



RAISING FUTURES

KENYA



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

Published June 2026

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Message from the Chair of Trustees



As I reflect on the past year at Raising Futures Kenya, I am struck by the journey we have travelled and the path that lies ahead. Our long-term ambition to shift the power while maximizing our impact on young people is not immune to the turbulent realities of the world we inhabit.

This year, our students have navigated a volatile landscape of rising living costs, the fallout of aid cuts, and protests which turned violent. In the UK, we have managed a challenging fundraising environment alongside transitions within our staff and Board.

In this context, Raising Futures Kenya has not only held its course but continued to thrive. This resilience is a testament to the strength of our mission, the clarity of our purpose, and, above all, the tangible results we see in the lives of the young people we support.

We've been developing the relationship between the UK and Kenya Boards. Working together across geographies, we have built trust, shared accountability and a common understanding of what success looks like. Crucially, this relationship is allowing us to shift power in a more intentional and meaningful way. Our Kenyan partners are increasingly shaping not just delivery, but the direction of the organisation — telling us what works, what is needed, and what the future UK organisation should look like. As we look toward 2026, we will renew our strategy using these conversations as our bedrock, ensuring that leadership and decision-making are rooted as close as possible to the communities we serve.



Our donors and partners continue to offer steadfast support because our results speak for themselves. The outcomes achieved by our students—in technical skills, personal confidence, and economic opportunity—provide compelling evidence that our community-led approach works. Every pound entrusted to us is stretched to its limit to ensure high-quality delivery.

Being based in Kenya, I am fortunate to be a regular visitor to our centres, and I am constantly blown away by the young people I meet and what these courses mean to them. At a graduation ceremony in Nairobi earlier this year, I was deeply moved by the stories I heard. Students

spoke not just of the skills they had acquired, but of the futures they were now brave enough to imagine—from launching mobile hair-dressing businesses to offering, quite practically, to fix my car. These moments bring home the true essence of Raising Futures Kenya: it is not just about training; it is about restoring hope, dignity, and possibility.

Raising Futures Kenya is a small organisation, but its influence is significant. It succeeds because it listens, because it trusts local leadership, and because it refuses to overlook the potential of young people. I am immensely proud to serve as Chair of Trustees and to work alongside such committed colleagues, staff, and partners in both Kenya and the UK.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us over the past year. Your belief in this mission makes these outcomes possible. I hope this report gives you a clear sense of what we have achieved together—and the confidence to continue this journey with us.

Sophie Tanner
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Leaders' Reflections



2025 was a year of bold progress amid challenging times. Your support empowered our Kenyan partners to equip over 1,000 children and young people with technical and vocational skills for a brighter future - and to spark ripple effects of transformation across their communities.

Success stories like Roselyn's (p8) and Grace's (p10) highlight these ripples: within families, communities, and even among current Seed of Hope students whom they now mentor. They inspire me with the hope that communities truly can change, one life at a time.

These communities are the experts in their own lives, which is why we remain committed to shifting power to our Kenyan partners. This approach strengthens local leadership to design culturally attuned, sustainable, and transformative programs. By amplifying their expertise and decision-making, we aim for lasting impact that endures beyond our direct involvement. I'm continually inspired by our dedicated team, volunteers, trustees, and Kenyan partners - and deeply grateful to our loyal supporters. Thank you for your role in the successes you will read about in this report.

Laura Armstrong

Interim CEO

High youth unemployment remains one of the defining challenges of our time. At Seed of Hope, our response is to equip young people with market-relevant skills, paired with holistic support that removes barriers to participation and places them on clear pathways for self-reliance. This year, 1,060 young people enrolled across our centers, each taking a deliberate step and putting in the effort to change the story of their lives. Their progress reminds us that our work is not only about individual opportunity, but about strengthening families, communities, and the wider economy.

With our model Toolkit set to launch in 2026, Seed of Hope's proven success is ready to be replicated across diverse contexts, ensuring thousands more youth can access opportunity. We also invested in infrastructure to better support training and student services at our Centers, and continued to advance sustainability through our Greening Technical & Vocational Education & Training (TVET) work. I want to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who has contributed to Seed of Hope's journey this year. To our students, who have shown up with determination despite the many challenges they face, and inspiring us to keep doing this work; to our donors, whose generosity has kept doors open and dreams alive; to our partners, who have walked beside us to extend opportunity further than we could alone; to our staff, whose daily dedication turns vision into action; and to the wider community of supporters who continue to champion youth empowerment - each of you has played a vital role in shaping our work.



Mary Mwangi

Executive Director
Raising Futures Kenya NGO

THE KENYAN LED SOLUTION

Raising Futures Kenya is a small UK-registered charity driving big impacts on youth employment and vocational training in Kenya. We partner closely with a Kenyan-led NGO, guided by local experts Mary Mwangi and Florence Olwenge, to deliver their community-led Seed of Hope programme. For over 20 years, it has equipped young people aged 14-25 with accredited vocational skills, business training, wellbeing support, and qualifications in high-demand trades like catering, hairdressing, carpentry, motor mechanics, and fashion design- plus English, financial literacy, and computer skills.

In Kenya, poverty blocks education (one-third of students drop out of secondary school), while youth (35% of the population) face 67% unemployment, often due to skills mismatches. This fuels exploitation, abuse, violence, trauma, and mental health crises- hitting girls hardest through early marriage, motherhood, or gender-based violence. Around 60% of Seed of Hope participants are female (17% young mothers), and the programme breaks these cycles by fostering self-reliance and employment or self-employment opportunities.



Florence Olwenge
Programme Manager

Mary Mwangi
Executive Director



Vision

Our vision is for all children and young people to be able to create safe, rewarding futures for themselves, free from poverty and exploitation.

Mission

Our mission is to support children and young people in Kenya to break cycles of poverty and inequality through skills training for employment and entrepreneurship.

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

Kitui water tanks and collection point

Drilling the borehole

Catering and hospitality students in the new kitchen

New kitchen in Kariti Seed of Hope!

Kariti Catering and Hospitality students and staff were excited at the launch of the new kitchen facilities, which provide a new space for the 40 students to learn practical skills, and for 145 daily nutritious cooked lunches, essential to the concentration and wellbeing of every young person at Seed of Hope.



The old kitchen

The previous makeshift kitchen was smoky and required a strenuous uphill journey to carry the prepared food to the serving area. Staff and students are delighted with the new gas cookers and learning facilities.

Kitui Borehole and Water point

In 2025 our water project in Kangweni, Kitui county was finished! This includes a 240m deep borehole and community water point in an area where people are experiencing increasingly frequent drought, crop failure, food insecurity and hunger. The borehole gives the local community access to clean, safe water for their families and their crops.

A word from Executive Director, Mary Mwangi at our Kenyan-led partner NGO:

"The borehole is a major milestone for SoH Kitui, as an infrastructure achievement and a long-term investment in our students and the community. Reliable access to clean water will improve hygiene and health and create a more dignified and supportive learning environment. Beyond the centre, the borehole and the agribusiness project will benefit the wider community, reduce food poverty and strengthen our relationship with the community, reinforcing the idea that SoH grows with the community not apart from it. This is what meaningful development looks like, practical, sustainable and life-changing!"

The sound of the water being pumped and filling the 10,000 liter water tank on the site of our Seed of Hope vocational training centre, is a joyful sound carrying with it the promise of huge benefits for the community.

Now with a reliable water source, we are also creating a demonstration farm and will deliver agribusiness training to 300 members of the community per year, to train them in reliable drought-resistant growing methods and generating sustainable year-round income.



2025 HIGHLIGHTS

Young Mothers in the pilot programme

Ann says:

“Seed of Hope has been more than a school to me, it’s a lifeline. It gave me the skills, support and confidence I needed to stand strong for my child and for my future”



Ann, who took part in the young mothers pilot, Kitui

Young Mothers Pilot Programme

Between January and September 2025 we introduced a pilot to remove one of the main barriers to consistent class attendance: lack of affordable and reliable childcare. We gave 30 young mothers vouchers that could be redeemed for childcare costs. We were delighted by the impact of the pilot and the way these young women were motivated to use the skills they learned.



Leela meeting Seed of Hope students



Kirsty, Mary and Leela in Kenya

The UK team visits Kenya

In February 2025, CEO Kirsty Erridge and Head of Fundraising and Impact, Leela Shanti visited Kenya to see the Seed of Hope projects in person and discuss strategy with the Kenyan team.

UK Head of Fundraising and Impact, Leela Shanti says:

“What a privilege it was to spend valuable time in Kenya in-person with incredible colleagues - to meet with dedicated leaders, new members of the team, teachers and current students across all three centres, and see how the programme is actually run, in action, first-hand for the first time. I was able to see the impact behind the reports, feel the love and buzzing atmosphere in the room, and sit face to face to hear rich feedback and success stories, discuss challenges and visions for the future with a depth that remote communication just can’t match. It was deeply inspiring and motivating!”

Pilot Project Outcomes:

- Average class attendance among young mothers increased from 83% to 92% (compared to 2024)
- Dropout rates among young mothers in Kitui decreased by 100% compared to previous years
- 85% of the young mothers reported reduced financial stress thanks to the vouchers
- 80% of beneficiaries used savings from the vouchers to buy basic necessities and purchase equipment for a small business start up
- Beneficiaries reported improved concentration and performance during training sessions





Roselyne's Story

“Coming from a humble background, life was not always easy. Raised in a family that struggled to make ends meet, I learned from a young age the importance of hard work and resilience. As a girl growing up in these circumstances, society’s expectations were clear, mechanics was not a place for women like me. But I’ve always believed that your background doesn’t define your future.

The moment I heard about the opportunities at Seed of Hope, something inside me knew I had to take that bold step. Choosing mechanics wasn’t easy. I faced doubt, criticism, and discouragement, both from people in my community and even from within myself. Many questioned whether a young woman from a humble background could really make it in such a technical, male-dominated field.

But I pressed on.

Seed of Hope didn’t just equip me with technical skills, it transformed my mindset. The institute gave me the confidence to believe in myself, and the courage to stand tall in spaces where women are often overlooked. Through mentorship, practical training, and personal development programs, I discovered that I was not limited by my background or my gender. The supportive environment at Seed of Hope made me realize that I was capable of far more than I ever imagined. I met trainers and mentors who encouraged me to push past fear, challenge stereotypes, and pursue excellence, not just in mechanics, but in life.

It wasn’t easy being the only woman in the workshop, but I was determined to prove that hard work, not gender, defines success. Thanks to the strong foundation I gained from Seed of Hope, my commitment, and my performance during the attachment [internship], I was retained by Wellcheck Auto Garage. Today, I work proudly as the only woman in the team, handling complex automotive tasks and earning the respect of my colleagues.

This opportunity has not only changed my life but also given me the platform to inspire other young women, especially those from humble backgrounds, to believe that they, too, can break barriers in mechanics, engineering, and beyond.”



“Seed of Hope gave me the courage to dream and the skills to stand tall in a field I once thought was not for me.”

*We interviewed our graduates
9 months after graduation...*

Impact



89%

of graduates were in employment or self-employment, with most working in fields directly related to their training



85%

were financially independent, able to meet their own basic needs such as rent, food and bills



97%

Completion rate: far above the national average

Education Support

1,055

Children and young people completed Seed of Hope courses

61%

Of those supported were women and girls



17%

of those supported were young mothers



Earnings Improved



79%

were earning above the poverty line



21%

were earning above the national minimum wage

Return on Investment

£223

average cost of our training courses

3.5x

ROI for every £1 invested

93%

of all TVET graduates were working in a related field

90%

of all TVET graduates were supported into an internship to gain real world experience

Wellbeing & Multiplier Effect

100%

reported positive impact on wellbeing

80%

were supporting family members financially

92%

graduates actively regularly mentor other young people in their community

2 ZERO HUNGER



4 QUALITY EDUCATION



5 GENDER EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES





Grace's Story*

“Life took a painful turn when I lost both my parents at the age of 15. My three brothers and I were taken in by our aunt, who already had her own children to care for. Life in her home was far from easy. We were treated more like laborers than family. Rest was a luxury we could never afford.

Eventually, I could no longer bear the constant frustration and emotional abuse at my aunt's house. I moved into a tiny one-room house just to find peace. But even then, I felt alone, discouraged, and overwhelmed.

Then, something changed. I got an opportunity to join Seed of Hope to study Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy. I always knew I wanted to be a beauty therapist, but when I joined, I had no idea how I would feed myself or even pay my rent. I was emotionally broken and mentally exhausted. But through the counselling sessions offered at Seed of Hope, I started to find my strength.

Counselling helped me look at life differently. I began to understand that even though life throws challenges, I have the power to face them and find solutions. I realised that with the skills I was learning, I could start offering services and earn money to support myself. Today, I'm a different person. I am full of life, confidence, and joy. I feel healed, emotionally and mentally.”

“I look forward to completing my course in June and starting my own beauty business. Seed of Hope didn't just teach me a skill, it gave me my dignity, my voice, and a second chance at life.” - Grace*

2025 IN FIGURES



77,671

Lunches distributed,
benefitting every
student and fuelling learning



2,252

Period packs
distributed between 647
women and girls, enabling
them to attend during their
period



718

Childcare vouchers given out to
support 184 young mothers, enabling
them to attend classes and focus on
learning



77,440

Attendances at Sexual &
Reproductive Health &
Relationships (SRHR) and
Mental Health Wellbeing
sessions



1,294

Individual counselling
sessions, to heal from
trauma and develop ways to
cope



19,550

People benefitting from
group counselling sessions



The support that sets us apart



Wellbeing

Addressing the trauma of experiencing poverty, inequality and, in some cases, extreme exploitation and abuse. Students feel supported, build resilience and coping mechanisms, so they're able to focus on learning.

Counselling

Group counselling addressing shared experiences and tackling stigma around mental health; and one-to-one counselling for students experiencing trauma.

Life-skills lessons

A curriculum about health and wellbeing, rights, and how to advocate for them, addressing healthy relationships, sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence and discrimination, and substance misuse.

Practical Support

Removing barriers which may prevent students from being able to attend their lessons, setting them up for success.

- **Free daily lunch** - you can't focus on learning when hungry
- **Free childcare vouchers** - allowing young mothers to learn
- **Free period packs** - so girls never have to miss a lesson

Graduate Support

We bridge the gap between learning and earning, to support the transition to employment. We arrange internships, peer mentorship from former graduates, and free access to our Business Hubs with computers, equipment and materials to launch a small business. We also run additional needs-led projects in the local communities.

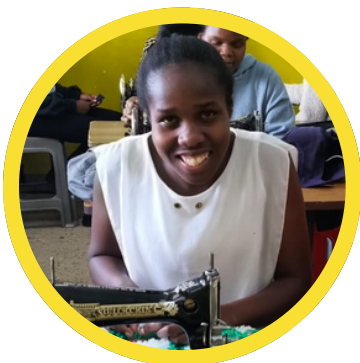
Our Graduates

RAISING
FUTURES
KENYA



Musyoka - Carpentry & Joinery

"I'm happy to be at Seed of Hope. I've already made a table and a stool by myself, and that makes me proud and hopeful for the future"



Joyline - Fashion & Fabric Design

"I used to miss almost five days of school every month, but thanks to Seed of Hope providing me with pads, I can now attend school every day with confidence."



Teresia - Hair & Beauty Therapy

"I joined Seed of Hope when my baby was just three months old, and now she's one year old. The childcare voucher has been a great support — it's helped me care for my baby's wellbeing and even cover transport to school. This support has made it possible for me to continue my training while raising my child."



Harrison - Catering & Hospitality

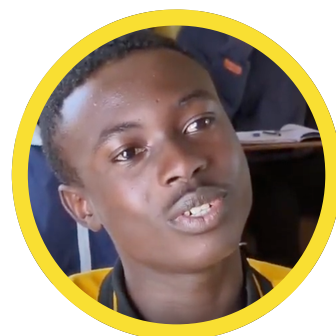
"This journey has changed my life, and now I return to inspire others because I know how far hope can carry someone."

Graduate Videos



Nyaoza - Fashion & Fabric Design

"Through my earnings now, I can help my mother, I can help my brothers and my siblings"



Bravin - Motor Vehicle Mechanics

"If you don't have the education, you don't have the transformation."



Stephen - Electrical Installation

Stephen discusses from his workplace how the Seed of Hope course supported his path to self-sufficiency. "I can take care of myself and also my family."



Francisca - Hair & Beauty Therapy

See the joy on Francisca's face as she talks about the impact of the Seed of Hope course on her life! "My life is not the same as before [...] Now I am bright!"



For more inspiring graduate videos, visit our [YouTube channel!](#)

Our Strategic Plan 2022-2026

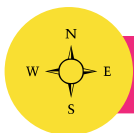
We continue to be committed to Shifting the Power to our passionate, experienced and dedicated colleagues in Kenya. We are acutely aware of the power imbalance between NGOs in the Global North, who typically have access to funding; and NGOs in the Global South, who typically are implementing the projects.

In 2025 our Kenyan partner NGO (also named Raising Futures Kenya) took the step to initiate a change of name to Growing Seeds of Hope Kenya NGO. This move was to further clarify the distinction between the two entities, which are working towards the same vision, but in very different ways. In the UK our primary function is to fundraise, build capacity and raise awareness; and in Kenya the primary function is to deliver the projects.

Over the remainder of this five-year strategy, we will collaborate closely as they build their team, resources, and capacity to assume greater decision-making for both organisations. We will actively encourage our loyal funders and supporters to direct contributions to them, reducing our role as intermediaries. We aim to enhance joint board involvement, so that the strategy is ambitious, practical, and grounded in local realities. We recognise that this is still a long journey of mutual learning, but both organisations remain fully committed to working together to achieve these goals.

Our Strategic Outcomes 2022-2026

Guiding our work over the 5 year period are the following outcomes:



Outcome 1

Raising Futures Kenya has an evidence based, independently reviewed and replicable model for holistic Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) provision in Kenya.



Outcome 2

Facilitate Raising Futures Kenya NGO in Kenya to become the lead partner.



Outcome 3

Raising Futures Kenya in the UK have diversified our income sources and reduced RFK Kenya's reliance on our/overseas funding.

Strategic Themes 2022-2026

Underpinning all of our work over the 5 year period are the following themes:

Do Good, Be Better

Learn from the Shift the Power movement and embed it throughout our organisation. Embed a culture of reflection and respond to changes in society. Actively reflect on our own actions, admitting to failure, looking for opportunities to learn, to act, to be better, to share and to ensure no one is left behind and everyone has an opportunity to thrive.

Sustainability

This theme cuts across all of our work and includes:

- increasing the sustainability of our programmes in Kenya
- increasing the sustainability of our finances through income generating activities
- increasing the long term sustainability for young people and communities who are benefiting from training and skills development at Seed of Hope
- increasing self-reliance and using environmentally sustainable working practices wherever possible.

Wellbeing and Thriving

Our Seed of Hope programme centres on the wellbeing of students, ensuring they are in the best position to be able to thrive. We will ensure this is extended to all staff, volunteers and anyone working with Raising Futures Kenya. We will advocate for wellbeing in the sector. We consider the whole person in our work. Sustainable development isn't simple; solutions are often complex and unique to each individual. We work closely alongside children, young people and families to ensure they have all the support they need to break the cycle of poverty and inequality.

Our Future UK Vision

Within 15 years we would like Raising Future Kenya's (UK and Kenya) unique, evidence based, approach to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to be integrated into Government, NGO and private TVET provision across Kenya – creating better outcomes for young people engaging in TVET.

Our ultimate long term goal is for there to be no need for a UK Raising Futures Kenya. In 15 years we would like RFK UK to be an influential voice and leading example in the UK development sector, advocating for localisation of development work and funding. We want RFK in Kenya to be fully autonomous, with donors and funders happy to fund them directly, and ideally with unrestricted funding which is the most effective and efficient way to give. We realise this requires a big shift in the UK/Global North funding sector so we are committed to being here for as long as our partner NGO needs us, and the support we offer will be led by their needs and requests.

Strategy Update and Plans

	2025 Update	2026 Plans
Outcome 1 - Evidence-based TVET model	We supported our Kenyan partner NGO in enhancing the Seed of Hope training campuses, transforming them into inspiring centres of excellence. Our Kenyan partner NGO continued to share the Seed of Hope programme model with a total of 31 other TVET providers in Kenya through their training and scaling model. Trained education partners saw rapid improvements, including lower dropout rates, reduced teenage pregnancies, and less drug use.	We will work alongside the Kenyan board to develop the scaling of our Seed of Hope model to other TVET providers. We will measure the impact of the training on these providers so we can share the model more widely.
Outcome 2 - Shifting Power	The UK Board and Kenyan Board continued to work towards agreed actions and milestones for Shifting Power, set out in our jointly agreed Shifting Power Roadmap. Led by the two Chairs, both based in Nairobi. We supported the Fundraising and Communications Officer at our Kenyan partner NGO to develop her skills to secure grants and donations directly to them. We continued to advocate for Global North funders to support our Kenyan partner NGO directly, rather than going through us first. In 2025 one of our funders agreed to fund our partner NGO directly. We have shared success stories of other funders who have done this, writing blog posts and LinkedIn posts to advocate for this shift. We supported and mentored the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer at our Kenyan partner NGO to expand and refine their Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning in order to be able to widely share the impact of Seed of Hope.	Continue to advocate for Global North funders to support our Kenyan partner NGO directly, rather than going through us first. Share success stories of other funders who have done this, write blog posts and LinkedIn posts to advocate for this shift. Support the Kenya team to be funder-ready, findable and fundable. Supporting the Kenya management team to use their time strategically to be able to engage more in networking, fundraising and strategic planning.
Outcome 3 - Diversifying income	Interim CEO has focused on diversifying UK income and developing new partnerships. Head of Fundraising and Impact focused on larger grants and invite-only funders. Fundraising and Communications Officer managing grant portfolio for smaller grants and stewarding current donors.	UK team to focus on solidifying and expanding UK donor base, including major donors and corporate partnerships. Head of Fundraising and Impact focused on larger grants and invite-only funders, as well as continuing to mentor the Kenya team to fundraise successfully from Kenya. Fundraising and Communications Officer to continue managing grant portfolio for smaller grants and to increase involvement in larger grants.

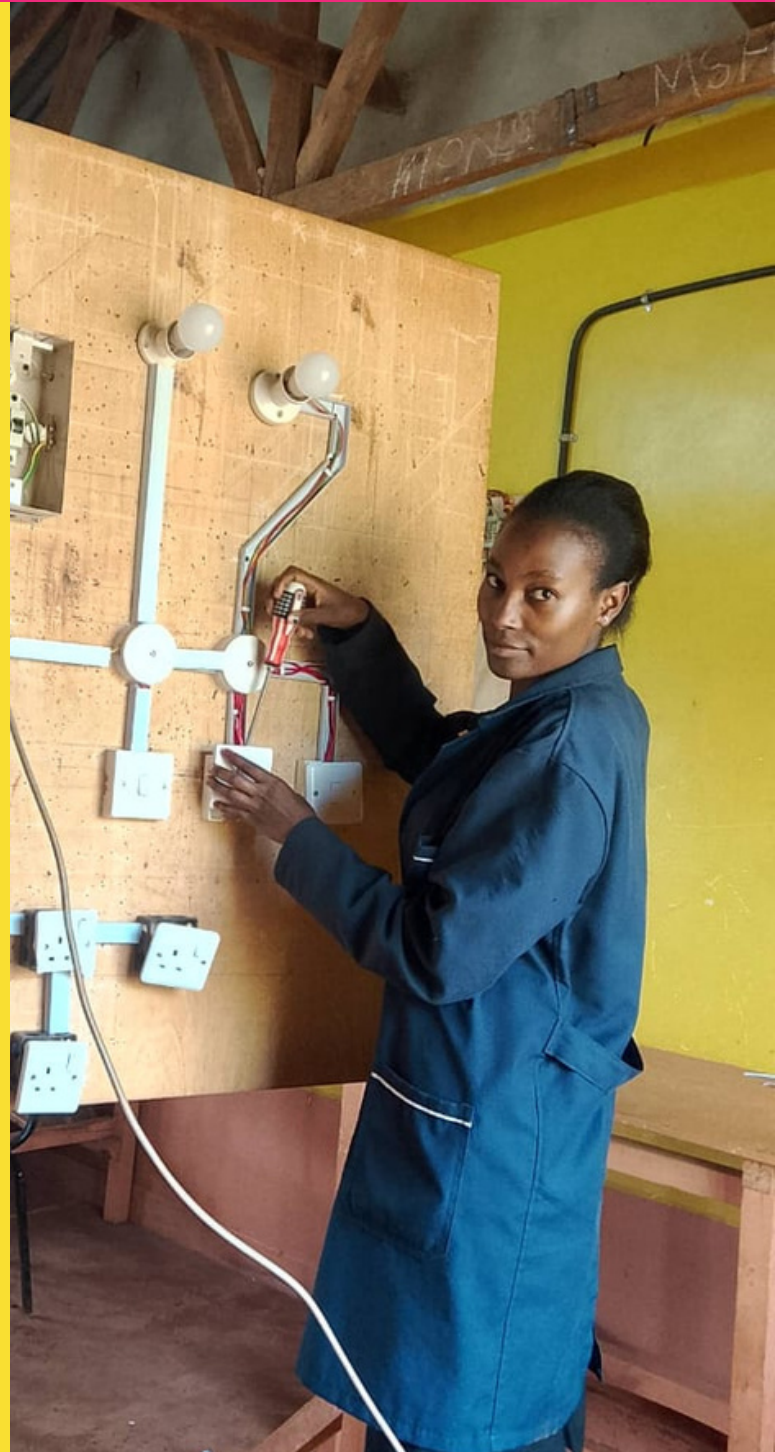
Thank you!

We keep our UK staff team to a minimum in order to prioritise employing staff in Kenya. All of our UK staff work part time.

- Laura Armstrong (interim CEO from November 2025)
- Kirsty Erridge - CEO (currently on maternity leave)
- Leela Shanti - Head of Fundraising and Impact
- Keely Bicknell - Fundraising and Communications Officer

Thank you so much to everyone who has contributed to to our work this year. We are grateful to everyone who supports us.

If you want to find out more about our work or how you can get involved, please reach out to us!



KEY INFORMATION

Reserves Policy

It is the policy of Raising Futures Kenya to maintain the unrestricted reserves of the charity at a level sufficient to meet its committed spend, management, administration & support costs for a period of 3 months. The 'reserves' are unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets and are split between UK and Kenya accounts as appropriate. In the UK we held unrestricted, designated reserves at the end of the year to cover 3 months UK running costs, which was £22,451.

Safeguarding

The safety and wellbeing of the students, community, volunteers and staff we work alongside is our top priority. We have a comprehensive Safeguarding Policy and set of procedures. All Kenyan staff undergo an annual safeguarding training course and our Senior Leadership have completed training in the implementation and management of safeguarding in the humanitarian sector. We have a Safeguarding Lead on the Board, Tom Quayle tom@raisingfutureskenya.org.uk.

Risk Management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the Charity. Trustees continue to review systems to mitigate the Charity's exposure to major risks.

Trustee Recruitment

Trustees are openly recruited based on the skills needs of the Board and then approved by current Trustees after a trial period of 3 months.

Public Benefit

The Trustees of Raising Futures Kenya confirm that they have complied with the duty contained within the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. This Annual Report details how we have delivered our purposes for public benefit.

Financial Overview

Income Statement

Charitable Activities

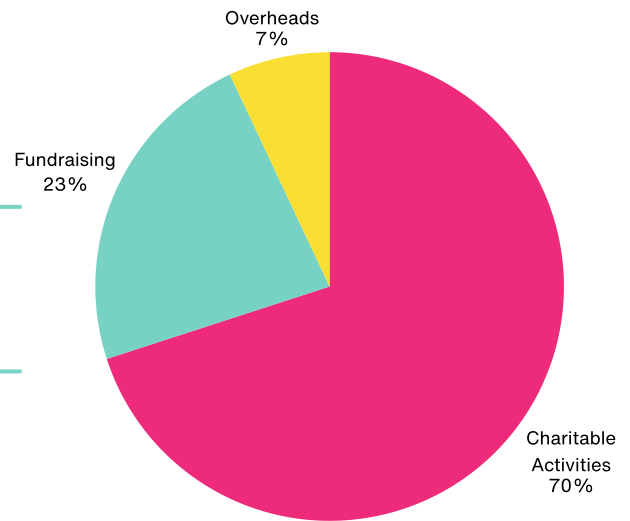
70% (£134,708)

Fundraising

23% (£44,153)

Overheads

7% (£13,926)



Income between 1st January - 31st December 2025 was £192,787.

Expenditure for the year was £193,806. In 2023 we moved to accruals accounting, which means income received in 2025 but to be spent on projects in 2026 have been accounted for as accruals.

£134,708 was spent on charitable activities which accounts for 70% of expenditure. The remainder was spent on necessities such as: fundraising 23% - generating funds in order to deliver the charitable activities and reporting to funders on how those funds were used, and governance and overheads (7%) which includes essential functions such as managing the finances, annual independent examination of accounts, insurance and adhering to our statutory obligations to ensure the charity is run professionally. We do not have an office in the UK; all UK staff are part-time and work from home to reduce overhead costs. We carefully account for every pound spent, maximizing impact by directing resources to those who need them most.

The Charity Trustees received no remuneration for their work as Trustees, but they can be reimbursed for travel expenses in line with our expenses policy (none were claimed in 2025).

