

62.89% Males

64.44% Females

Female fellows generally had better performance evaluation results in RE-Novate

STEM

Fellows in STEM generally had higher performance scores in RE-Novate

10th

Fellows in 10th grade displayed higher growth levels overall in RE-Novate.

Higher average attendance rates suggest a higher average performance in cognitive abilities, socio-emotional skills, and character development
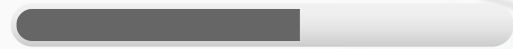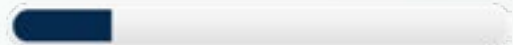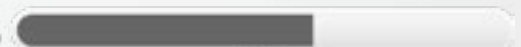
Scores indicate that 10th graders had the highest level of character development overall in RE-Novate (75.63) while 12th graders marginally had the lowest character development scores (74.54)

The average score RE-Novate fellows received in cognitive skills was

81.52

75.63% 10th

74.54% 12th

Mentorship

RE-Novate had a mentor to mentee ratio of

2:5

Female mentors made up 44% of RE-Novate mentors with males making up 56%

56% Males mentors

44% Female mentors

Mentor-mentee meetings lasted on average 1 hour - especially in-person meetings

There was a higher level of consistency and frequency in TRIBE-scheduled mentor- mentee meetings

The average number of mentor-mentee meetings per month was 2

Seminars

◇ There was an even distribution of male and female panelists across RE-Novate seminars

◇ SDA Seminar had the lowest attendance rate primarily due to conflict with other partner schools academic calendars

◇ BW Harris seminar was generally cited as the best seminar by fellows

◇ Fellows respond to seminars that are more engaging and require more responsibility.

Financials

RE-Novate is TRIBE's first flagship high school entrepreneurship program. The team made many assumptions concerning the program. Initially, the plan was to work with the students to develop their entrepreneurial skills and project development skills through the learning workshops. As the program rolled out, the program team saw room for improvement and iterated, adding in additional components that were not initially taken into consideration or fleshed out and communicated. This caused shifts and adjustments in the finances, as money had to be reallocated to fit the emerging scopes.

Another case in point was the challenge involved with following through with systems and processes. Given that the financial system had not been clearly communicated throughout TRIBE, teams found it difficult to communicate their financial requests which often resulted in conflict between team members.

These problems have provided critical insights to inform operations around planning, budgeting, execution, and communications.

Major Takeaway / Recommendations

Improve communication skills among teams by communicating on time, collecting routine feedback, developing a communication plan and status report schedule, and producing regular communication/performance reports.

Realistic budgeting for effective program implementation by reviewing similar projects and planning budgets ahead of time to capture realistic estimates.

Create a list of skills or knowledge required for financial processing and conduct training when needed. This intervention would enable team members to be fluent with the required processes and systems, thereby improving operations efficiency.

Total Involvement. The finance team should be involved in the progress of program operations to ensure that resources are available to achieve program results. Additionally, it is critical to the overall organization that processes and systems relating to procurement and payments are understood and adhered to, to ensure proper coordination and foster confidence between team members, donors, as well as other stakeholders.

Embracing a New Challenge

Impact Evaluation

Though we learned a lot and gathered as much insights from RE-Novate's pilot, we fell short of properly documenting our experience and conducting a thorough impact evaluation due to the team's capacity, financial challenges, and time constraints. During the course of the program, we outlined the following strategies to define our impact thesis and identify critical areas of improvement:

Conduct a difference-in-difference study between fellows and 'just-missed-the-cuts' to assess critical thinking, problem-solving, and all areas of development for our fellows.

Utilize participation and engagement data of students to analyze performance results and assess correlation.

Conduct a monthly assessment of RE-Novate students to measure the impact of the program on their development.

Test for ventures/projects launch, job opportunities, and college enrollment three to six months, nine months to a year, and two years later and verify how RE-Novate contributed to preparing fellows for such opportunities

Compare fellows' character development and performance at home and in their communities pre and post-RE-Novate. Evaluate parents.

Conduct an open evaluation on basic entry-level roles required at some local enterprises and test both groups of students in point 1.

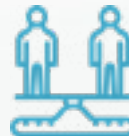Design teacher/administrator training to enable them create new interventions at their respective schools. Monitor schools three to six and nine months later and then one to two years to assess the level of interventions and change that would occur.

Compare fellows' performances in class pre and post-RE-Novate: participation, contributions, grades, critical thinking, and insights. Evaluate instructors and administrators.

We believe these strategies are effective enough to give us a well-rounded view of our impact moving forward. However, we are seeking external firms to conduct two main studies: a difference-in-difference study and a character development and performance study. These studies will give us additional insights as we redesign and expand our programmatic efforts and extend our fundraising support.

Learning management systems and processes. We aspire to become a thought leader in secondary education across Africa. We intend to document our experiences and communicate efficiently with stakeholders across every segment of the program. The learning management system will serve as a repository for evaluation and digital content for our students, facilitators, partner schools, and other stakeholders. It will also enable us to share our learnings with a wider audience and promote collaboration among team members. Additionally, it will provide opportunities for feedback and continuous improvement of the program.

Redefining RE-Novate Curriculum. As already articulated in this report, we implemented the case study methods coupled with other experiential activities to give our students a holistic experience. Based on the feedback of our facilitators and observations, we observed the following and are redefining our curriculum to reflect current realities:

More Afrocentric case studies. Most of the case studies discussed during the learning workshops were Western-focused. All of our facilitators said they found it quite challenging to explain some concepts and scenarios to the fellows. We wrote a case study on J-Palm Liberia, but that was one out of the 24 stories they had to read. While case studies on international companies and culture are a good way to enlighten fellows' approach to learning, we believe that a balance with local stories would draw in on the challenges and opportunities they currently face.

Structured modules for the learning sessions. We recognize that the topics covered in the learning sessions were quite broad, with some areas of overlap and other important topics such as financial literacy being missing. In order to ensure that all the necessary topics are covered, we plan to create a comprehensive syllabus outlining the core concepts to be explored during the learning sessions and develop supplementary learning materials to further explain and clarify any misunderstood concepts.

Module I:
The entrepreneurial leader

Identifying Entrepreneurial Opportunities. Students will learn how to identify and assess entrepreneurial opportunities in the marketplace and develop strategies to capitalize on these opportunities.

Building a Resource Network. Students will learn how to effectively build and maintain a strong network of resources to foster collaboration and enable successful personal and business growth.

Developing an Entrepreneurial Mindset. Students will gain insight into the mindset of an effective entrepreneur, including qualities such as resilience, creativity, and risk-taking. They will also learn how to apply these qualities in their own pursuits.

Module II:
Soft skills for young entrepreneurs

Effective Communication. Students will learn how to effectively communicate their ideas and express their thoughts in various contexts and conversations.

Interpersonal Skills. Students will gain an understanding of the importance of interpersonal skills when building relationships and developing successful business ventures.

Problem-Solving. Students will develop problem-solving skills through the study of strategies and techniques designed to help them identify solutions and navigate challenging situations.

Tribe · RENOVATE
Academy for Entrepreneurial Development

Module III:
Hard skills for young entrepreneurs

Financial Literacy. Students will gain knowledge of key financial concepts such as budgeting, investing, and banking to help them make informed decisions about their financial future.

Business Strategy. Students will learn how to develop an effective business strategy to ensure sustainable growth and success.

Technology. Students will gain an understanding of how technology can be used to improve efficiency and effectiveness in a business setting. They will learn how to apply the latest tools and trends to gain a competitive advantage.

Module IV:
Ideate, design & pitch

Ideation. Students will learn techniques to generate innovative ideas and build their entrepreneurial mindset.

Design Thinking. Students will gain an understanding of the design thinking process to help them define and refine their ideas into tangible products and services.

Pitching. Students will develop their pitching skills to effectively communicate their ideas and present their business plans to potential investors and partners.

Module V:
Earning your first pay cheque:

Job Searching: Students will learn how to effectively search and apply for jobs and leverage their own networks to find new opportunities.

Personal Branding: Students will gain an understanding of the importance of personal branding and learn strategies to create a professional presence that reflects their goals and values.

Interview Skills: Students will develop their confidence and practice their job interview skills to increase their chances of success.

Digital Literacy Integration. Due to time and resource constraints, we could not fully implement the digital literacy component of the pilot. However, we created a repository of courses for students on Google Garage for Fellows to learn from. While this was useful, only about 10% of the fellows completed up to about 50% of the digital literacy courses. Factors such as school workload and lack of internet access and gadgets affected students' participation. Going forward, we aspire to work closely with partner schools to understand what they are teaching in the computer classes, helping to tailor the program to facilitate our students' learning experience. We will also work to acquire digital devices from partners to improve digital literacy skills, and open our offices for personalized digital learning sessions.

The RE-Novate we envision

We aspire to build a replicable and scalable school-to-work model for high school students in Liberia and beyond.

We are launching advocacy and stakeholder engagements to integrate entrepreneurial and work skills into the national curriculum

We are developing 300 purpose-driven problem solvers over three years to establish a blueprint for building young entrepreneurs and prepared entry-level employees

What do we need?

Learning Solutions Funding model

We are raising USD 1.5 Million to facilitate the RE-Novate we imagine over the next three years.

Strategic support

1. Join our mentorship program. Provide academic guidance and professional development tips to our Fellows.

2. Provide professional support to our Team. Serve as a mentor and facilitator to our growing team. Provide one-on-one mentoring to any of the team members and facilitators. Help us build our knowledge management system and further define our impact thesis.

3. Write a case study about a company in Africa or a business scenario. Contribute to our learning workshop content development by writing business case studies for our students and serving as a guest lecturer.

4. Introduce us to your rich network.
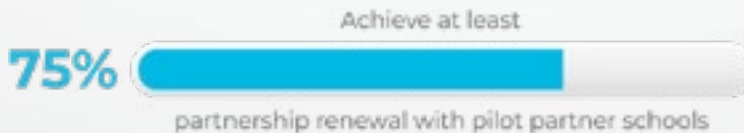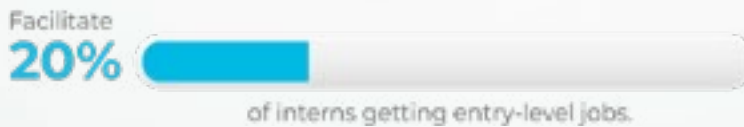
RE-Novate Inaugural Cohort

We are launching RE-Novate Inaugural Cohort this year with the following objectives:

Expand RE-Novate from **3 partner schools to 6** partner schools

Enroll **60** students for the inaugural cohort

Recruit
50%
of fellows for internships with local institutions

Facilitate
20%
of interns getting entry-level jobs.

Achieve at least
75%
partnership renewal with pilot partner schools

Support
5%
of fellows to gain international college admission

Signup today and join to support our Learning Solutions team as a mentor or professional coach.

Email us: info@weareatribe.org

RE-Novate

Pilot Report

2021
2023