Introduction:

The Wu-tang project is a human capital development initiative aimed at bringing world-class learning opportunities to the Pankshin Local Government Area in Nigeria. The term “Wu-tang” is a phrase from the Ngas language, which translates to “You should study”. The goal of this project is to revive the study culture by providing the community with tools to compete favorably in the global economy.

Background:

The Pankshin Local Government Area has been affected by numerous crises in the past decade, resulting in the destruction of valuable infrastructure, including houses, schools, markets, and libraries. Additionally, public universities have been plagued by strikes, causing the suspension of schooling activities and leaving students in a state of limbo. The situation is particularly dire for students living in rural areas, where access to electricity, wifi, and other technology for self-learning is limited. This has led to an increase in idle youths, who are at risk of being recruited by criminal organizations.

Methodology:

The Wu-tang project aims to revitalize the Pankshin Community Library, which has stood for 21 years but has fallen into disrepair. The project will involve the reconstruction and renovation of the library, including the installation of an innovation lab with computers, whiteboards, internet access, and 24-hour electricity from solar panels. Community leaders and government representatives have expressed support for the project, and youths and other stakeholders have pledged their time and effort to contribute manual labor to the construction process. Additionally, a competition will be organized to create an avenue for the expression of the youths’ interpretation of the Ngas culture. I have received estimates of the cost of construction materials like roofing sheets and PVC ceilings from Vasco Industries LTD, but my experience with construction in Nigeria is that construction materials tend to be more expensive in the dry season due to increasing demand. To this end, I expect the costs to decrease slightly in the rainy season (summer) when the work will begin.

The project will also involve the development of a mentorship program that will connect students with experienced professionals in their field of study. The program will provide students with an opportunity to learn from experienced professionals, ask questions, and gain valuable insights into the industry. This will help to bridge the gap between the classroom and the workforce and prepare students for the challenges they will face after graduation. To this end, I have communicated with several sons and daughters of the soil through the Ngas Development Association President, who has secured panelists for information sessions that will serve as networking opportunities for the participants. Several campus partners have also agreed to record short inspirational clips for distribution over the course of the project.

In my experience, projects like this often have a domino effect, and the potential for growth is endless. At the opening, government representatives, together with well-meaning individuals are sure to be present. I intend to leverage the windfall from the general elections to secure more support and draw government attention to the project. In order to implement more changes in the future. In the future, the project will also involve the development of a comprehensive digital library that can be accessed remotely, enabling students in rural areas to access educational resources even when they are unable to visit the library physically. The digital library will be equipped with various educational materials, including e-books, videos, and other multimedia resources. The library will also be equipped with a wifi network, enabling students to access the internet and other online resources.

To complement the digital library, the project will also involve the development of a mobile application that will enable students to access educational resources on the go. The app will provide students with a
personalized learning experience, allowing them to access the resources they need when they need them. The app will be equipped with features such as quizzes, flashcards, and interactive exercises that will help students to better engage with the material.

Project Timeline:

- Community consultation and planning – 1 month (Ongoing)
- Construction and renovation - 1 month (June-July)
- Equipping the library with technology - 1 month (July-August)
- Organizing the competition 1 month (Ongoing) execution in the second week of August
- Launch and opening of the library Aug 21, 2023

Resources:

- Funding for construction and renovation materials – Davis Fund
- Technology and equipment for the innovation lab
- Manpower for construction and renovation – Davis Fund and community labor
- Expertise in library management and technology – Community Librarian

Evaluation:

- Number of visitors to the library – If successful, we expect an increase in footfall from 20 visits a week to about 100 visits a day.
- Usage of technology and equipment – Considering the increasing need for internet connectivity and electricity by students, we expect heavy use of computers in the first few months after construction and a flatlining after the novelty wears off.
- Feedback from community members – By December 2022, a survey will be conducted of parents, youths, and stakeholders to assess the benefits and drawbacks of the project.
- Number of participants in the competition – Successful outreach should guarantee about 20-30 entries for the competition.
- Improvement in students’ academic performance – Surveys of students in schools around the area will be conducted to check for a correlation between library visits and academic performance.

Conclusion:

The Wu-tang project aims to reclaim the Pankshin Community Library and bring meaningful self-education back to the community. With the support of community leaders, government representatives, and youths, the project aims to provide a safe and stimulating environment for learning and personal growth. The competition organized as part of the project will also serve as an opportunity for the expression of the youths’ interpretation of the Ngas culture.