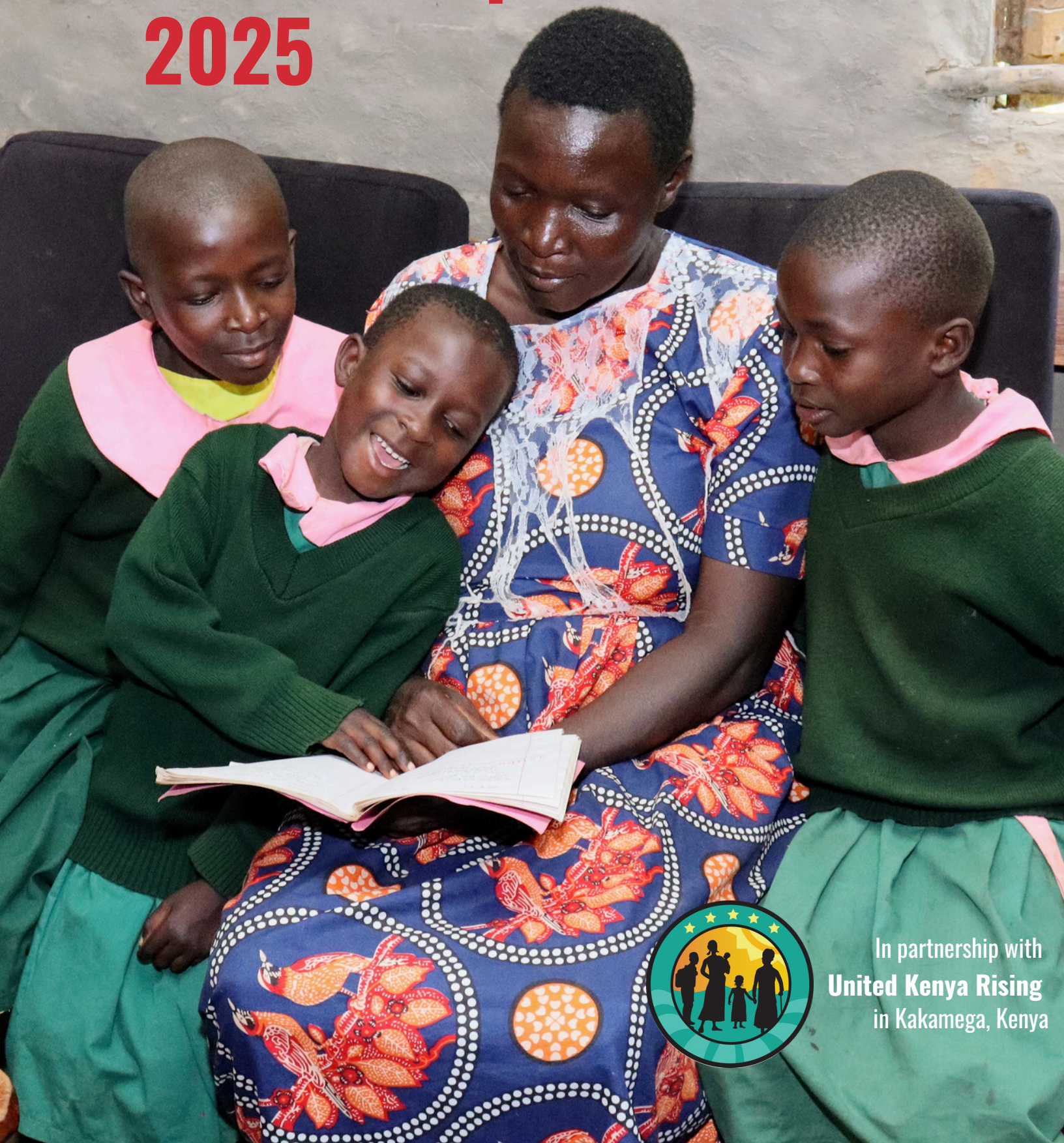


Friends of Kenya Rising

Annual Report 2025



In partnership with
United Kenya Rising
in Kakamega, Kenya



Something very special



Dear Friends,

Our partner United Kenya Rising's holistic and deep-impact Family Care program was built over many years with your financial support, and is now proving to be something very special.

Through an exacting and community-led process, United Kenya Rising (UKR) works to identify the most vulnerable families in the least-served areas of western Kenya. Its three-year Family Care program then brings those families the audacious goal of transformational change.

Every family and every success is unique, although they are all underpinned by the Family Care program's significant training, guidance, opportunities, and resources.

This tailored method is neither simple nor inexpensive, and it is quite rare for organizations fighting extreme poverty. Yet this case-by-case approach is remarkably results-driven, while remaining genuinely human and deeply compassionate. That's why it works so well.

From your support, we have truly built something very special.

John Chisholm

Executive Director

Our Purpose



We exist to support our partner United Kenya Rising (UKR) and its Family Care program.

Our focus is to offer financial, technical, and other support to UKR in Kakamega, Kenya. In turn, their holistic Family Care program assists vulnerable families as they rise out of poverty.

Mission

We assist Kenyan students and their families as they rise out of poverty.

Vision

A world without poverty where all people can lead the kind of life they want and value.

Our Partnership

Two organizations, on two sides of the world, pursuing one mission

We are Friends of Kenya Rising, an American 501(c)(3) nonprofit. We exist to support our partner United Kenya Rising (UKR) and its Family Care program in western Kenya.

UKR's staff, leadership, and board members are all Kenyan. The Family Care program that they run is locally-developed and locally-led. We work hand-in-hand with UKR to see their Family Care program evolve, grow, and thrive.

Throughout this 2025 Annual Report, “we” will speak with one voice.





Who we serve

Family Care serves the most vulnerable families in already-poor areas, identified by their own communities as most in need of assistance.

Finding these families is an intensive process that requires deep involvement of community members and United Kenya Rising (UKR) staff.

UKR looks for the most heartbreaking situations where it can catalyze the greatest positive change. Often, that means families living in extreme poverty with additional great challenges too - from the recent loss of a breadwinner, to raising children with disabilities or chronic health conditions. In many ways, the assessment process seeks families in their ‘great moment of need.’



Community-led nomination of the very poorest families



Detailed assessment and selection process



Families served are the neediest, according to their own communities

Family Care: a 3 year journey



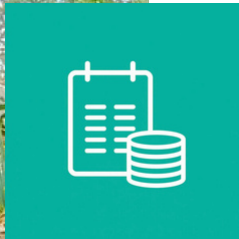
“My life has changed since UKR stepped in. I now have a beautiful home and a thriving farm. I was... reunited with my family... my children go to school... and my wife helps me grow food. I am no longer lonely.”

Resources available to every family



Guidance & training

- Four dedicated staff assigned to every family (social work, farming, education, public health)
- Intensive training, with one at-home or group session every week (on average)
- Holistic guidance and direct services cover a very wide thematic range, from family planning to vaccinating livestock, and from vision care and Sickle Cell support to entrepreneurship



Customized family budgets

- \$620/year (\$1860 over all 3 years)
- For farm & business development, healthy home life, and health or educational needs
- Used 'as needed' after careful planning, to boost families' own resources
- All disbursements sent and tracked digitally



Total homestead rebuild

- Collaborative projects (re)building homes, latrines, and kitchens to dignified, village/community common standard
- Family Care provides hardware like roofing and nails, plus \$200 to hire local contractors
- Families and their neighbors provide labor and local materials like timber, sand, and gravel



Scholarships

- High School scholarships for talented students and vulnerable would-be freshmen
- University scholarship available to all youth achieving university 'direct entry' grades
- Vocational college scholarship available to all youth who first give back through volunteering



Holistic support



Families move from cycles of poverty to cycles of prosperity

Poverty and prosperity are multidimensional, and everything is connected.

When a family's home brings them comfort and pride, they are confident and ready to take on other challenges. And when a family succeeds in agriculture and livelihoods, everyone eats well and there's better nutrition. Healthy, rested parents earn more and their children learn more. The capacity to aspire grows.

Every family's obstacles, strengths, and goals are different, as is our support for each family. But our aim is always to help families leverage their strengths to accelerate cycles of positive change that will grow with future generations.



Deep Impact



Goal

We invest significant resources in highly vulnerable families, as needed in their unique situations, and engage with them weekly for three years. It's an all-hands-on-deck effort to work with each person so that a whole family's trajectory completely changes. **Our aim is to spark a truly transformative impact that endures for generations.**

Timeline

Year 1

Address neglected health issues and get all children in school. Rebuild home, grow more food, plant trees.

Year 2

Clean water, light, and warm beds.. Get health coverage, youth into work skills training, expand small business, invest in farm animals and sale crops.

Year 3

Healthy, confident family full of hope. Respectable homestead and sound education pathways. Multiple income streams, savings, and farms with a surplus.



"I feel blessed. It's like moving from zero to hero. I sleep happily now. I see hope in my future. UKR has shown me the way and I see myself going far. "



2025's Top Media updates



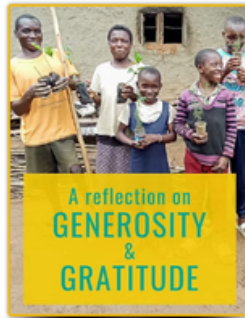
New website

Our website is fully refreshed! Check it out [here](#). You can catch up on news, discover great photos, and view the Live Impact Dashboard visualizing the work UKR does every single day.



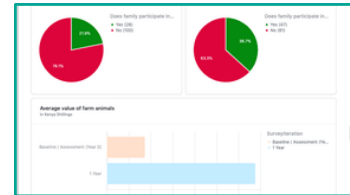
Build a house w/ \$700

Our [most popular 2025 newsletter](#) focused on how families (re)build houses, and how \$700 of materials becomes a home when neighbors come together.



Generosity & Gratitude

At Thanksgiving, we sent [a small booklet](#) sharing brief anecdotes of generosity and gratitude. Each one can touch your heart and brighten your day.



Live Impact Portal

A key part of UKR's program management system is the [Live Impact Portal](#). Internally, program staff can 'click in' on any chart to pinpoint specific families needing additional attention.



Josephine's Story

Every Family Care story is unique. Josephine reflects on her family's journey [in this short video](#) showing just one person's version of why we do what we do.

2025

Highlights



New HQ office

At the start of 2025, UKR moved into its newly renovated office headquarters, just down the street from its old home. What was once a boys' dormitory is now the hub of a small UKR campus that includes the two-story HQ and three adjacent houses converted into office spaces.



New recognition

UKR achieved a major milestone in its legal registration by transitioning to Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) status. It also won Silver in the Community-led Development category of Kenya's *Warriors for Good Awards*.



New Zones

In July, UKR added two new zones spread across the steep rocky hills of Banja, a community of several thousand families in Vihiga County. It is the least-connected and poorest area UKR has reached, and is proving an opportunity to create even greater impact.



New Families

After weeks of assessment visits, 55 families were invited to join Family Care from the two new zones in Banja. The new families were selected from among 100 identified as 'most vulnerable' by village managers and Community Health Promoters.



New staff

Four talented new staff members joined UKR as it reached even more families. Bramwel Mwavali and Melvin Ambande joined the Education team, while Mectarious Kipketer joined Media, and veterinarian Dennis Liazula joined the Agriculture team.



New outreach

Family Care is UKR's main focus, but in 2025 several thousand more people benefitted from its community initiatives. These include free camps for vision care and health screenings, distributions of seedlings, and restoring three community water points.

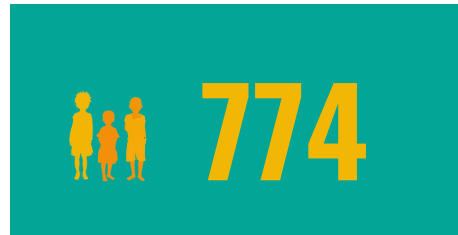
Our Reach in 2025



Families served



Children assisted



Full scholarships



Homesteads rebuilt



Goals & projects funded

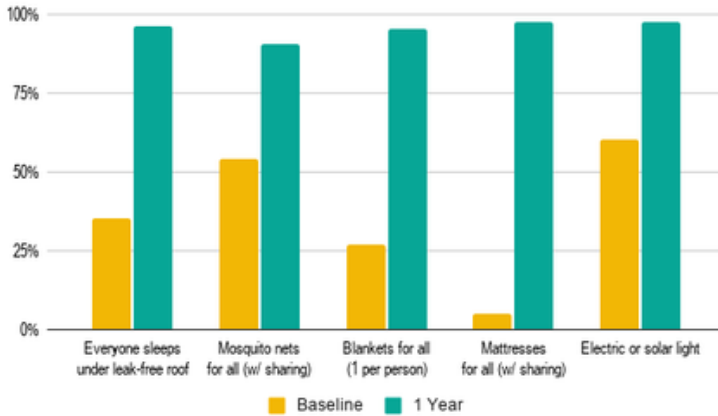


Lives deeply impacted



Dignified Homes impact

Can the family sleep comfortably at night?

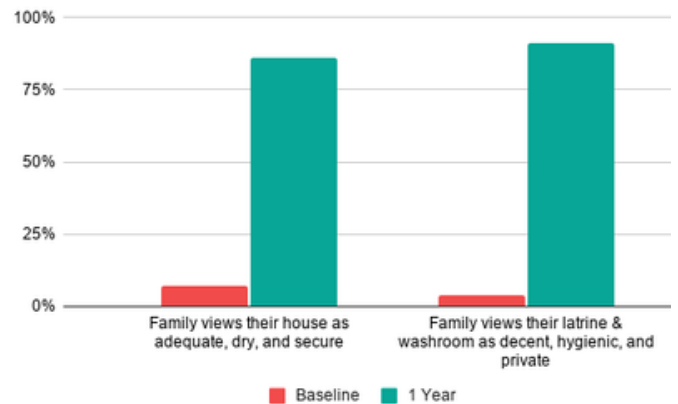


Within the first year, and with materials provided by the Family Care program, almost all families (re)build a house, kitchen, and latrine & washroom building. The pride families have in their new homesteads creates motivation to keep the momentum growing and enables families to visualize rapid progress in all aspects of life.



Families rebuild their homesteads in the first year of Family Care, with UKR offering them nails, cement, and roofing so that they can renovate or construct homes offering them dignity in their communities.

Do families' homesteads offer them dignity?



After building or renovating houses, latrines, and kitchen out-structures, more is needed for the place to truly feel like a good home. Families organize what they can, and can also draw on their family budgets to procure furniture from local carpenters if they lack very basic items like beds to share, or a table and chairs in their living room. Other essentials like light and water storage are also addressed as families bring their homesteads up to the local standards.

2025 Dignified Homes programming

94
Homes (re)built
sheltering 470 people

2032 Trainings

124 Solar lights

891 Mattresses & blankets



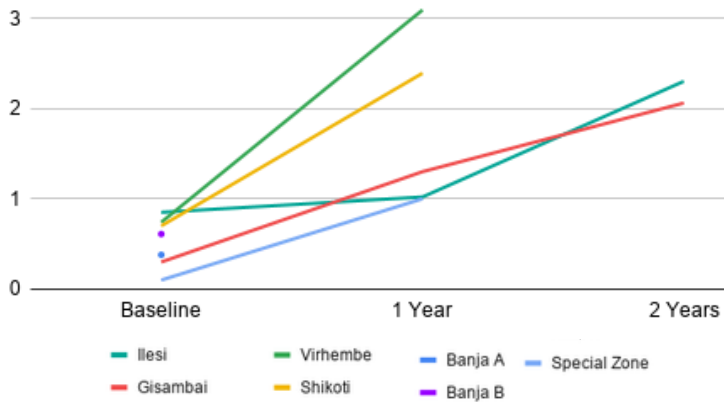
Penninah's success

"Our new home has given us peace of mind, comfort, and a fresh start. I've even found myself dancing! Every morning when I wake up and look around, I feel like I'm still dreaming."

-Penninah, a UKR mother and widow who is raising her two sons plus two other young relatives

Agriculture impact

Maize harvest from previous long-rains season
by community zone, dry weight measured in 198-lb sacks

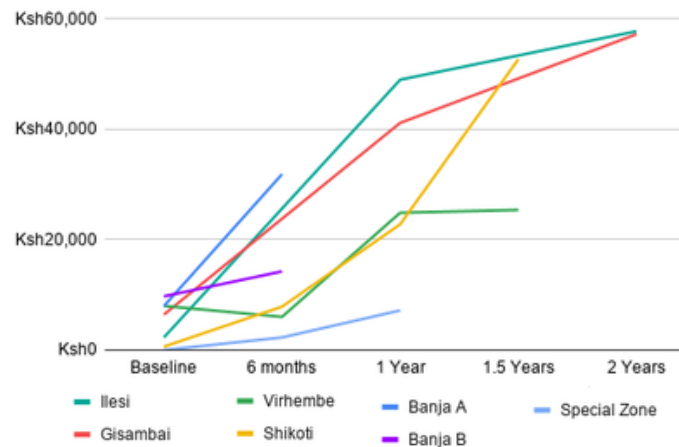


The rapid increase in maize harvests under Family Care comes from extensive training on planting and cultivation practices, plus much larger cultivation areas, and help buying inputs. Families grow more of their staple grain maize while diversifying into fruits and veggies, rearing more animals, and adding things like fodder and trees. This total farm revamp improves food security, family diet, and income.



Families engage in farm training twice monthly, learning cost-conscious sustainable agriculture that covers everything from soil health to agroforestry to vertical gardens. Through this, families build holistic 'full circle' systems where each activity complements another and where - just like in the Family Care program overall - *everything is connected*.

Average total value of a family's farm animals
by community zone, in Kenya Shillings



This chart speaks volumes, because farm animals provide food and income now while also acting as a form of savings. When families consistently grow the size and number of their animals, they're not just raising them successfully. As well, they're overcoming unexpected challenges without resorting to selling off their growing investment in chickens, goats, or cows.

2025 Agriculture programming

Crop types sold
3.4x

2489 Trainings

80% Of families planted trees

2x Cultivated land area ('use all space wisely')



Magdaline's success

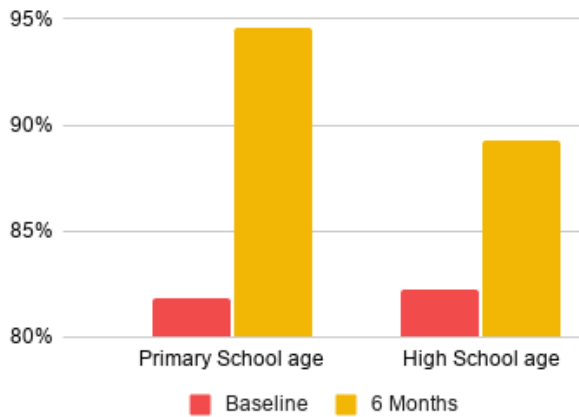
*“Since UKR came into my life, it has been progress after progress. I now have a productive farm and reliable income from my agribusiness. I'm proud to provide for my family... **this is one of the proudest moments of my life.**”*

-Magdaline, mother of two

Education impact

Families with all children in school

Most children who had dropped school for financial reasons return to class soon after joining Family Care.

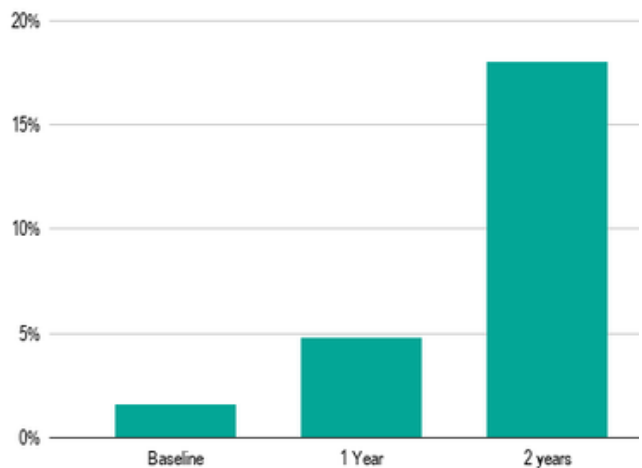


Soon after joining Family Care, UKR's education team works alongside parents to organize a cost-sharing solution to try and get all children back in school. A majority of UKR families receive financial support for educating their primary and high school students (an average of \$65 per family per year). For children and youth out of school for too many years, UKR staff try to help them identify pathways to hands-on skilled careers through vocational training.



Families with any higher education

Families where anyone has started (or graduated with) a college, vocational, or university credential



2025 Education programming

956 Students supported

889 Academic & career guidance sessions

High School scholarships
91

Vocational scholarships
113

University scholarships
76

University scholarships are awarded to Family Care youth with top exam scores, while vocational scholarships are open to all Family Care youth who first do some community volunteer work.

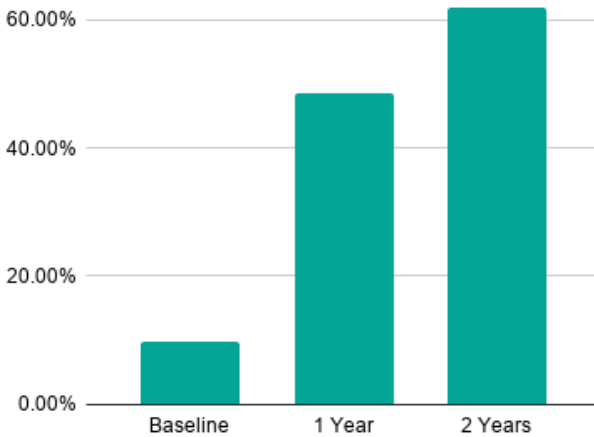
Samwel's success

"My degree is not just a personal accomplishment; it is a direct reflection of your kindness and commitment. Thank you, from the deepest part of my heart, for empowering me to break through barriers. I promise to carry the spirit of your generosity forward in my life."

-Samwel, who earned a BSc in Biomedical Science, & Technology in 2025

Livelihood impact

Families currently operating a business, which they view as profitable and worth continuing

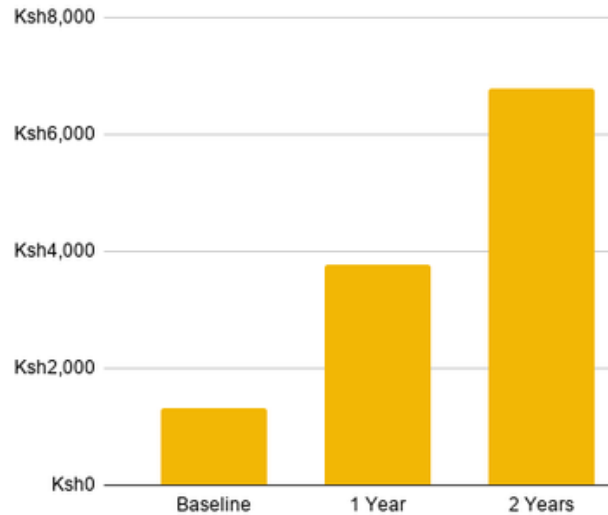


UKR guides families in developing multiple sources of income, generally including both agricultural and non-farm ventures. This builds financial resilience and helps families weather unforeseen challenges while continuing to grow.



Almost everyone does some form of farm business. As well, some parents discover entrepreneurship, while others leverage their location and unique skills to run businesses that can range from sewing clothes to selling fresh doughnuts - or even doing both.

Average value of a family's non-farm business assets, stocks, and capital



Families "start small" on their own to prove a business concept. Then, ventures showing commitment and promise benefit from capital boosts through Family Care budgets.

2025 Livelihoods programming

Families who save

2x

1373

Trainings

132

Business micro-grants

98%

Growth in # of business activities, within 1 year

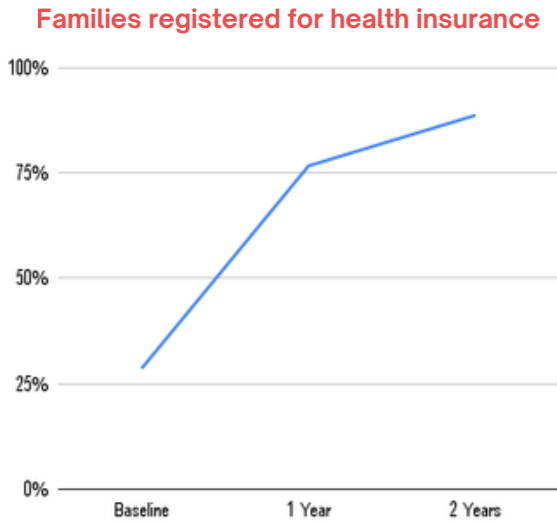


Josephat's success

"I love this venture. Every pot I decorate carries part of my energy and creativity. As much as it's about making money, it's also about showing what I can do."

-Josephat, father of four

Health impact



Families are guided with insurance registration, and may be assisted with payment. Individual Family Care budgets are often used as well to fund urgent treatment or medication. Some of the families joining Family Care were selected in part because of disabilities or urgent untreated medical conditions, where insurance and social counseling can quickly reverse frustratingly solvable situations.



Access to care becomes much easier with insurance. Additionally, UKR organizes free medical screening and vision health camps for entire communities in all of its zones, while hospitals and a local optometry school provide qualified experts to run them.



General wellness may be where Family Care shines brightest on the topic of health. Holistic programming in other areas helps families eat well, stress less, and live healthier routines through good hygiene, clean drinking water, and sound sleep.

2025 Health programming

New latrines
93

719 Trainings

73 Homes treated to eradicate termites

802 Mosquito nets, water filters, handwash stations



Lydia's success

"I used to experience frequent chest pains but could not afford medical care. Through UKR's support, I accessed diagnosis for asthma, and today I have an inhaler and feel much better. I now help my husband with farm work, and I can sell firewood and do soap making to support our family."

— Lydia, a UKR mother raising four children, three grandchildren, and a niece

2025 Team

FRIENDS OF KENYA RISING - U.S.

Staff

JOHN CHISHOLM - EXEC DIRECTOR

Board of Directors

LEAH BENNETT - SECRETARY
LINDA BENNETT
ALISON HYDE
MARY KLAUS
MARY KRAUS

FRANNIE NOBLE - VICE PRESIDENT
CARRA MCFADDEN - PRESIDENT
JOHN MCFADDEN - TREASURER
RACHEL WILLIAMSON-WARD

UNITED KENYA RISING - KENYA



Board of Directors

MARGARET BOLENGE - CHAIR
PAMELA MBIHYA
GETRUDE SIKUKU
FLORENCE WASWA
PETER MUHAVI

Social Work

ANGELA MISESI
BROWN LOMOSI
AKAPITUS MATEKWA
DOROTHY SHILWATSO
MILLICENT KAVAYI
NANCY MUYONGA
FARHAN MOHAMED
MELVIN AMBANDE
LILIAN KISIENYA

Education

LYDIA ULUMA
GRACE WAMBUI
BRAMUEL MWAVALI
JACK BUTICH
ANDREW LUSWETI

Agriculture

ALFRED KITAYI
HULDAH KEMUNTO
DENNIS LIAZULA
ELECTINE WAFULA
ELIZABETH MAFUNO
FRED KHAEMBA
HUMPHREY SOGONI
MARK MMBONO

Administration

NELSON IDA - C.E.O.
MARTHA ETEMESI

Accounts

MERCY NAWADE
TRIXIE YVONE ARIKO
VERA VIHENDA

Media

ELSEA WEKESA
OKOTH JOHN
VICTOR BIRAI
MECTARIOUS KIPKETER

Public Health

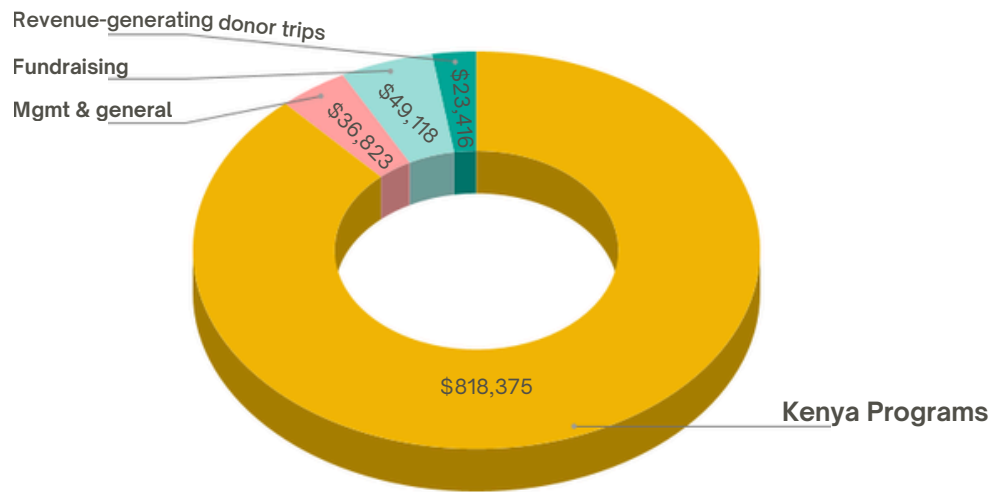
DENNIS OKISAI
GODFREY MUHATIA
DOMINIC KHAYIYA
VERONICAH KHAYERI
WINNIE WEKESA

Support

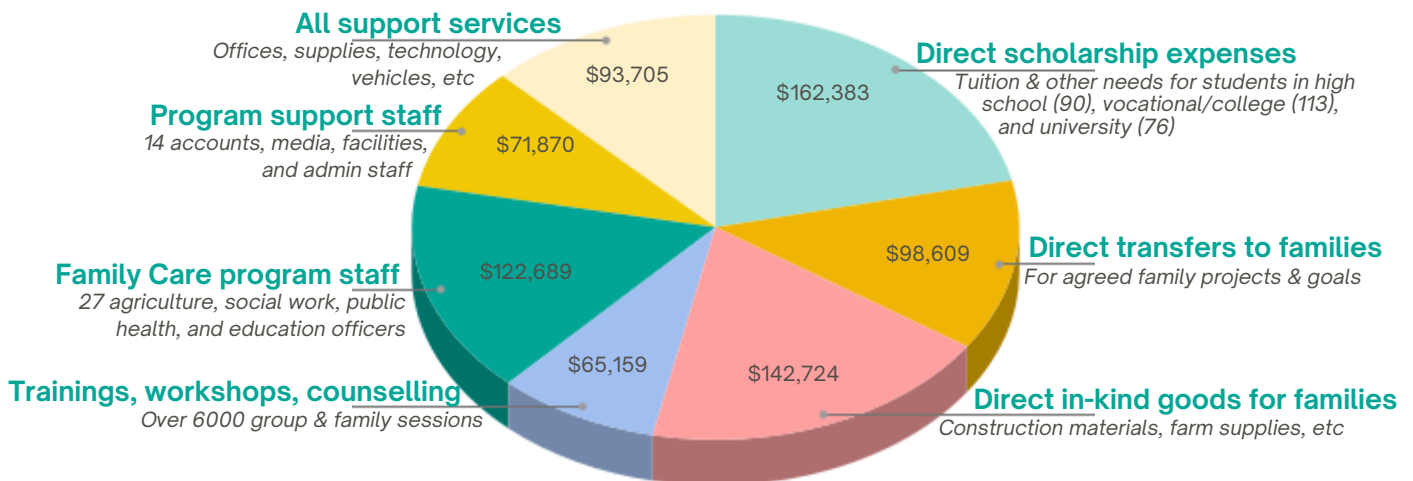
ANNE MUHONJA
LYDIA MUSINDI
JOSEPH LOPEM
HUMPHREY ADAMBA

2025 Finances

FRIENDS OF KENYA RISING EXPENSES



UNITED KENYA RISING EXPENSES*



*Represented in USD, based on total 2025 Kenya Shillings expenditure of 96,913,542 converted at end-year rate of 128 KES/USD

Thank you!



Friends of Kenya Rising



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www.friendsofkenyarising.org