



**BEHAVIORAL THERAPY AND CASH
GRANTS SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE
YOUTH CRIME AND VIOLENCE**

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Safe communities for everyone.

Behavior Therapy and Cash Grants Significantly Reduce Youth Crime and Violence

NEPI, Inc., 2024 Annual Report

Design Concept: Klubosumo Johnson Borh

Writers and Contributors:

Klubosumo Johnson Borh, Uncle Newton Toe, Thompson L.T. Borh, Johannson Q. Dahn, Earl Mulbah, and Jacob N. Slewion Sr.

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Letter from the Chief Executive Officer



In today's rapidly changing world, where people, information, and resources move faster than ever, it is vital to find effective solutions to the most pressing 21st-century challenges. At the same time, new ideas and tools are expanding our ability to create lasting social impact.

I am pleased to introduce **STYL**, a comprehensive youth rehabilitation program rooted in cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and designed to improve community safety through financial incentives. STYL is the flagship program of the **Network for Empowerment & Progressive Initiative (NEPI)**. In 2024, I had the privilege of continuing STYL's implementation in Liberia, with support from donors including the Livelihood Impact Fund, Towards Kindness, the Agency Fund, and other valued partners.

Building on this progress, we launched a pilot program targeting the highest-risk young men in Lagos, Nigeria, in partnership with **Innovation for Poverty Action (IPA), GiveDirectly (GD), and Global Development Incubator (GDI)**.

What makes STYL unique? The model has been rigorously tested and backed by evidence from respected researchers and organizations. Beyond West Africa, STYL shows great promise in reaching the most vulnerable and violent youth populations. As long as government ministries and NGOs are willing to implement the approach, and donors remain committed, STYL could be adopted anywhere, youth crime and violence threaten communities.

The success of NEPI in 2014 demonstrated the power of collaboration. With your support, NEPI successfully rehabilitated 450 beneficiaries in Liberia (Cycle 2, Cohort 1: 224 participants; Cycle 2, Cohort 2: 226 participants) and launched the new pilot in Nigeria. Your assistance has been instrumental in making a difference in the lives of our beneficiaries and has inspired us to adapt and grow in response to their evolving needs. Given the time, resources, and commitment you invest in the causes that matter most, we invite you to review and share this report. Together, we can explore ways to deepen our impact and build safer, stronger communities.

For Donors: Your support helps us scale this evidence-based model to transform lives and build safer communities.

For Government Partners: STYL offers a proven approach that can be integrated into national youth crime prevention strategies to achieve lasting impact.

Thank you for being part of NEPI's story. We welcome your continuous partnership as we work to scale the STYL model across Sub-Saharan Africa and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Klubosumo Johnson Borh', written over a light blue circular graphic element.

Klubosumo Johnson Borh
Chief Executive Officer, NEPI Liberia

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Executive Summary

We live in a rapidly changing world where information, people, and resources are moving faster than ever, heightening the urgency to solve the most challenging problems of the 21st century. Simultaneously, new ideas and tools have emerged, expanding our opportunities to create lasting social impact.

At **NEPI**, we focus on reducing crime and violence. Crime and violence are among the most significant root causes of human suffering worldwide, with profound implications for personal safety, community stability, and economic growth. Violence has a global economic impact of approximately \$14.4 trillion, with over 200,000 youth homicides each year. Globally, youth crime and violence appear to be steadily increasing as economies grapple with inflation, while young people face underemployment, unemployment, and disenfranchisement. Traditionally, solutions have emphasized punitive, carceral measures that carry a high economic burden and address symptoms rather than root causes. These challenges are particularly acute in regions like Sub-Saharan Africa.

In this challenging landscape, the **Network for Empowerment & Progressive Initiative (NEPI)** stands as a beacon of hope and transformation. NEPI's pioneering approach reimagines how we respond to youth crime and violence. Moving away from traditional punitive methods, NEPI's strategies focus on prevention, rehabilitation, and sustainable community development. This report outlines the innovative methods and outcomes of NEPI's work, serving as a testament to the power of proactive, community-centered solutions.

NEPI's work, rooted in the belief that every individual holds the potential for positive change, is driven by a commitment to creating safer, more prosperous communities. By engaging directly with at-risk youth, NEPI not only reduces crime but also empowers young people with the tools, skills, and opportunities to build a better future for themselves and their communities.

In an era where challenges are complex and solutions require innovation, NEPI's work is more than a program—it is a movement toward a more just, peaceful, and prosperous world. We are pleased to support NEPI on this journey of change and hope, as we continue to strive for a society where every young person can thrive, free from the shackles of crime and violence.

About NEPI, Inc.

Who We Are

The **Network for Empowerment & Progressive Initiatives (NEPI)** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization registered in New York, Michigan, and Liberia (www.nepiliberia.org). NEPI is the creator and original implementer of the STYL program. **Klubosumo Johnson Borh**, a 2021 Rainer Arnold Fellow of the Mulago Foundation, a 2023 Youth Empowerment Fellow of the Agency Fund, and a 2025 entrepreneur of the Charity Entrepreneurship Incubation Program for starting a high-impact nonprofits, is a founding member and the CEO of NEPI. He has been a key contributor to developing and adapting STYL over the past 10 years.

What We Do

We reduce youth crime and violence through an eight-week group cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) program paired with a \$300 cash grant. STYL is a CBT-based hard-core youth rehabilitation model. The program identifies the highest-risk young men in a community and offers them an eight-week group CBT curriculum focused on reducing reflexive violent behaviors, improving planning and self-regulation, and fostering noncriminal social identities. STYL promotes future orientation, self-discipline, and nonviolent, pro-social behavioral norms.

The curriculum combines lectures, group discussions, role-playing, practical exercises, and one-on-one counseling. The unconditional \$300 cash grant provides income support as participants apply what they learn and begin changing their lives.

NEPI creates lasting change by engaging the young men most involved in crime and violence and working with communities where these challenges are concentrated. We drive change in practice and policy locally and nationally, advocating for resources, practices, and policies that restore the dignity and potential of young people.

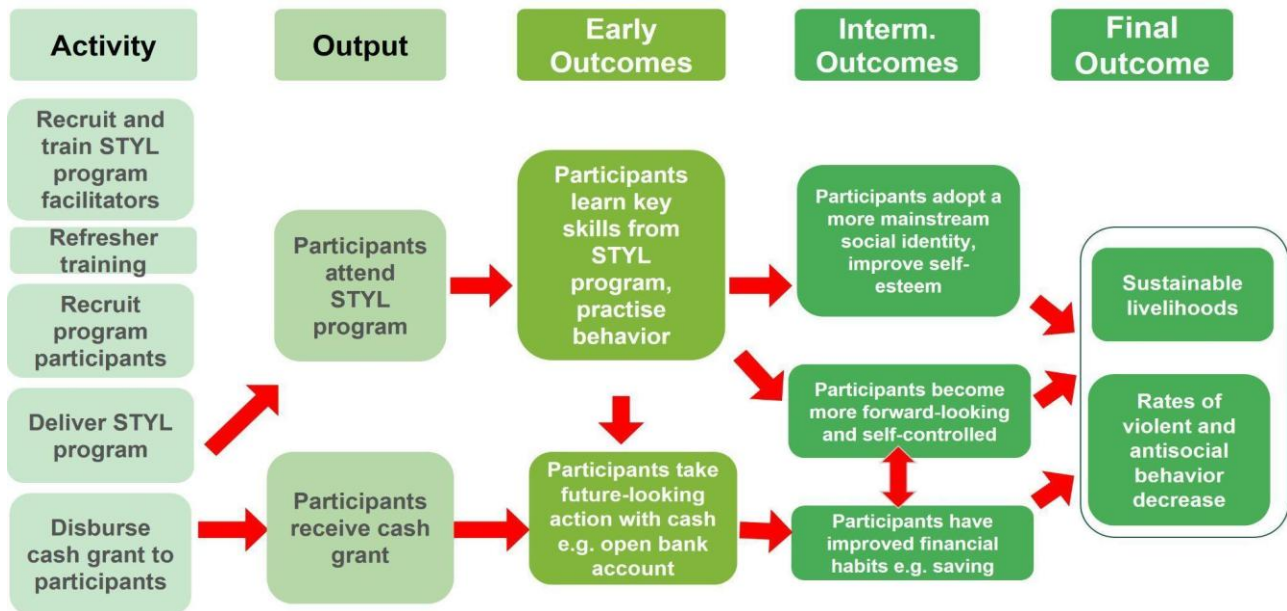
Mission

Create safer communities.

We continually seek more effective solutions to crime and violence while sharing our expertise with the world. We push for long-term change. We will strive until we find sustainable solutions to crime and violence and contribute to reducing extreme poverty. The STYL model is scalable, cost-effective, and impactful, costing approximately \$530 per participant, translating into just \$2.50 per crime avoided over ten years.

Theory of Change

NEPI Detailed theory of change



NEPI Theory of Change Narrative

Need: There are persistently high rates of crime and violence in Monrovia, Liberia. This challenge is particularly acute in its fragile context, where a significant proportion of the population is underemployed or unemployed. Limited economic opportunities, especially for young men, are a major driver of crime and violence. Economic marginalization of these high-risk men perpetuates cycles of vulnerability, making them susceptible to recruitment into destructive activities such as rioting and rebellion.

Inputs: To disrupt these cycles, STYL targets young men at the highest risk of criminal or violent behavior, ranging from street fighting and drug dealing to theft and armed robbery. STYL provides an eight-week CBT program combining group therapy and one-on-one counseling delivered by facilitators who graduated from earlier cohorts. The curriculum blends group discussions, lectures, role-playing, reflection, and practical assignments to help participants recognize harmful thought patterns and practice alternative responses. Beneficiaries also receive a \$300 unconditional cash grant to support them as they implement what they learn.

The program's effectiveness depends on successful targeting, recruitment, and participation by the young men it is designed to reach.

Outputs: Once enrolled, beneficiaries engage meaningfully with the training and receive their grants. In evaluations of STYL, about two-thirds of those recruited agreed to participate and

attended at least 80% of sessions. This requires high-quality facilitation and reliable, timely disbursement of cash grants.

Outcomes: Through participation in and completion of the STYL program, beneficiaries are expected to learn key self-control and planning skills and values from the program and practice learned behaviors. Beneficiaries will necessarily have to apply the skills learned in the CBT program to real-life situations to actualize the training's benefits. They are expected to adopt a more positive, "pro-social" self-image and improve self-control, planning, and deliberate decision-making skills. Moreover, [evidence suggests](#) that the program's effects were largest and persistent when combined with a cash transfer, consistent with STYL's emphasis on patience and planning. The researchers posit that the unconditional cash grant allowed beneficiaries to apply more sustained practice and behavior change by foregoing illicit profit-generating activities. This assumes that the beneficiaries will spend and invest their cash grant in forward-looking, financially prudent avenues.

Impacts: The successful implementation of STYL will lead to increases in productive economic activity engagement and an increase in financial resilience (e.g. the ability to cope with economic shocks) and sustainable livelihoods. The program will lead to a large and sustained decrease in criminal, violent, and antisocial behavior on both an individual and community level. Most of the impacts of the STYL program are due to the positive externalities on society, which include increased feelings of safety and lower risk of political instability, which are ultimately likely to have large impacts on investment, tourism, and community development. [Evidence](#) on the 10-year impacts of STYL suggests that the intervention led to a reduction in a wide range of antisocial behaviors, including a reduction of 34 crimes per participant per year at both the 1- and 10-year surveys. Interpolating, this implies 338 fewer thefts and robberies per program participant since the STYL program. These results support the efficacy of programs like STYL that empower young men with the resources and tools to analyze and change their intentions, behaviors, and identity.

Our Approach

Program Overview

The STYL program consists of identifying the highest-risk young men in a city and offers an 8-week group CBT focused on automatic violent behaviors, improving planning skills, and future focus. When CBT and one-on-one counseling are provided, youth stop bad behavior (anti-social – petty crime, drug use, fighting with self and police).

The group CBT program focused on three kinds of behavior change:

- First, the program helps men learn to behave and adopt a more mainstream social identity rather than feel like outcasts or criminals;
- It also teaches men skills of self-control: to manage emotions, reduce impulsivity, become more conscientious and persevering, and more planful and goal-oriented in their daily activities. As part of this, increasing participants' future orientation seems to be a key driver of behavior change;
- Finally, the program strongly emphasizes how to deal with anger, interpersonal violence, and threatening situations.

Youth meet on average in groups of twenty, led by two NEPI facilitators/trainers, and will receive the program 3-4 hours a day, 3 times a week. On alternative days when groups do not meet, facilitators visit youth at home or work to provide advice and encouragement. The sessions employ a mix of lectures, group discussions, and practice, including role-playing in class, homework that requires practicing tasks, exposure to real situations, and in-class processing of experiences of executing these tasks. Like many CBT programs, these tasks begin simple and get more difficult over time.

The idea behind the use of CBT to reduce violent behaviors is that much crime and violence is the product of poor decision-making and distorted thinking. Youth may react in haste, fail to consider the long-run consequences, or overlook alternative solutions to their problems. They may hold on to exaggerated, negative beliefs about a rival. Or they may have difficulty managing their emotions or impulses. Programs informed by CBT try to help youth become aware of these harmful thoughts and patterns and learn to think and react differently in these situations.

There are many potential channels through which the therapy may have an effect on violent behavior:

- First, the therapy teaches skills such as improved emotional regulation, planning, and conscientiousness, a form of human capacity that improves productivity and earning potential, raising the returns to legitimate work and increasing the opportunity cost of anti-social and criminal behavior;
- Second, the therapy could shape time preferences, making decisions more future-oriented and less time-inconsistent. Participants may, therefore, make more forward-looking investments and avoid short-term reactions that will have long-term costs;
- Third, the therapy may change the men's identity. Research in both psychology and economics supports the idea that groups have well-defined norms of their perceived group. To some extent, people may be able to change their perceived social category and, with it values that reward and penalize certain behaviors;

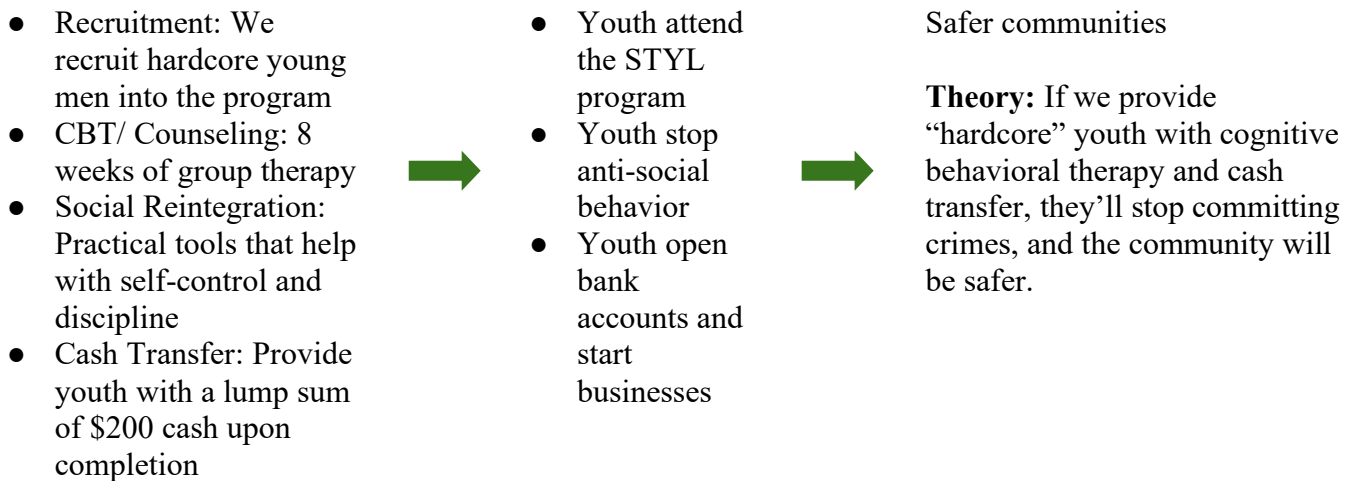
Through social reintegration activities, youth are provided with practical steps to change their lives and space to evaluate how they think and feel about themselves and their experiences. Through a series of assignments like visits to banks, supermarkets, and community-saving clubs, youth practice these practical steps that build toward new skills of self-control and discipline. The program uses role models to demonstrate to program participants that other youths formerly like themselves who have been able to change their lives for the better are welcome back into mainstream society. Youth start good behavior through these social reintegration activities - new haircuts and changing their dress code.

This program is accompanied by an unconditional \$300 cash grant, which provides income support as the young men practice what they learn and focus on changing their lifestyles. The cash transfer consists of two tranche payments. The first tranche payment is US \$200 six weeks into the program and US \$100 three months after the program's completion. When the cash grant is provided, youth open bank accounts, attend school and start a new job or business. The cash grant may have an effect through different channels. Even a short-term increase in legal earnings may reduce criminality by increasing the returns to legal enterprises and raising the opportunity

cost of anti-social behaviors in the long run by positively reinforcing the therapy's push towards a more mainstream, legal lifestyle, and providing increased opportunities to practice these behaviors in the months following the therapy.

The STYL Model

The STYL model is a CBT-based youth rehabilitation program for hardcore street youth, involving therapy and cash to reduce participants' criminal activities and ultimately create safer communities. NEPI recruits young men at the highest risk of engaging in crime and violence and provides eight weeks of CBT-based group and individual counseling, a \$300 cash transfer, and practical tools that help with self-control and discipline to facilitate social reintegration. This is made possible by support from bilateral and multilateral organizations.



The STYL model



NEPI

- Recruitment: We recruit hardcore young men into the program
- CBT / Counseling: 8 weeks of group therapy
- Socially Reintegration: practical tools that help with self-control and discipline
- Cash Transfer: Provide youth with a \$300 cash upon completion

- Youth attend the STYL program
- Youth stop anti-social behavior
- practice reintegrating into the community
- Youth open bank accounts and start businesses

- **Safer communities**

Theory: If we provide “hardcore” youth with cognitive behavioral therapy and a cash transfer, they’ll stop committing crimes, and the community will be safer .

NEPI STYL Scale Strategy

VISION

- Safer Communities
- Doer: NGOs
- Payers: Government, and Big Aids

Anywhere there is youth crime and violence across Sub-Saharan Africa and globally.

Approach to the Big Shift

Doer: Targeting a range of NGO partners across Africa, Systematically transferring the impact model

Payer: Big Aid, like USAID psychosocial and GiveDirectly cash transfers partnership, which attracts more payers Leveraging government infrastructure and resources (cost sharing)

Technology: build and operationalize data platform, tech enables training of STYL trainers, dashboards to monitor delivery across a range of implementing partners,

Model: A new implementation guide to work via other NGOs, maintaining efficiency and impact at scale,

Policy: Develop and integrate a robust MEL strategy to ensure that initial program rollout and scaling decisions are data-driven, Model integrated into national youth policy

Collective Action: Membership of the Unlock Aid coalition to coordinate efforts to encourage the national Gov't to use evidence-based programs

R&D

Liberia (2009-2012)

1.0 Pilot tested the STYL Model with 1000 of the highest-risk youth.

Design, test, and refine the model, iterate on it, and make it truly scalable.

Developed a scalable 1.0 model through evidence-based, cost-effectiveness.

Streamline the model, and make it simple enough, cheap, and easier to replicate.

Conducted an RCT and a 10-year follow-up survey; results show a 20-50% reduction in crime and violence.

REPLICATION

Sub-Saharan Africa (2024 - 2027)

2.0 Systemize the delivery model

Recruit a global team (Chief Program Officer-CPO, Chief Financial Officer-CFO, and a Partnership Manager, to lead scale-up globally

Institutionalize the Intake Survey for participants' recruitment through IPA technical capacity

Institutionalize a new monitoring framework to ensure NGO partners deliver the solution well.

Country selection strategy for implementation in 5 new countries

Team/board evolves from issue area expertise to organizational scaling.

At least 35,000 youths reintegrated over 5 years

IMPACT

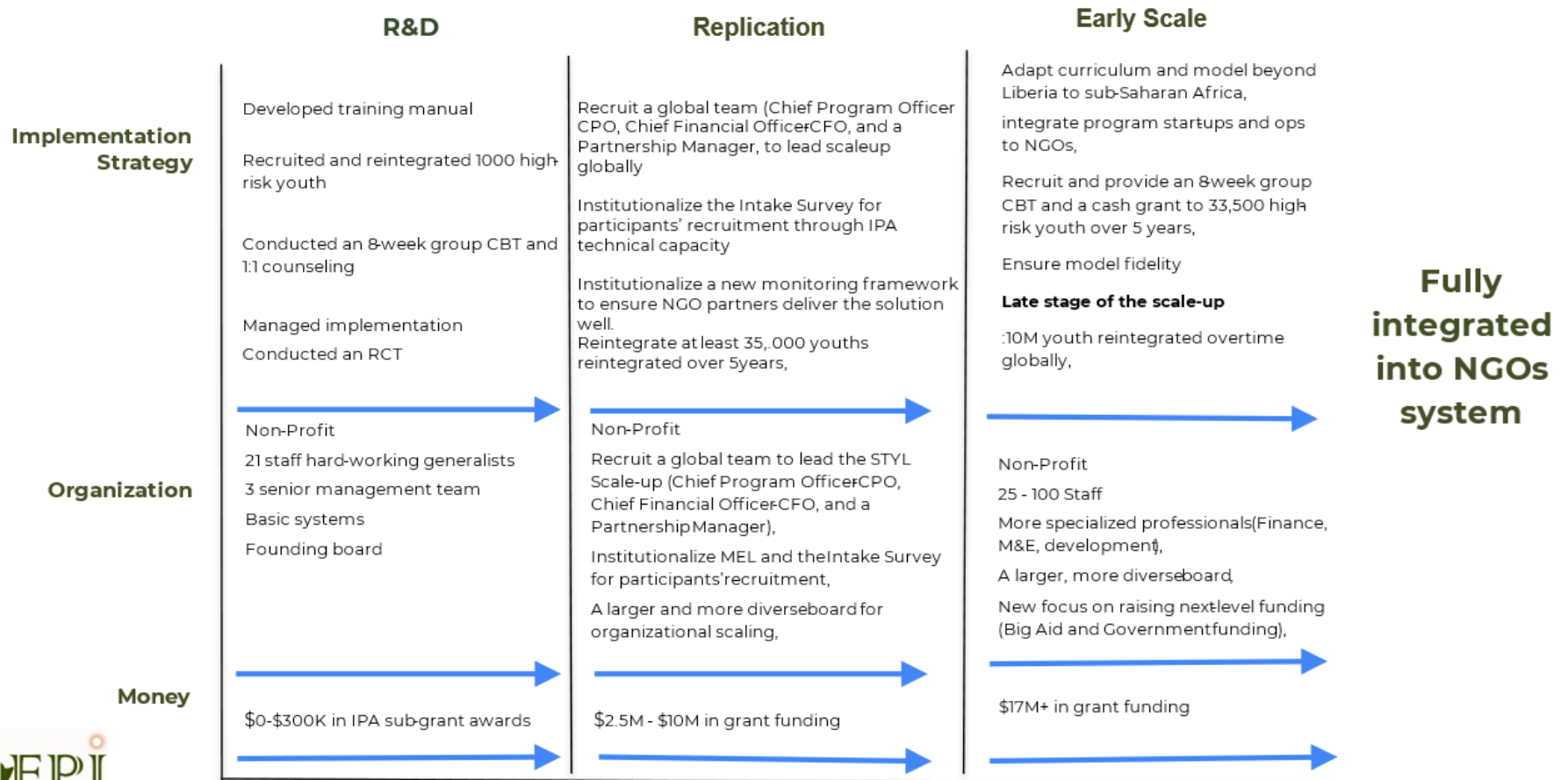
IDEA

CBT-based hardcore youth rehabilitation Program



TIME

NEPI STYL Scale-up Implementation Plan



STYL Scale-Up Implementation in Liberia:

NEPI Staff Refresher Workshop

NEPI Staff Capacity Strengthening Workshop in Preparation for STYL Scale-Up.

In February 2024, NEPI conducted a three-day in-house refresher workshop to reinforce organizational capacity and readiness for the scale-up of the STYL initiative. The training engaged 26 NEPI staff members alongside four co-facilitators who are graduates of the prior STYL implementation, fostering continuity of expertise and institutional memory.

The workshop focused on aligning participants with the updated design iteration, the evidence-based model, and the strategic path-to-scale plan. Through dedicated sessions, the training strengthened facilitation competencies, advanced understanding of group dynamics, and equipped staff with practical strategies for delivering impact at scale.

A comprehensive review of the STYL manual—now developed into a detailed implementation guide—was conducted to ensure consistent application of best practices across all training sites. Staff members demonstrated their facilitation skills in structured exercises designed to support effective peer learning and the strategic pairing of field teams across training centers.

This investment in capacity building is an essential step toward sustaining the fidelity and quality of STYL programming as NEPI expands its reach to new communities.

Mapping

Community Mapping to Inform Targeted Youth Engagement in Monrovia. The Sustainable Transformation of Youth in Liberia (STYL) program is designed to engage disadvantaged young people living in high-risk areas of Monrovia. To ensure interventions are responsive and effectively targeted, NEPI undertakes a structured community mapping process prior to participant recruitment.

The mapping exercise is conducted across three program zones: Central Monrovia, Paynesville, and Bushrod Island. It includes:

- Identifying community leaders and stakeholders to facilitate local collaboration.
- Locating hotspots where high-risk youth populations are most concentrated.
- Conducting awareness-raising activities about STYL’s objectives and benefits.

Given the high mobility of youth in these areas, NEPI consults closely with community representatives and partner organizations to validate and prioritize the most populated locations.

The exercise identified the following hotspots for engagement:

- **Central Monrovia:** 8 hotspots

- **Bushrod Island:** 7 hotspots
- **Paynesville:** 12 hotspots

This evidence-based mapping approach informs:

- The scale and scope of recruitment and enrollment activities.
- Allocation of resources across zones to match the size and needs of target populations.
- Effective engagement strategies tailored to specific community dynamics.

Community mapping is a critical component of STYL’s implementation, ensuring that interventions reach the most vulnerable youth and are grounded in local realities. Policymakers and stakeholders are encouraged to support similar evidence-driven approaches to maximize program impact and sustainability.

Data-Driven Recruitment: Institutionalizing the STYL Intake Survey

As part of efforts to enhance the rigor and effectiveness of its recruitment process, NEPI, with technical support from Innovation for Poverty Action (IPA), has institutionalized the STYL Intake Survey as a core component of program implementation.

Implementation Approach. The Intake Survey has been digitized using **SurveyCTO**, a secure and flexible mobile data collection platform. To support effective deployment, NEPI staff received comprehensive training on:

- Administering the survey via tablet-based devices
- Upholding ethical research standards, including obtaining informed consent
- Adhering to field protocols to ensure consistency and data quality

The integration of the Intake Survey ensures that:

- **Recruitment decisions** are informed by reliable, real-time data
- **Program scale-up** is guided by evidence, ensuring alignment with STYL’s proven impact model
- **Monitoring and evaluation** systems are strengthened for accountability and learning

Embedding digital data collection and ethical protocols at the recruitment stage contributes to more targeted, equitable, and effective service delivery. This model demonstrates how data-driven tools can be institutionalized to support evidence-based youth programming at scale.

Enumerators Recruitment, Training, and Pilot Survey

NEPI, a non-profit organization, recruits and trains individuals with relevant experience in data collection to conduct intake surveys aimed at engaging community participants. The enumerator recruitment process primarily targets candidates with prior experience in administering intake surveys or working with vulnerable populations.

This report outlines the enumerator recruitment approach, training program, and pilot survey activities conducted to ensure the effective implementation of the intake survey with at-risk youth.

For the majority of enumerator recruitment, NEPI prioritized individuals who had:

- Previous experience conducting intake surveys.
- Background working on projects involving vulnerable or at-risk populations.

This approach ensured that recruited enumerators possessed the foundational knowledge and sensitivity required for engaging with highly vulnerable youth.

A five-day interactive training program was conducted to equip enumerators with the skills, knowledge, and tools needed to administer the survey effectively. The training was practical and tailored to the objectives of the STYL program.

The training aimed to achieve the following outcomes:

a) Preparation of Field Staff

- Trained 26 field staff to conduct in-person surveys with at-risk youth in Monrovia using the Intake tool.

b) Familiarization with Protocols

- Supported field teams in understanding the STYL program field protocol and procedures.

c) Gaining Cooperation

- Introduced best practices for gaining respondent cooperation and obtaining informed consent, especially when engaging with difficult or hesitant respondents.

d) Security and Risk Mitigation

- Provided skills in identifying security risks and implementing mitigation strategies. Enumerators received training on safety protocols and risk management.

e) Interviewing Techniques

- Developed proficiency in interview practices, including probing techniques for quantitative data collection.
- Emphasized principles of effective communication, active listening, neutrality, non-judgmental responses, confidentiality, and ethical considerations.
- Prepared enumerators to handle sensitive topics professionally.

f) Practical Exercises and Evaluation

- Conducted mock interviews and role-playing scenarios to reinforce training content.
- Provided real-time feedback from peers and facilitators.
- Assessed learning through three quizzes and a final evaluation to identify knowledge gaps and measure readiness.

Key activities included:

- Familiarization with survey structure, question types, and logical skip patterns.
- Breakout sessions with enumeration teams and supervisors to discuss the Intake Survey and gather feedback.
- Practice administering the survey using digital data collection tools (SurveyCTO).
- Simulation exercises with challenging scenarios and uncooperative respondents to build enumerator confidence and skill.

To evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of the survey methodology, pilot fieldwork activities were conducted in a controlled environment.

The pilot aimed to:

- Assess enumerator readiness under real-world conditions.
- Evaluate participant response to the survey process.
- Gather insights to refine the full-scale survey implementation.

Key activities included:

- Conducting fieldwork exercises with respondents similar to the target STYL program participants.
- Facilitators observe enumerator performance to ensure adherence to protocols.
- Providing constructive feedback to improve consistency and quality of data collection.

The two-day pilot surveys were carried out across three different locations in Monrovia. A total of **36 participants** between the ages of **18 and 40** were surveyed.

- Enumerators demonstrated improved knowledge and confidence in administering the Intake Survey.
- Field teams gained familiarity with security and risk mitigation strategies.
- Pilot feedback informed adjustments to the survey methodology and field protocols.
- The structured and participatory training approach ensured enumerators were well-prepared for full-scale implementation.

The recruitment, training, and pilot survey activities successfully built enumerator capacity to engage at-risk youth and collect high-quality data. The insights gathered during the pilot will guide refinements to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the intake survey during program roll-out.

Deployment and Data Collection

Following the pilot phase, the data collection teams were deployed across the three designated survey zones: **Paynesville, Bushrod Island, and Central Monrovia.**

Three (3) supervisors each led a team of enumerators, with **five (5) enumerators assigned to each supervisor**, resulting in a total of fifteen enumerators conducting fieldwork.

Each enumerator was mandated to complete **up to five (5) surveys per day** over a **twelve (12) day period.**

To ensure the timely completion of data collection activities, the deployment strategy was adapted to reflect zones with higher concentrations of at-risk youth. Specifically, **two teams of enumerators were assigned to areas identified as having larger populations of eligible respondents.**

This targeted allocation of resources supported efficient survey coverage, strengthened engagement with the target population, and enhanced data quality across all locations.

Data Quality Assurance

Data quality as a key component of the recruitment was rigorously maintained throughout the recruitment process. Daily data downloads and systematic reviews were conducted to monitor key indicators, including outliers, duplicates, survey duration, enumerator productivity, logically skipped patterns, missing data, refusals, consent rates, survey form versions, eligibility violations, and survey coding accuracy. Text and audio audits further supported data integrity.

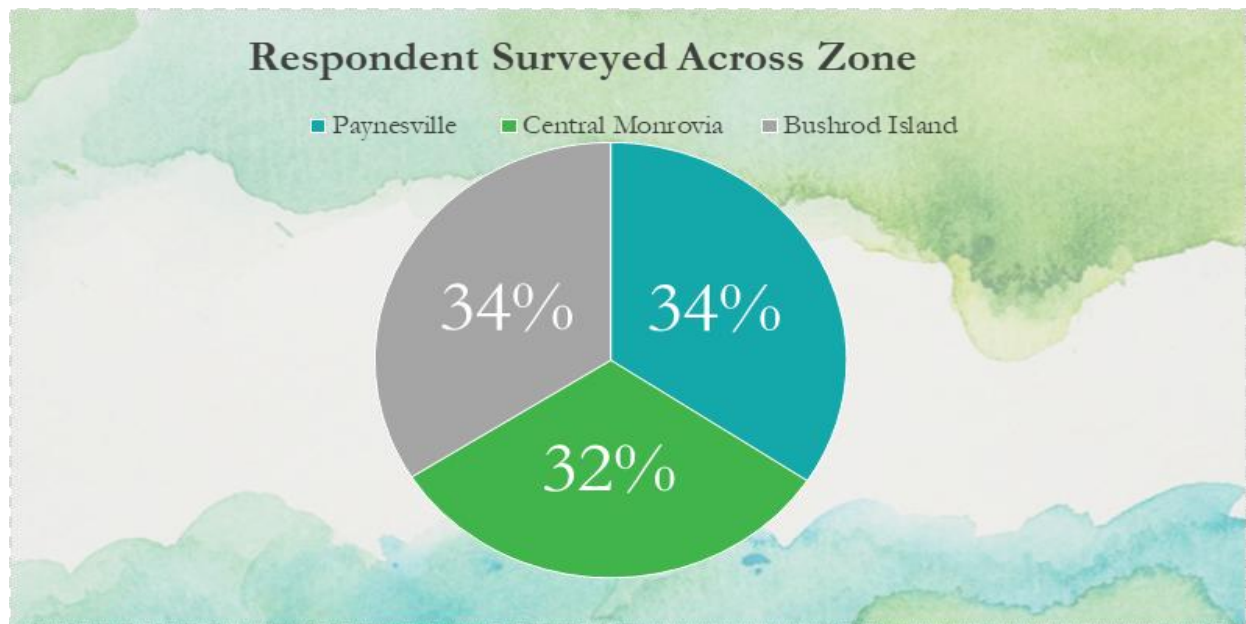
During Cycle 2, Cohorts 1 and 2, a total of 2,114 respondents were recruited from twelve hotspots in Paynesville, Bushrod Island, and Central Monrovia. All records were cleaned and verified to ensure participant eligibility in line with program criteria.

The table below presents the surveyed respondents across the three (3) zones.

Table 2: Respondents Surveyed

Zone	Freq.	Percent
Paynesville	726	34.34
Central Monrovia	669	31.65
Bushrod Island	719	34.01
Total	2,114	100

Image 1: Respondents surveyed across the zones



Respondent Profile

Of the 2,114 survey respondents:

- **Education:**
 - 66% (1,397) had not completed high school.
 - 30% (626) were out of high school.
 - 4% (91) were still in school.
 - Only 6% had completed elementary education.
- **Drug Use:**
 - 89% reported active drug addiction at the time of the survey.
 - Among those addicted, 29% also sold drugs.
 - The most frequently used substances were Italian White, followed by Diazepan/D-10 and Tie White.
 - Approximately 59% reported that their peers used drugs regularly.

STYL Participants selection and assignment

Participants in the STYL (Sustainable Transformation of Youth in Liberia) program were selected based on an index that measured anti-social and hostile behavior. This index was constructed using a combination of self-reported survey items designed to capture various dimensions of risky behavior, aggression, impulsivity, and conflict with authority. The index provided a standardized score for each respondent, allowing for objective identification of individuals exhibiting higher levels of behavioral risk.

A total of 2,114 respondents were initially surveyed through the Intake Survey using SurveyCTO, a digital data collection platform that ensured data accuracy and efficient field

monitoring. After data cleaning and processing in Stata, 1,058 individuals with the highest index scores were selected for admission into the STYL program. This selection threshold ensured that the program targeted youth who were most in need of behavioral intervention.

The table below shows the respondents who were selected to participate in the CBT for 2024.

Table 7: CBT Participants for 2024 (Cycle 2 Cohorts 1 & 2)

1= if the respondent is above their block's median index score	Paynesville	Central Monrovia	Bushrod Island	Total
0	363	334	359	1,056
1	363	335	360	1,058
Total	726	669	719	2,114

The above table shows that 50% of the sample was selected after the index calculation and randomization to be assigned to the various cohorts for 2024.

A photobook was created to help identify participants and assign them to training sessions. Photos were taken of all 2,114 survey respondents, with clear documentation. Among these, 1,058 participants were selected for the program, and their photos were linked to their names, IDs, communities, and training zones.

In Cycle 2: Cohort 1 and 2

- The **STYL 8-week CBT program** admitted 720 participants across Cohorts 1 and 2.
- The **NEPI program** enrolled 360 participants in Cohort 1 (224 graduated) and 360 in Cohort 2 (246 graduated).
- The program graduated 470 participants in 2024.

The participants received an **unconditional \$300 cash grant** to support them as they applied new skills and worked toward lifestyle changes. This cash transfer was paid in **two tranches**:

- **\$200** upon program completion
- **\$100** six months later

The organization **GiveDirectly** facilitated the digital cash transfers to graduates of the STYL program.

Learning Agenda

Since 2012, several randomized controlled trials (RCTs) have measured both the short-term and long-term impacts of relying on cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)-based activities to reduce crime and violence. Given this robust evidence base, the team does not propose an additional replication RCT evaluation of the core STYL program in Liberia. Instead, the focus is on testing adaptations to the program to improve cost-effectiveness and scalability.

The project's evaluation priorities center on two main areas:

1. **Exploration of Adaptations to Improve Cost-Effectiveness:**
 - Testing additional follow-up visits as a potential supplement to cash transfers to improve participant outcomes (this testing is already underway).
 - Comparing phone calls versus in-person follow-ups to assess whether participants can be reached more effectively and efficiently.
 - Varying the timing of cash transfers to compare CBT attendance and spending patterns when cash is received earlier.
2. **Exploration of the Model at Scale:**
 - Gathering information on participant needs in other contexts to inform the adaptation of a new STYL pilot.
 - Ensuring the monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) system is robust enough to track implementation quality as the program scales.
 - Exploring the possibility of leveraging the Ministry of Health's mental health professionals to deliver STYL at scale.

In addition, two further evaluations will be undertaken:

1. An evaluation of a new model combining a residential program with a detoxification component.
2. An evaluation of a pilot in Lagos, Nigeria.

Both initiatives are in very early stages and have not yet been implemented on a small scale. The intention is to conduct pilots to assess the feasibility of implementation and analyze their effects on early outcomes.

Finally, a comprehensive MEL strategy was developed with IPA in 2023 to ensure STYL is implemented at scale in alignment with its original design. A set of indicators has been defined to test the project's key assumptions and to track outputs and early outcomes during scaling. Special attention will be given to monitoring cash transfers, incorporating safeguards to prevent misuse for criminal activities.

STYL Implementation in Lagos, Nigeria:

Regional Expansion and Country Selection Strategy

The Organized Crime Index: We use the *Organized Crime Index*, a project funded by the European Union, to assess both the extent of criminality and a country's resilience to organized crime. According to research and stakeholder discussions, the success of NEPI's program in Liberia was largely attributable to the absence of entrenched, large-scale, organized criminal networks.

The Index provides two primary indicators of criminality:

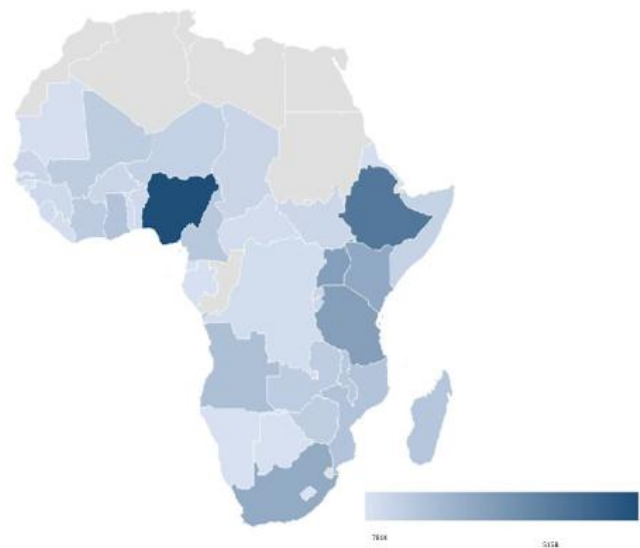
- **Criminal Market:** Measures of the scale and scope of illicit markets, including:
 - Human Trafficking
 - Human Smuggling
 - Arms Trafficking
 - Flora Crimes
 - Fauna Crimes
 - Heroin Trade
 - Cocaine Trade
 - Cannabis Trade
 - Synthetic Drug Trade
- **Criminal Actors:** Measures the presence and influence of organized criminal actors, including:
 - Mafia-Style Groups
 - Criminal Networks
 - State-Embedded Actors
 - Foreign Actors



These indicators enable us to better understand the nature and prevalence of organized crime within a country context.

Absolute Need: The *Absolute Need Index* measures the prevalence of interpersonal violence deaths per 100,000 population. Data on interpersonal violence deaths are sourced from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) and are current through 2019. Population figures are obtained from the World Bank as of 2019.

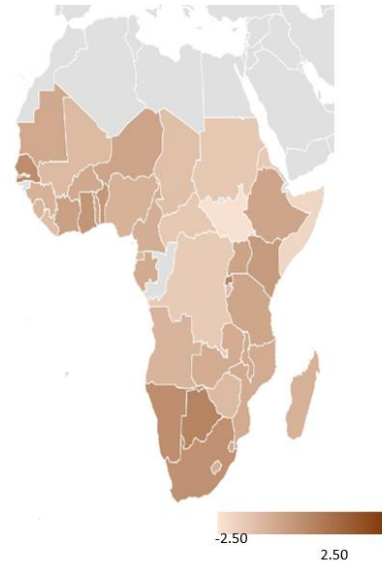
Understanding both the extent of interpersonal violence and the size of the affected population is essential for designing effective interventions and for evaluating the program's impact on reducing violence and improving well-being. Additionally, comparing the absolute needs of Sub-Saharan African countries to those of Liberia will provide valuable context for assessing the potential impact of NEPI's program.



Entry Feasibility: *Entry Feasibility* measures a country’s government effectiveness and its political interest in addressing youth-related issues.

Government effectiveness is assessed using data from the *Worldwide Governance Indicators* (WGI), a project of the World Bank. This indicator reflects **perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality and independence of the civil service, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the government’s commitment to those policies.**

Political interest is evaluated based on input from implementation partners and a review of publicly available information on existing youth programs.



**Partnership to Accelerate Impact:
NEPI/IPA Partnership on MEL Development**

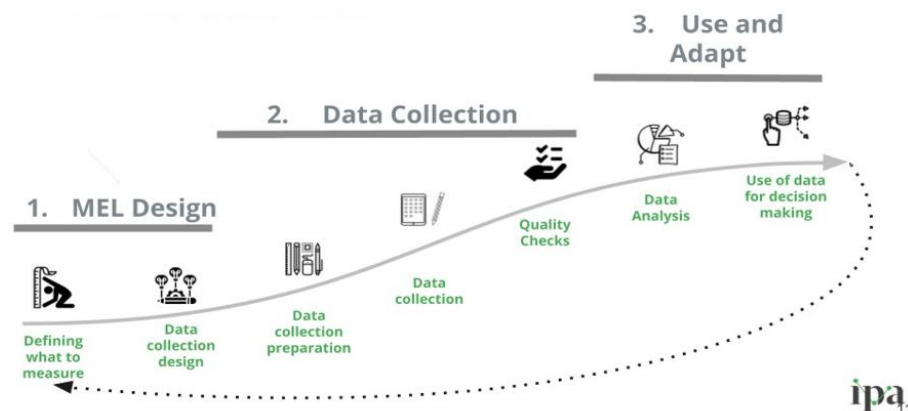
In 2024, IPA continue to support NEPI to test, validate, and adapt its program to have maximum impact. The support included MEL/Learning and government engagement.

Key Activities:

MEL/Learning Support: IPA supported NEPI in refining the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) system. The system allows NEPI to track its program activities and outcomes, which is key to tracking implementation fidelity and making adjustments to the program. IPA prepared NEPI to conduct comprehensive MEL activities that achieve the below objectives:

- Monitor program delivery and make data-driven adjustments to ensure the quality of implementation at scale;
- Test program adaptation required for success at scale and
- Foster NEPI’s organizational learning so that NEPI can adjust and improve its program in an evidence-driven way.

IPA Partnership with NEPI to Develop Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning System (MEL System)



IPA Support to Government Engagement

IPA also continues its support to NEPI to refine the government engagement strategy. The strategy aimed to enhance the buy-in of the Liberian government ministries into a scale-up of the STYL program across Liberia. This created a more sustainable ecosystem around its model, increasing the likelihood of sustained impact at scale. NEPI will scope potential implementing partners to continue scaling the program nationally through a hybrid model using both NEPI and an implementing partner (with NEPI playing a technical assistance role).

NEPI/GDI Partnership

To develop a strategy for scaling and replicating the STYL program beyond the current implementation by NEPI in Liberia, including replication in other countries, in 2023, the Global Development Incubator (GDI) partnered with NEPI to incubate the organization. GDI has a track record of launching transformative social ventures. The GDI incubation model comprises four phases, which include:

- Discovery
- Design
- Build
- Exit

During the first phase, GDI discovered the following opportunities within the NEPI model:

- CBT-based violence prevention interventions have a growing body of evidence;
- However, there is a low uptake of these interventions across Sub-Saharan Africa;
- NEPI and its partners have developed distinctive experience in designing and implementing this intervention.

Based on these findings and to seize the existing opportunity, GDI asserts NEPI needs to (1) build its organizational capacity, (2) forge new partnerships regionally, and (3) potentially spin out a new organization. For the design phase, GDI is supporting NEPI in building its organizational capacity and forging new partnerships regionally, with investment in its regional expansion strategies.

GDI's approach during the design phase includes:

- Embedding some of its staff into NEPI to support a regional scale-up;
- Developing a regional strategy and methodology for adapting STYL to new contexts;
- Adapting STYL for implementation in at least one additional country, engaging a local partner;
- Cultivating a pipeline of new opportunities in other countries;
- Building the team;
- Developing a new brand and communications strategy;
- Mobilizing resources to support near-term projects and longer-term sustainable financing for CBT-based interventions in the region;

NEPI has completed the GDI discovery phases and is now in the design phase of the incubation process, with the organization partially funding regional expansion efforts. GDI will continue to

partner with NEPI to provide strategic and operational support for the regional expansion program.

With GDI support, NEPI achieved the following:

- Identify implementing partners in Nigeria and support partner capacity building and support participants' recruitment;
- Prepared for the launch of a small-scale pilot with four cohorts of 25 high-risk young men, 100 participants total, in early 2024 in Lagos, Nigeria;
- Replicate the results from the STYL program in Lagos;
- Gain strategic and operational insights on how to scale in a new country;
- Identify opportunities for near – and long-term funding in Nigeria;
- Secure funding for program expansion in Liberia and Nigeria;

NEPI/GiveDirectly Partnership

NEPI explored a partnership with GiveDirectly (GD) to deliver digital cash transfers for the STYL program. The cash transfer consists of a lump-sum payment of US \$300. An initial tranche payment of US \$200 is made upon the program completion and a \$100 payment 6 months after the training. The organization partnered with NEPI to enroll STYL program participants for the disbursement of an Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) and related operational monitoring.

Of the 1058 randomly assigned participants, the STYL 8-week group, CBT, admitted 720 participants in Cycle 2, Cohorts 1 and 2. NEPI enrolled 360 participants in Cycle 2 Cohort 1 and graduated 224 and enrolled 360 in Cycle 2, Cohort 2, and graduated 246. The program is accompanied by an unconditional \$300 cash grant, which provides income support as the young men practice what they learn and focus on changing their lifestyles. The cash transfer consists of two tranche payments. The first tranche payment was US \$200 upon program completion and US \$100 six months after the program's completion. GiveDirectly delivers digital cash transfers to program graduates of the STYL program.

The partnership developed the following system for the NEPI/STYL program:

- Developed and rolled out an Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) System,
- Conducted several technical and safety verifications to integrate participants into the cash payment system to complete payments.
- Conducted an in-person enrollment of 720 participants in Cycle 2, Cohorts 1 and 2, to decrease operational complexity and reduce payment delays associated with registration errors;
- Distributed SIM cards for program participants' mobile money transfers and conducted town hall to explain mobile money basics, including how to withdraw and PIN/security considerations;
- Addressed incorrect mobile money registration and payment issues arising during the disbursement;
- Distributed cash to program beneficiaries;
- Conducted a post-payment survey to confirm successful transfer receipt;

- Collected data on participants’ enrollment, participants who were successfully paid, experiences, operational metrics challenges, and spending choices.

What needs to be true for a recipient to be paid?

If a recipient’s data checks off all these boxes, then they will be considered ‘ready for pay’ and included in our payment list.

1	Correct Stage	They are in stage Pay	
2	Correct Transfer Date	Their next transfer date is on or before Preparation Day of payments	
3	Passed Screening	They passed ComplyAdvantage sanctions screening on Processing Days	
4	Passed Name Verification	They passed name verification on Processing Days (the name we have for their phone number matches the name returned by the MNO)	
5	0 Blocking Cases	They have no active blocking cases open (with the call center or IA team)	
6	0 Recipient Pauses	They do not have an active Director’s Check (note: it is the CD’s responsibility to submit all pause requests)	
7	0 Geo-level Pauses	They are not in a geographic level that has been paused for payments (note: this can only be done at the lowest geographic level)	
8	Transfer Followed Up	Their most recently completed transfer has been followed up (if applicable)	

Why might a recipient’s transfer be delayed during payments?

1	Open Case(s)	A recipient has an open case as of Processing Days of payments
2	Director’s Pause	A CD has placed requested a director’s check on a recipient, which blocks their transfer for a one -month period (checks are reset on Reconciliation Day of payments)
3	Follow Up Missing	A recipient has not received a follow -up for their most recently completed transfer and is therefore not ready for the next payment
4	Geographic Level Block	A CD has placed a request to block certain geographic levels from being paid, which blocks the transfers for all recipients in that level for a one -month period (village blocks are reset on Reconciliation Day of payments)
5	Sanctions Screening Flag	A recipient was flagged during sanctions screening on Preparation Day and Joe did not approve them, or they were newly flagged during sanctions screening on Processing Days
6	Name Verification Failure	A recipient failed name verification (this could be due to several things, such as the provider saying that the account number for a recipient is not registered or the data team manually denying a recipient because the name returned by a provider is too dissimilar to the name we have for a given account)
7	Payment Gateway Failure	Data team attempted to send the payment, but it failed for any number of reasons that vary greatly by the portal and the mobile money provider: not enough funds, challenges with the MoMo or portal itself, incorrect sim registration, etc.

*See more information on why a recipient might not have been paid [here](#) (note that this document includes only Segovia screenshots)

Appendix

NEPI Core Values

Leadership

We are committed to being effective stewards who engender trust and provide solutions that lead to change and deliver the highest quality of integrated care.

We live our ethics and values daily, upholding an organizational culture that recognizes and celebrates our diverse strengths.

We honor the unique identity of every person we serve, treating each individual with dignity, respect, friendliness, care, and compassion.

Our passion to provide exceptional service drives everything we do.

Accountability

We foster an environment of trust through openness, honesty, and transparency.

We hold ourselves and others accountable for decisions, actions, and outcomes.

We are committed to being responsible stewards of the financial resources entrusted to us.

We remain accountable to our donors, Board, and host governments for the impact we deliver and how we use our resources.

Excellence

We pursue the highest standards in all our endeavors.

We ground our work in best practices and continuously drive innovation.

Excellence is the hallmark of every process, service, and result we undertake.

Transparency

We uphold total transparency.

We share clear, accessible information about how we allocate and manage funds.

We guarantee responsible and effective management across all our activities.

Collaboration

We believe that people affected by conflict are essential partners in the peace process.

We promote peaceful coexistence by working hand in hand with local communities, governments, and donors to address violence and crime.

Together, we design timely, effective programs that create sustainable solutions to local challenges.

Our Stakeholders

NEPI stakeholders include:

- The people and communities we serve (our primary stakeholders),
- Donors,
- Partners,
- Governments,
- Philanthropists.

Our Commitments to Stakeholders:

- We act ethically as individuals and as an organization.
- We treat all people with respect.
- We are open and transparent about our work and methods.
- We ensure stakeholder participation in design, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.
- We are effective stewards of financial resources and the natural environment.
- We commit to achieving demonstrable impact, using stakeholder feedback to learn, improve, and innovate.

After the country selection strategy, we intended to focus on the first three countries (Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Congo) below for a replication pilot.

Liberia

Organized Crime Index		Country Need	Entry Feasibility	
Criminal Market	Criminal Actors	Absolute Need	Government Effectiveness	Political Interest
5.10	5.00	18.2B	-1.38	High

Sierra Leone

Organized Crime Index		Country Need	Entry Feasibility	
Criminal Market	Criminal Actors	Absolute Need	Government Effectiveness	Political Interest
5.05	5.75	23.3B	-1.11	Medium

Nigeria

Organized Crime Index		Country Need	Entry Feasibility	
Criminal Market	Criminal Actors	Absolute Need	Government Effectiveness	Political Interest
7.05	7.25	515.7B	-1.00	Medium

Potential Country: Sierra Leone

- 80 percent of population in Sierra Leone is under the age of 35
 - Over 60 percent of youth are experiencing structural unemployment, high illiteracy rates and lack of education
 - Youth are disillusioned and largely become involved in crime to support themselves and their families
-

Potential Country: Nigeria

- 70 percent of population under the age of 35
 - Nearly 54 percent of youth are unemployed
 - Estimated that 65 percent of total economy under the informal sector
 - Lagos state has the largest crime incidence, accounts for nearly 40 percent of crimes in Nigeria
 - Boko Haram is very active in Northern Nigeria, and able to recruit youth through force, money, and psychosocial factors
-

Potential Country: Congo

- 60 percent of population in Congo is under the age of 24
 - High youth unemployment of 30.5 percent, but likely higher (80 - 90 percent) with lack of access to quality education and market-relevant skills
 - According to UNICEF, approximately 10,000 youth are associated with armed groups and forced labor
 - Large share of crime is perpetrated by armed militant groups in Congo
-

Criteria: Greatest Need

In Liberia, NEPI was able to make an impact because of the presence of high -risk youth engaged in crime. The next country should have a high youth population and a high incidence of crime. In -country data collection will be key to understanding the youth crime and violence rates in the chosen country.

	Congo	Nigeria	Sierra Leone
Youth Population (15 -24)	7.7M	18.5M	757K
Prevalence of Interpersonal Violence Deaths per 100,000	3,923	2,416	2,764
Absolute Need*	22.9B	515.7B	23.3B
Organized Crime Index	5.03	7.15	5.40

*Absolute need is a measure of the country population and prevalence of interpersonal violence deaths

¹ce: [United Nations Population Fund](#), Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, World Bank, Institute for Security Studies

Criteria: High-Impact CBT

Initial research and interviews about the potential expansion countries indicate CBT could potentially impact high-risk young men.

Congo	Nigeria	Sierra Leone
There are a few studies and interventions that have utilized CBT to help high-risk young men. However, the studies largely focus on war-affected youth and former child soldiers, under 18. Further, there is no evidence of programming that incorporates cash transfer. Our partner in Congo has experience with delivering CBT to youth.	No comparable interventions to NEPI's STYL program have been identified in Nigeria. Existing studies in southwest Nigeria (Ibadan) and southeast Nigeria focused on limited participants (40 and 45, respectively) and different age groups, lacking comprehensive data collection on behaviors related to loneliness and anti-socialness.	There has been a CBT intervention aimed at war-affected youth. Other small-scale interventions but no organizations similar to NEPI doing this work. Further, no indication of cash transfer programs or programs solely focused on high-risk young men engaged in criminal activities.
Opportunity: High Existing gap in market	Opportunity: High Existing gap in market	Opportunity: High Existing gap in the market

Criteria: Implementing Partners

Congo	Nigeria	Sierra Leone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GiveDirectly DRC • CBT Expert from Congo Initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Peace Advancement in Nigeria (CEPAN) • Challenge Fund for Youth Employment (CFYE) • CLEEN Foundation • IPA Nigeria • Youth Experts at Ford Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPA Sierra Leone • Prison Watch Sierra Leone • Research Program on Children and Adversity (RPCA) • WAYout Arts
Dedicated and motivated partners with a strong commitment to utilizing CBT to help high-risk youth. Partners identified have the ability to potentially support program adaptation and implementation.	There are a few youth initiatives in this space, but not many are with youth involved in crime. IPA Nigeria and the experts at the Ford Foundation appear enthusiastic and capable of recommending organizations for program implementation.	Existing relationships and new partners are interested in this work, and there is CBT experience available. However, there are concerns around fidelity to STYL program and making adjustments to include high-risk young women.

Criteria: Favorable Environment

	Congo	Nigeria	Sierra Leone
Conflict Status	Active <i>Kivu Conflict</i>	Inactive <i>Boko Haram active in North</i>	Inactive <i>Civil War ended 2002</i>
Government/ Political Environment	Human rights concerns and large degree of insecurity in the country. The government is viewed as ineffective, corrupt, and unstable.	Recent elections and government is currently tackling economic issues, but it is relatively stable.	Held election in June 2023 and President Bio won his second term. Some corruption concerns, but government is stable.
Funding Availability*	\$752M <i>International community providing a lot of funding to address conflict and restore stability</i>	\$525M <i>Some funding related to youth, addressing Boko Haram (primarily focused on women & children), etc.</i>	\$25M <i>Funders not as interested in, US funding related to access to electricity and water</i>
Language	French	English	English

*Funding availability based on US Foreign Assistance statistics

Potential Risks

Congo	Nigeria	Sierra Leone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active conflict status could make working in Congo risky and unsafe Unclear if STYL program will work in this context Lack of experience with trauma-informed CBT Financial fraud risk with cash transfer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will we be able to expand to Northern Nigeria? Will the program be a viable alternative for youth considering joining Boko Haram? Have not identified experienced CBT providers who have worked with this population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of a strong partner Existing partner is interested in providing program to at-risk young women Concerns around funding availability and funder interests in youth

Identification of Implementing Partners and Pilot Focus

Potential Partners

Cleen is one of the best-known NGOs working on crime + violence in Nigeria

- Cleen works nationally and has a presence in Lagos
- They have extensive relationships with federal, state, and local governments; civil society actors; donors; and researchers.
- They have built an app that enables citizens to report crimes, which has modest uptake so far
- In Lagos, their primary entry point is the Crime Prevention Project. Each local government area within Lagos state has a CPP composed of community leaders who meet monthly to collaborate on peacebuilding. The CPPs coalesce at the state level in a Crime Prevention Strategic Group that reports to the Department of Education and has ties to the Police Commissioner.
- Cleen's current programming in Lagos includes (1) cybercrime program, (2) Small pilot to wean drug-dependent people (3) facilitation of CPP meetings in select LGAs

We are open to working with other implementing partners

- There may be other organizations that we have yet to discover: international NGOs working on peace and security; and organizations working in specific regions, states, or local government areas. In the coming weeks, we will try to survey additional candidates
- As a first partner we are looking for a high-capacity organization that is reliable and nimble. If and when we expand, we may consider smaller grassroots organizations that have credible street outreach.
- Our approach to partner selection
 - Select a partner after we have decided on a specific geography and target population
 - Run an RFP, even if Cleen is likely to be a leading contender

A small group of passionate and expert individuals may serve as advisors

- Patrick Okigbo (Founder/CEO, Nextier) has a strong network in the public + social sectors at a very senior level. His org has built a crime and violence database. They supported the design of the Amnesty Program for Niger Delta Militants. He has read Chris's book Why We Fight. He has the expertise, interest, and network to serve as a strong advisor.
- Onyinye Onyemobi (Program Officer, Ford Foundation) has a background in leading crime and violence programs. She can be found in the market chatting up street boys. She has the program expertise and personal conviction to serve as an advisor. She may also help us navigate the funder landscape.

- Arinze Nwokolo (Asst Prof, Lagos Business School) is a mentee of Chris Blattman. His scholarship includes a focus on crime and violence. He is designing another research study using a CBT-based intervention.
- We would benefit from additional advisors, especially
 - An individual with lived experience of crime + violence
 - A former government official (former, so that they're neutral, free to speak openly)
 - An expert in crime + violence, with implementing experience (but no conflict of interest – i.e. won't be bidding on our RFP)
 - Credible local leader, once we have selected a local government area

Some organizations may be allies but are unlikely to lead implementation

- LEAP Africa: high-talent, youth-led NGO that operates at the ecosystem level. They have secured major funding from private foundations like Mastercard Foundation to re-grant to a variety of other youth-focused organizations. Through that work they've built a strong network of NGOs, talent, and funders.
- Africa Youth Growth Foundation: a 20+-year-old organization with programs in livelihood and public health. They mostly work as a subcontractor to larger international implementing partners.
- Mentally Aware Nigeria Initiative. MANI has a strong social media presence, raising awareness around mental health issues, and tackling stigma issues. They offer virtual counseling sessions based in CBT, overseen by a clinical psychologist
- Ere Wellness. Corporate wellness programs that leverage CBT. The founder is well-networked in the mental health space, is trained in CBT, and is interested in the project director position.

Pilot Focus

Violence in Nigeria is high throughout the country and varies regionally.

- Some types of violence are widely distributed: Electoral and other politically motivated violence; Gender-based violence; Cultism and ritual killings; Kidnapping
- Other forms of violence are concentrated regionally
 - Urban violence, especially in Lagos – described further below
 - Conflicts related to the extraction of oil and minerals, especially in the Niger Delta and in the North
 - Terrorism, especially connected to Boko Haram in the North East

Violence in Lagos has ties to road workers and the state government.

- For decades, informal sector transit workers have had disputes over territory and routes that often turn violent.
- Politicians (including the former Lagos State Governor, now President) have organized these workers in the National Union of Road Transit Workers to whip votes and to support state revenue collection.
- The same system sustains the trade of drugs, weapons, and other contraband, which attracts its own territorial disputes. The prevalence of drug use is an added risk factor for violent behavior.
- Local gangs extort money from small businesses, under the threat of violence. This also has a territorial nature that may be connected to road worker territories.
- Kidnapping schemes also take advantage of transit systems.
- A vibrant cybercrime industry employs many youth who channel stolen accounts to more experienced cybercriminals. The revenue finances gang activity and violent rivalries.
- Young men who work relatively independently steal from citizens, also under threat of violence

The pilot's focus has two features

- Geographic: Which local government area (or sub-LGA neighborhood)? We are open to LGAs outside of Lagos, given what we've learned about the extent of the organization of crime there.
- Priority population: What population within that geography?

We plan a pilot focusing on 100 men

- The pilot would be conducted as four sequential cohorts of 25 men, allowing for an iterative approach to learning and program improvement
- All four cohorts would focus on a single geography. The cohorts are likely to focus on a single priority population, with some refinements to recruitment

In selecting a geography and priority population, we have several considerations:

- Strategy: Which geographies/priority populations allow us to learn about how to address the biggest drivers of violence in Nigeria?
 - From one selected LGA (likely Agege, could also consider Ajeromi or Surulere)
 - Involved in high-risk activities in terms of the impact of the violence on the communities, such as armed violence, drug trafficking, or extortion
 - Likely not personally profiting much from the criminal activities

- Effectiveness: To what extent does global evidence suggest that a STYL-like program (CBT+cash) will be effective for that geography/priority population?
- Contextual: How do we situate the work within kindred efforts?
 - Focus on white spaces, i.e. geographies/population segments that are not served by others
 - Focus on alignment, i.e. geographies/population segments that have well-aligned programs/infrastructure we can piggy-back on
- Risks: How will the government and gangs respond? Will they shut us down if we address organized crime / expose data that threatens their revenue/power?

Program Structure:

- 8-week intensive CBT-based training program + N400,000-500,000 cash transfer
- Modules adapted from Liberia program, contextualized for Lagos
- 2 facilitators per cohort (1 lead, 1 co-facilitator, with 1 facilitator on standby)
- 3 weekly group sessions plus one-on-one counseling

Program Components:

- Intake and Assessment:
 - 19-question risk assessment survey
 - Initial drug testing (for baseline data, not for exclusion) - *additional area for discussion*
- Core Modules (adapted for Lagos context):
 - Transformation
 - Substance Abuse Awareness
 - Personal and Environmental Hygiene
 - Anger Management, Self-Esteem and Etiquette
 - Goal Setting and Planning
 - Financial Literacy and Management
 - Job Readiness
- Out-of-Classroom Activities:
 - Community service projects
 - Sports events
- Cash Transfer:
 - Total amount: N400,000-500,000 per participant (tranche delivery to be adapted)
 - First tranche: upon program completion
 - Second tranche: after 3-6 months
- Follow-up and Support:
 - Weekly one-on-one check-ins during the program
 - 6 months of post-program follow-up

- Referrals to vocational training or job opportunities, and support partners for mental health and substance abuse
- Monitoring and Evaluation:
 - Use mixed methods MEL with both qualitative and quantitative data; consider spillover effects and long-term impacts
 - Include participant and program-level indicators; establish baseline data
 - Evaluate crime reduction, economic, social, and psychological outcomes
 - Key components: intake surveys, feedback sessions, economic tracking, behavioral assessments, module-specific tests
 - For small sample sizes, focus on earlier elements in the Theory of Change
 - Pre-register analysis to ensure reporting on all planned outcomes
 - MEL and research will largely evaluate the differences between cohorts rather than within cohorts
 - Consider long-term follow-up, potentially up to 10 years post-intervention

STYL Scale-up Opportunities in and Beyond Liberia

StrongMinds Visit Report

A StrongMinds staff (Rosco Kasujja) visited NEPI in Liberia and spent five working days with the staff at the office as well as a day observing groups (two groups) and a consultation visit with and at the Ministry of Health. The staff was able to interact with the staff who implemented the STYL model and past clients who were available to interact with the StrongMinds staff. The StrongMinds staff was also invited to a partnership meeting with representatives from FID, the Ministry of Health, the Carter Center, GiveDirectly, and the Center for Rehabilitation and Reintegration. Finally, the StrongMinds staff spent time with the NEPI program staff, research and innovation staff, and the partnership team during the visit. His observations and recommendations are below:

Observations

1. NEPI's philosophy: The work that NEPI is doing in Liberia is highly admirable and recognized wherever you go. I believe that the rehabilitation process of youths involved in anti-social behaviour, specifically, violence is currently leaving a mark on many communities. Any society that has experienced violence would need a player dedicated to helping the youths turn their lives around and in the same way prevent the destruction of both life and property within the community. NEPI is aware of the under-privileged and poor access to government services hence the determination to support local youths.
2. STYL model: The components of STYL are built within a well-researched approach referred to as cognitive behavioural therapy and results are publicly available for anyone to see for themselves. The model offered transformative approaches to formerly violent

youths, and an intense 8-weeks counselling process before embarking on a cash grant that provides an opportunity to any youth to have a head-start as they look to rebuild their lives and contribute to the bigger community. This model is intense and requires a lot of money and human resources to hit big targets. It was evident that it is only possible to enrol a specific number of clients per cycle while the rest wait in the cue for the next intake. It was impressive to listen to the staff and former clients passionately talk about the lessons over the past years but more impressive was their willingness to innovate around the model to make it less financially straining as well as scalable within and outside Liberia.

3. NEPI's current achievements: NEPI's operations over the past year have resulted in the rehabilitation of thousands of youths and led to behavioural change. It is worth mentioning that the cash grants also directly change communities economically. The partnerships and ambitions that NEPI holds are an achievement in themselves.
4. Scalability: While the model is scalable which in any sense is practical, it might not necessarily be transferable to all communities. While this is normal, it also brings into question the issue of mental health which hasn't been prioritized in the programming. It is important to think about innovations around the model to ensure that more people have access to the services while at the same time increasing efficiency in reach and quality. NEPI already collects data on various outcome variables, and it is time to capitalize on this and innovate around the model and its implementation in Liberia and beyond.
5. Openness: It is without doubt that I report how receptive and open all the NEPI staff were to my visit. The willingness to self-critique and encourage the conversation around innovation for efficiency was not only impressive but timely. While it is easy and natural for any organization or team to fall in love with their model and not welcome any idea to change it, the NEPI team was continuously open to the idea of improving their programming in any way possible. This was demonstrated throughout my conversations with all the NEPI team.

Recommendations

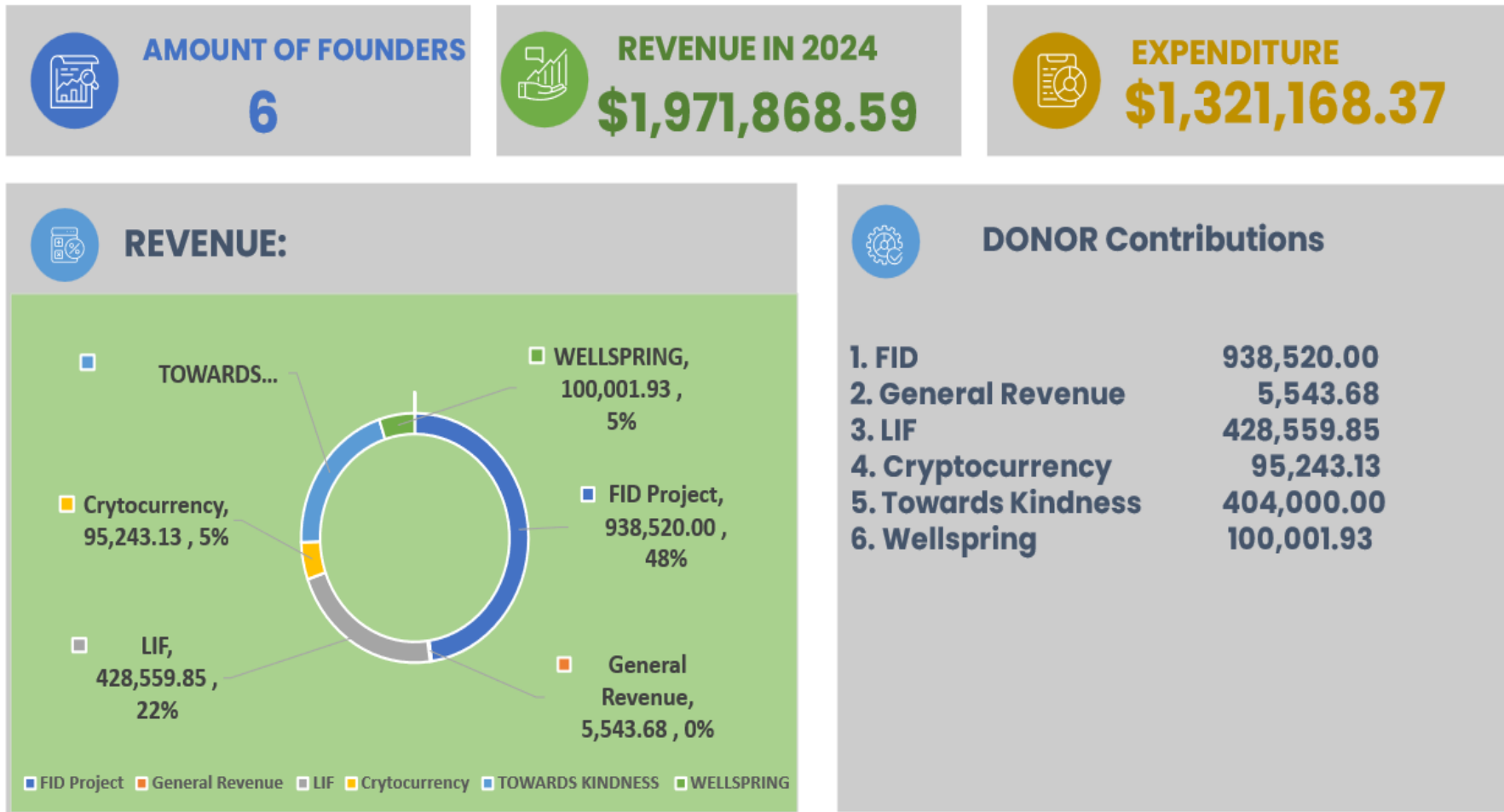
1. NEPI's transformation program for the youths involved in violence is effective but comes at a cost both in form of time and finances. On average, one group of 20 participants receives more than 12 hours of contact with two facilitators each week yet it is not a residential program. This is costly (both in terms of time and finances). We discussed at length how this can be changed, and the team has some impressive ideas about this. For NEPI to increase their reach they must make room for more participants, but this can only happen after tweaking the model. StrongMinds can support their research and implementation team if this is the direction that they would like to take.

2. NEPI has a huge opportunity to improve their mental health programming in Liberia and beyond. NEPI already captures so much out data around mental health but offering mental health services to communities is still something that hasn't been well attended to. With StrongMinds lies a huge opportunity to replicate the model with lay workers (community volunteers) which is inline with the World Health Organization recommendations due to a global lack of specialists in mental health in low- and middle-income countries. Over the years StrongMinds has developed and tested models on scaling up mental health services in Africa. This is something that NEPI could replicate.

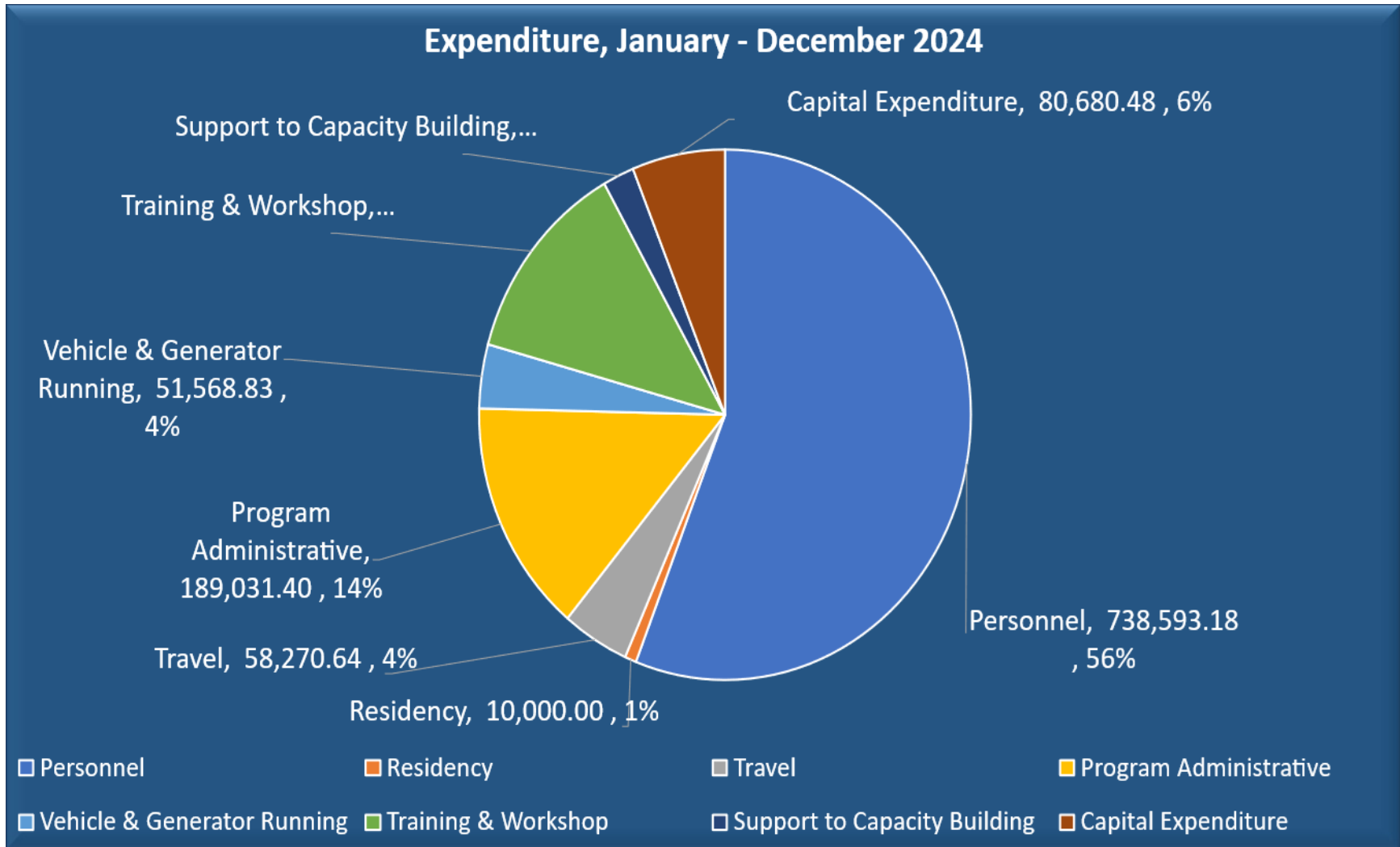
Conclusion

NEPI has a great opportunity to scale and reinvent itself for the good. Both StrongMinds and NEPI have the potential for a healthy partnership and collaboration should they choose to explore this. It was a clear realization that opportunities are available for both organizations to continue serving communities in areas where they are established with scaling-up opportunities up for grabs. There will be many partners who will need NEPI's expertise worldwide once they scale their adapted model.

2024 Revenue and Expenditures Dashboard



Expenditure, January – December 2024



Statement of Activities by Donor

Statement of Activities by Donor							
30-Dec-24							
	FID Project	General Revenue	LIF	Cryptocurrency	TOWARDS KINDNESS	WELLSPRING	TOTAL
REVENUE							
Donation	938,520.00	5,543.68	428,559.85	95,243.13	404,000.00	100,001.93	1,971,868.59
Other Revenue		-	-		-	-	-
Total Revenue	938,520.00	5,543.68	428,559.85	95,243.13	404,000.00	100,001.93	1,971,868.59
EXPENDITURE							
Personnel	6,732.00	678.46	388,451.48	41,601.13	204,141.10	96,989.01	738,593.18
Residency	8,000.00	-	-	-	2,000.00	-	10,000.00
Travel	-	-	53,412.32	-	4,858.32	-	58,270.64
Program Administrative	1,534.00	686.73	129,576.90	5,042.03	37,014.22	15,177.52	189,031.40
Vehicle & Generator Running	-	-	36,020.65	1,253.18	9,540.00	4,755.00	51,568.83
Training & Workshop	-	-	152,840.51	-	3,470.25	9,510.00	165,820.76
Support to Capacity Building	750.00	-	7,143.58	1,149.50	17,310.00	850.00	27,203.08
Capital Expenditure	-	552.80	53,105.64	1,037.49	18,241.15	7,743.40	80,680.48
Total Expenditure	17,016.00	1,917.99	820,551.08	50,083.33	296,575.04	135,024.93	1,321,168.37

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\$1,3 Million

**Annual Revenue
Growth in One Year**



26th Street, Tubman Blvd, Sinkor,

1000 Monrovia, 10 Liberia

Mobile: +1 715-977-1020; +231 88 081 7428

borhj@nepilibria.org

borhjonson@yahoo.com

www.nepilibria.org