

YOUTH DREAM FOR CONSTRUCTIVE ACHIEVEMENT – YDCA LIBERIA

BENJAMIN LAMBSON SCHOLARSHIP FUND PROPOSAL

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY THROUGH EDUCATION IN LIBERIA



STARTING SMALL TO GROW BIG!

Project name	Benjamin Lambson Scholarship Fund
Project site	Brewerville, Liberia
Implementing organization	Youth Dream for Constructive Achievement – YDCA Liberia
Address	Brewerville City, Montserrado County, Liberia
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E-Mail	ydca2018@gmail.com
Budget	\$2,000.00 per academic year
Beneficiaries	5 disadvantaged children
Important information	The Benjamin Lambson Scholarship Programme is designed as a long-term commitment , providing continued support to each child for as long as they remain enrolled in school and eligible.

ABOUT Youth Dream for Constructive Achievement – YDCA Liberia

The Youth Dream for Constructive Achievement – YDCA Liberia is a nonprofit organization committed to improving access to quality education for vulnerable children in Liberia, West Africa. The organization was established in 2017 with mission;

“To provide solaces for children, youth and women to enable them explore their full potential, growth and development”

YDCA is legally registered under the **Nonprofit Corporation Act of Liberia**, with register number at ***009667190***. YDCA's professional, gender-centered leadership structure ensures effective program management and delivery of its program. The organization employs qualified professionals, the majority of whom have at least three to four years of experience in social development, as well as relevant advanced academic and professional qualifications.

YDCA is led by a seven-member (7) national and international Board of Directors, who provide strategic leadership, policy direction, and oversight to ensure strong governance, accountability, and institutional integrity.

The core leadership and management team includes the Executive Director, Program Manager, Administrative Assistant, Project Officer, Finance Officer, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Communications and Social Media Officer. In addition, YDCA is supported by a dedicated team of active volunteers who provide essential services on a voluntary (gratis) basis, strengthening program implementation and community engagement.

At YDCA, we believe that education is the most sustainable path out of poverty, and we work to ensure that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are not denied learning opportunities due to financial constraints. The organization empowers children to stay in school, achieve academic success, and lay the groundwork for a dignified and productive future by providing targeted scholarship support, mentoring, and monitoring.

YDCA Education Program and Impact

YDCA is dedicated to increasing access to quality education for vulnerable and underserved children by removing both material and financial barriers to learning. YDCA's Education Support Program provides essential school materials to low-income children, reducing absenteeism, increasing classroom participation, and improving overall learning outcomes. We began supporting 20 children in 2023 through our Liberia-Japan Pen Pal Program and will reach a total of 50 by 2025.

As part of this initiative, YDCA distributes complete school supply kits containing school bags, exercise books, textbooks, pens, pencils, erasers, rulers, mathematical sets, notebooks, school uniforms, and basic learning aids appropriate for the child's grade level. These distributions ensure that children are well-prepared to attend school with dignity and confidence.

The YDCA also runs a Pen Pal Program, which connects children with peers and supporters locally and internationally. This program encourages literacy, cultural exchange, and written

communication confidence in participating students while also instilling a sense of global citizenship and emotional support. Many children report better reading and writing skills, more motivation to stay in school, and a greater sense of belonging.

CONTEXT AND PROBLEM STATEMENT (LIBERIA)

Liberia's education system faces ongoing challenges, particularly for vulnerable children from low-income, rural, and marginalized communities. The long-term consequences of a 14-year civil war, followed by the 2014 Ebola outbreak and the COVID-19 pandemic, disrupted education, destroyed infrastructure, and caused teacher shortages. Only approximately 54% of children complete primary education, and just over a third of preschool-aged children have access to early learning programs (**UNICEF Liberia, 2022**).

Out-of-school rates remain high among all age groups. Approximately 15-20% of children aged 6-14 are not enrolled in school, and approximately 20% of adolescents aged 15-17 are out of school, highlighting the risk of dropout as children grow older (**Republic of Liberia, Education Sector Analysis, 2022**). Vulnerable children often have limited time for school due to income-generating activities like farming, trading, or caregiving.

Moreover, the recent **cut in USAID funding** has further increased pressure on Liberia's education sector. USAID-supported programs previously helped fund teacher training, learning materials, school feeding programs, and community education support. The reduction in funding risks widening learning gaps, increasing dropout rates, and reducing access to quality education services for vulnerable students who depended on these interventions.

Additional barriers include overcrowded classrooms, untrained teachers, outdated curricula, and lack of learning materials. Girls face extra challenges due to gender inequality and inadequate menstrual hygiene support, leading to absenteeism or early dropout. Rural areas, including Montserrado, are disproportionately affected, with children walking long distances to reach school. In this context, scholarship programs and holistic support interventions are critical to keeping vulnerable children in school, improving learning outcomes, and breaking cycles of poverty.

(Sources: <https://www.unicef.org/liberia/basic-education> https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/Liberia_esp_2022.pdf?)

ABOUT THE BENJAMIN LAMBSON SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

This scholarship program is known as the Benjamin Lambson Scholarship Fund. It was founded to honor Benjamin Lambson's life and legacy, which was defined by service, compassion, and a strong belief in education's transformative power. The Scholarship Programme provides comprehensive educational support to children from low-income families in rural Montserrado who want to learn but lack the financial resources to continue their education. Many families in this area struggle to afford school-related expenses like registration, uniforms, books, learning supplies, and exam fees, which has a significant impact on school attendance and retention, particularly in rural and low-income communities. For parents in this area, supporting their children through education is their top priority, but their efforts to provide access to education for their children are still limited by economic hardship.

- Poor and vulnerable families in Liberia continue to face high education costs. Even when education is nominally free, indirect and mandatory costs continue to prevent many children from consistently attending school.

- These costs include school registration and maintenance fees, insurance, textbooks, exercise books, pens, uniforms, examination fees, and other learning materials—the majority of which must be paid upfront at the start of the academic year. These costs present immediate and often insurmountable barriers to enrollment for families living on unstable or subsistence incomes.
- Many children are pushed into income-generating activities to support their families.
- Children from low-income families are often expected to contribute, even if it's a small amount, to meet basic family needs. They may collect snails, fish, tend livestock, work in rice fields, or care for younger siblings.
- Children who engage in petty trading, farm labor, street vending, or domestic work have less time for school, lower concentration and performance, and are more likely to drop out.

About The Benjamin Lambson

Benjamin Lambson's journey began far from Liberia, yet his heart found a home in Liberia. Born in Utah, USA, Benjamin answered God's call in 2010 to spread the gospel and serve souls in need. His first assignment took him to Freetown, Sierra Leone, where he learned the foundations of missionary work. Soon after, he received another sacred assignment, this time to Liberia.

When Benjamin arrived in Liberia in 2010, he did more than serve; he lived among the people. He embraced the culture, the community, and the everyday life of Liberians. He became a true disciple of God, walking with the people, teaching, listening, and offering hope. His time in Liberia was memorable, remarkable, and deeply transformative. He was inspired by the strength and resilience of Liberian families, but he also saw the heavy burdens they carried, poverty, limited employment, and a lack of opportunities for their children. Witnessing these challenges touched Benjamin in a profound way. The struggles of vulnerable children did not leave him unchanged; instead, they planted a desire in him to uplift, to support, and to help create paths to a better future.

MESSAGE FROM BENJAMIN LAMBSON:



“I served a mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Sierra Leone and Liberia. During my time there, I served in Matadi, Logan Town, Doe Community, Sinkor, and Brewerville. As I labored among the people, I came to love them deeply—they truly became like family to me. I was welcomed into their homes and lives, and I experienced firsthand the warmth and richness of Liberian culture. I loved the vibrant music, the joyful greetings, and especially the food—palm butter quickly became one of my favorites.

Beyond their culture, I was inspired by their love for learning and their determination to grow. Education was a treasure to them. I saw parents sacrifice so much so their children could have a school uniform. Their desire to learn was matched by their faith and resilience. They believed in a brighter future and worked tirelessly to make it possible, even when resources were scarce.

At the same time, I felt the deep challenges many families faced—pains rooted in poverty, lack of employment, and limited opportunities for parents to support their children. These struggles were real and often heartbreaking. Yet, in the midst of these trials, I witnessed incredible strength, hope, and devotion to God. Their example of perseverance and

faith changed me. Serving among them taught me what it truly means to love, to sacrifice, and to trust in the Lord. It was a sacred privilege that shaped me into a better disciple of Jesus Christ.”- Benjamin Lambson

PROGRAMME AIM

It is our aim to break the cycle of poverty by supporting children who are eager to learn but are prevented from accessing education due to financial hardship.

Our aim is to provide the following,

- Tuition for a school year
- A new school uniform
- All the books, exercise books and pens they need for the school year
- Support students who are leaving school possible careers and further education opportunities

BENEFICIARIES

The primary recipients of this programme will be:

5 primary and secondary school-aged children from low-income and vulnerable households in underserved communities who are in desperate need but cannot afford to attend school.

SELECTION PROCESS FOR SCHOLARSHIP BENEFICIARIES

The selection of children for the Benjamin Lambson Scholarship Programme will follow a structured and transparent process to ensure that support reaches those most in need and with the greatest potential to benefit from the programme. The process begins with community and school outreach, where YDCA Liberia, in collaboration with schools and local leaders, announces the scholarship opportunity. Families are invited to submit applications to meet the basic eligibility criteria.

Parents or guardians of eligible children will complete a short application form, providing details about their household income, family circumstances, and the child’s current school enrollment. YDCA staff will conduct a preliminary review of all applications to verify financial need, age and grade appropriateness, enrollment status, and willingness to participate. Supporting documentation such as school records or teacher/community recommendations will be reviewed to ensure accuracy and credibility.

Shortlisted families will then be invited for brief interviews to discuss the child’s educational goals, household situation. Following these interviews, a selection committee comprising YDCA staff, the board of Directors and Benjamin Lambson will evaluate applications based on the established selection criteria. The committee will assign priority scores to ensure that scholarships are awarded fairly and equitably to children who demonstrate both need and potential impact.

Selected families will be formally notified and onboarded, completing a scholarship agreement and receiving guidance on participation in the program. YDCA will then begin continuous monitoring, tracking school attendance, academic performance, and parental engagement to ensure that children maintain eligibility and that the programme achieves its intended outcomes. This process ensures transparency, fairness, and accountability while promoting family and community involvement, which are critical to the long-term success of the programme.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

By providing scholarship, YDCA expects to achieve the following outcomes:

- YDCA makes education more affordable for families with multiple children, allowing them to enroll all of their children in school.
- Education improves social standing, economic independence, and decision-making capabilities. As a result, they will be able to make a greater contribution to the education of future generations.
- Reduced dropouts due to financial constraints.

ESTIMATED BUDGET

The estimated cost for this scholarship is 2,000 per annual.

For one year of sponsorship:

US \$400.00 per child per year 400 x 5 children = 2000 per year.

Programme Continuity and Sustainability

The total cost for the current year of the scholarship programme is **US\$2,000**, supporting **five (5) children at US\$400 per child per year**. The Benjamin Lambson Scholarship Programme is designed as a **long-term commitment**, providing continued support to each child for as long as they remain enrolled and eligible.

The **US\$400 annual contribution per child** is renewed each academic year to ensure uninterrupted access to education. Donor renewals, and partnerships will sustain the programme beyond the initial year. By supporting this scholarship, donors invest not only in a single school year, but in a child's **ongoing educational journey and future success**.

We invite and encourage sponsors to provide ongoing, long-term support to the children they sponsor, ensuring continuity in their education and personal development.

Budget Item	Estimated Cost (US\$)	Description
School tuition and registration fees	\$250.00	Covers annual school fees charged by public, mission, or low-cost private schools
Uniforms and footwear	\$70.00	Includes school uniform and basic footwear required for attendance
Learning materials	\$80.00	Exercise books, textbooks, stationery, and basic learning supplies
Total per Child		US\$400.00
Total for 5 students per year		US\$2,000.00

This budget ensures that beneficiaries can attend school consistently without interruption due to unpaid fees, lack of materials, or uniform requirements, while also supporting effective programme monitoring and accountability.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

- Children's school attendance will be monitored monthly using official school attendance registers and verified through coordination with school administrators and class teachers, in line with the Ministry of Education's reporting practices. The program targets an attendance rate of 99% or higher, with follow-up actions taken when attendance declines.

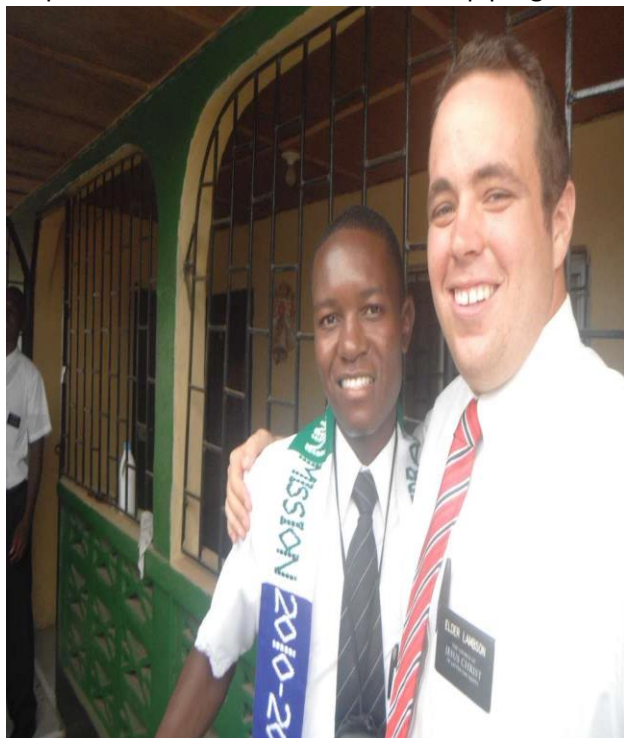
- Academic progress will be assessed each school period or term through the review of official school report cards, continuous assessment records, and examination results, as prescribed by the Ministry of Education. These reviews will help track learning outcomes and identify students who need additional support.
- Student retention will be monitored annually through school enrollment and promotion records. Although average dropout rates in many communities remain around 5%, the scholarship program aims to reduce dropout among beneficiaries to less than 1% by addressing financial and social barriers to continued schooling.
- At enrollment, baseline information on students’ and parents’ attitudes toward education will be collected through structured interviews and questionnaires. Follow-up assessments will be conducted every two years to measure changes in attitudes, parental involvement, and overall program effectiveness in promoting sustained educational participation.

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Activity	Timeline
Community outreach and beneficiary identification	January – February 2026
Beneficiary screening and selection	March – May 2026
Scholarship award and school enrollment	August – September 2026
Ongoing monitoring and mentorship	October 2026 – May 2027
Mid-year progress review	July 2026
End-of-year evaluation and reporting	June 2026

ANNEX I: Legacy of Service – Benjamin Lambson

The photographs below capture Benjamin Lambson during his missionary service in Liberia. They reflect his close connection with Liberian communities, his commitment to service, and the relationships that inspired the creation of this scholarship programme.



Benjamin Lambson during his missionary service in Liberia (2010)



Interaction with youth and community members in Liberia



Community engagement with Liberian families during missionary service



Benjamin Lambson missionary service activities within local Liberian