

Project: Kiva Fellowship, ACEP Cameroun

Background

Using its pioneer technology to connect lenders to small business owners around the world, Kiva is a nonprofit organization that works towards alleviating poverty through lending. Kiva was established in 2005 and to date has lent over \$283 million to borrowers from 61 countries on five continents. Through its unique model, Kiva provides credit to individuals who have limited or no access to traditional banking systems. In this way customers are able to create better lives for themselves and their families.

The Kiva Fellows Program was initiated in 2007 in order to develop stronger, more effective relationships with Kiva's Field Partners across the globe. Fellows work in a variety of capacities, serving as Kiva's "eyes and ears" on the ground. The Fellow's program's main objectives are to: (1) Improve Field Partner's compliance and competence with regards to Kiva's policies. (2) Help Kiva operate with efficiency, innovation and entrepreneurialism. (3) Expand Kiva's visibility and reach to attract new lenders and engage existing ones.

Project Description

Kiva has recently developed a new partnership with the microfinance institution (MFI) ACEP Cameroun, an organization established in 1999 through a joint venture between the Cameroon Industry Ministry and AFD, the French Agency for Development. The bank's mission is to support the development of small and medium enterprises in Cameroon's urban centers by providing small lines of credit, fight against poverty by extending funds to the most vulnerable, and ensure the security of savings. ACEP also possesses a particular and rare strength in "client voice", where it adapts its practices and products through actively seeking out client feedback.

This bank, located in the capital Yaoundé with branches across the country, requires training and other capacity building

measures to transition new procedures and build its Kiva client base. Through a comprehensive workplan, the four-month fellowship will provide ACEP and its clients the opportunity to scale up its Kiva operations. The fellowship will focus particularly on training ACEP's staff (management, loan officers and others) on Kiva process and procedures, meeting and verifying borrowers within the community, and creating digital content to help broadcast Kiva's unique story. While the project's deliverables are numerous and detailed, flexibility and adaptability are very important and will be used to ensure that the partnership between Kiva and ACEP is meaningful and sustainable.