

Raising Futures Kenya Annual Report 2020

Formerly known as: Vision Africa Give a Child a Future

Raising Futures Kenya works together with vulnerable children and young people in Kenya to enable them to access free technical vocational education, business skills training and mental health and wellbeing support through our Seed of Hope programme. We support students aged 14-25 to find secure employment or set up a small business enabling them, and their families, to build a financially secure future, free from poverty. Our Seed of Hope programme won a Small Charity Big Impact Award in 2019 from The Foundation for Social Improvement and has been externally audited for impact, being rated as 'highly impactful'.

For 19 years we have worked in close collaboration with local people and organisations in Kenya to develop projects that are owned by the community and create real, lasting, sustainable change. We support young people like **Linet** (pictured), who had an incredibly traumatic childhood and no practical skills or educational opportunities. She graduated from Seed of Hope with a qualification in Fashion Design and is now a tailor at the company where she did her work experience. As well as supporting her twins, she is now able to send money to support her six siblings with their education and hopes to start her own business when she has saved enough.



"My life wouldn't have been good without Seed of Hope. I've found everything that I've never had before. I don't know where I would have been right now without it, I would have been demoralised, I probably would have died because of my low self-esteem and depression."

- Linet, Seed of Hope student



Photo: Students at Seed of Hope Kitui

The need for our work

“With no other options for education or work, I turned to sex work to put a roof over my head. The harsh life as a street girl, I was harassed and abused by the big boys and I became pregnant. I thought about committing suicide as I felt like this life has no meaning and my child's life would be even more tragic than mine.” - Seed of Hope student 2019

Across Kenya, over 1.5 million young people aged 15-24 are now unemployed and not in education or training (KNBS Labour Report, Dec20). Half of these young people have lost their jobs since the start of COVID-19. We've seen firsthand the devastating impact this has had on children, young people and families. Many families live hand-to-mouth and rely on casual labour jobs which have now been lost, particularly in the rural areas and slum communities where we work.

Self-employment is now the most secure way to earn an income in these communities and is being encouraged by the Government, but many young people do not have the skills and knowledge needed. Few young people in Kenya have secondary education (only of 27% the young people we work with), and this is often poor quality. Financial literacy (money management) and business skills are not addressed in formal education in Kenya, and young people struggle to access any capital funding to establish their own businesses.

High levels of youth unemployment and poverty puts young people, particularly young girls, in a very vulnerable position - at high risk of exploitation including; child marriage, teenage pregnancy, selling sex as a means to survive, drug/alcohol addiction and criminal activity. Vulnerable girls are also the victims of gender based violence, including rape, sexual violence, sexual harassment and physical violence. These horrendous experiences often cause significant trauma and poor mental health.

Nicholas' Story

Nicholas joined Seed of Hope Kitui in 2020 three years after completing his primary school education. He had spent those three years working for a local butchery in his village. He had no opportunities or hopes and thought he had a bleak future ahead of him.

However, a chance meeting with a former Seed of Hope student meant he heard about the free courses on offer. He immediately enrolled in the Hairdressing and Beauty therapy course. This was a courageous step as he was the only male enrolled in the class amongst 24 girls but that didn't stop him.

Nicholas was a stellar student in his class and was always among the top performers. During the COVID-19 lockdown, when centres were closed for face-to-face training, Nicholas started a work attachment (internship) with a local salon. At first customers were curious, as not many people had seen a man working in a salon before within the community. In the two months that he was on attachment, he was able to build a number of clients who would specially request him as they were so impressed with his skill.

The work experience gave Nicholas the confidence he needed to learn more about the workplace and running a business, and the motivation to develop his skills when the face-to-face training resumed. His parents have seen his personal growth and can attest to the dedication in which Nicholas has put in making sure he is the best at his craft.

Nicholas is now working at the salon where he did his work attachment and has grown his network of private clients. He intends to apply for the business loan offered by Seed of Hope Kitui to start his own salon and cosmetic shop. In his own words; **“Seed of Hope has helped me change my life in ways that I didn't think were possible, I'm glad that I was able to take this opportunity for it has given me the hope for a better future”.**



History

Raising Futures Kenya (registered charity number 1181670), formally known as Vision Africa Give a Child a Future, is a UK registered charity working in partnership with a Kenyan Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO). Vision Africa Give a Child a Future (registered charity No is: 1091198) was established in the UK in 2001 by Rev and Mrs Packard and was registered as a charity in England and Wales on 18th March 2002 under its constitution, which was adopted on 15th December 2001 and amended 9th March 2002.

In December 2018, we re-branded as Raising Futures Kenya. In January 2019 a new organisation, Raising Futures Kenya CIO was registered with the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO, registered charity number 1181670) to replace Vision Africa Give a Child a Future. The Trustees of the charity felt that the CIO structure, which was not available when the charity was originally founded, was more appropriate for the future ambitions of the charity. Once all of Vision Africa Give a Child a Future's (1091198) liabilities and assets are transferred to Raising Futures Kenya (1181670), Vision Africa Give a Child a Future (1091198) will be officially closed and removed from the Charity Commission register.

Vision, Mission and Themes

Our **vision** is a world where all children and young people in Kenya live with dignity, hope, and the opportunity to fully participate in society.

Our **mission** is to create opportunities with children and young people in Kenya to break the cycle of poverty and inequality and fulfil their potential.

Our overarching themes are embedded in each and every aspect of our work at Raising Futures Kenya.

Theme 1 – Sustainability - We work hard to ensure that everything we do is environmentally and socially sustainable. Whether it is the decisions we make about travel or printing, or the projects we engage with in Kenya.

Theme 2 – Transparency - We want to be leaders in transparency in the charity sector. We commit to making our decision-making processes, finances and fundraising practices publically available for our supporters to see for themselves. We're very confident in our approach to development and management.

Theme 3 – Respect - We treat everyone with respect, whether students and their families, our generous donors who make our work possible, the teachers at our vocational training centers, or our employees and volunteers.

Theme 4 - Person centred - 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 with the children, young people and families we support to ensure they have all the support they need to break the cycle of poverty and inequality.

Trustees

Trustees are chosen and elected by the Raising Futures Kenya Board. The following trustees served throughout the year 2020:

Chair: Andrew King

Treasurer: Michael Doris (appointed 23.09.20)

Secretary: Jo Chamberlain

Andrew Munnings

Deborah Kimathi

Brogan Pierce

James Bramble

Manni Kuthiala (appointed 23.09.20)

The following Trustee stepped down in Feb 2020: Laura Roberts

Founders - Mrs. V. Packard. Rev. J. Packard.

Bankers - Barclays Bank, Tamworth Business Centre 24 Middle Entry, Tamworth, B79 7NJ

Independent Examiner - Susan Forde

All photos and stories in this report are shared with consent.

Chair's Report for the period Jan-Dec 2020

Throughout this incredibly difficult year, we found ourselves increasingly drawn to the power of young Kenyans and their stories to keep us going.

I personally found myself regularly going back to a quote from Esther, the head girl at Seed of Hope Nairobi.

When asked what advice she would give to her past self, she said; **"When you feel like you have reached the end of your rope, tie a knot and hold on. You are stronger than you know."**

This was the advice we needed this year. 2020 was the most challenging year we've ever experienced as an organisation. It presented the perfect storm for us; huge increased need for emergency aid due to COVID-19, coupled with a huge reduction in funding available to charities working in international development with many funders closing their doors to charities like us.

Thankfully several funders and our wonderfully generous supporters stepped in during our hour of need and granted us emergency funding which we were able to quickly disburse to Kenya, and to the families and children who had no food and no rent to keep a roof over their heads. We are incredibly grateful to our loyal pool of generous supporters, many of whom have been with us since the charity began, who donated to our emergency appeal and enabled us to be where we were most needed most. Here is a summary of what's happened at Raising Futures Kenya in 2020.

Staff changes

In May 2020 we wished Vic Hancock Fell, our UK Director, a happy maternity leave as she had her second child. Kirsty Erridge, our Deputy UK Director, was promoted to interim UK Director to cover Vic's role until her return in July 2021.

Projects

Despite COVID-19, 2020 has seen us make significant progress towards our strategic priority areas:

1. Continue to deliver and develop/improve our vocational training model (Seed of Hope) to boost opportunities for young men and women from vulnerable communities in Kenya.
2. Build the capacity of our two partner specialist schools, Percy Davies and Kirunguru, to facilitate full community ownership and future sustainability of the schools, without the financial support of Raising Futures Kenya.
3. Equip and empower the families of the re-integrated children and former sponsored students, to be income secure and able to provide for their families' basic needs.

COVID-19 Emergency Support

Thanks to our incredible generous supporters and funders we were able to very quickly launch an emergency support project for the most vulnerable children and families who had lost all of their household income when restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 lead to huge unemployment levels. As our team in Kenya work very closely with the children, young people and families in our projects we had the infrastructure in place to quickly assess the level of support each family needed and within 2 weeks were able to provide them with emergency support. We're really proud of this and it's certainly one of the advantages of being a small organisation and being able to be agile and respond quickly.

We supported 358 people with emergency support such as food, hygiene products and cooking fuel. We also paid rent for many families at risk of becoming homeless. Towards the end of the year many families were supported with a small amount of seed funding to start a small business so they wouldn't be reliant on us for on-going support. There are still young people we are supporting going into 2021.



Seed of Hope Programme



Our flagship holistic vocational training programme, which is free for all vulnerable 14-25 years olds, continued despite the COVID-19 lockdown resulting in all schools and colleges in Kenya closing from March 2020. Our fantastic team of teachers quickly pivoted and adapted the courses to be delivered to students remotely. This was done through a variety of WhatsApp groups, text messages, phone calls and printed work packs for those children and young people without phones. All students were also able to access free counselling sessions with some of our specially trained teachers. This mental health wellbeing support was so vital to many students who were going through incredibly difficult situations.

Our 3 Seed of Hope training centres remained closed for 7 months. When they reopened we had a phased return of students with some students going on work placements whilst others came in for their practical lessons and then swapped. Sadly, although most students continued with the remote learning, not all students were able to come back to practical lessons. This was due to a variety of reasons; not living in the area any longer (having returned to their home or to live with extended family), having to find work to support their families due to the widespread increase in poverty but perhaps the most sad was the number of girls who didn't return because they had been married off or had fallen pregnant. This is a common issue affecting girls in communities the world over, poverty often leads to exploitation of girls and young women or forces them to make heartbreaking decisions such as turning to prostitution or crime to survive. Our teachers have been working closely with these girls, and their families, to support them back into learning.

We treat every student as an individual and tailor the support they need to help them stay in education. This includes practical support such as free cooked lunches, menstrual health products for all girls and support with travel costs. We continue to provide our Life Skills, Wellbeing, Empowerment and Gender Equality sessions to students every week. These sessions cover topics such as healthy relationships, respect, gender based violence, female genital mutilation, sexual and general health, nutrition and many other topics which help to empower young people to know and assert their rights. We are committed to challenging harmful traditional practices and anything which perpetuates gender inequality. Students also have access to free counselling whenever they need it to help them cope with past trauma and depression/anxiety etc. We know that students can't focus on learning if they are hungry or suffering from a past trauma, we're here to support them with these issues so they're in the best possible position to learn and build a secure, rewarding future for themselves.

We have been working on increasing sustainability of the two rural Seed of Hope centres, Kitui and Kariti, through the expansion of their farms. We've been planting a mixture of short-term and long-term crops to supplement the lunches provided for the students and surplus can be sold to generate income to subsidise the running costs of the training centres. We're very keen to reduce our environmental impact so growing our own crops is a small step towards this.



All of our staff are from the communities we work in so we knew there was an increased need for training and support for young people to be able to set up their own business, as employment opportunities were even more scarce. 1.5 million young people under 25 are unemployed in Kenya now, almost half of these lost their jobs due to COVID-19. In November 2020 we undertook a large-scale Community Needs Assessment surveying over 300 participants across the communities we work alongside. Participants included: students, parents/guardians, teachers, local business owners, Government officials, local education and training providers, village leaders etc.

The findings from this needs assessment has given us time to review our Seed of Hope programme and how we can increase the students we can work alongside in 2021, alongside increasing sustainability of the programme so there isn't a reliance on overseas funding.

Special Education Schools Programme



Thanks to a grant from Danish charity Help Every Day, we have made significant progress with Strategic Objective 2. Both Percy Davies and Kirunguru Special Education Schools now benefit from income generating farms to supplement their feeding programme and generate income for school costs. The schools have planted a variety of short-term and long-term crops so there is something for every season. In 2021 the schools will set up their additional income generating activities which includes a small bakery and a posho mill to make flour. We are confident both schools will be totally self-reliant mid way through 2021.

Photo: New crops ready for planting

Family Strengthening Programme

We've made excellent progress with Strategic Objective 3 thanks to our Programme Manager Winnie. At the end of 2020 all 41 families in our Family Strengthening Programme had taken part in financial literacy and business skills training, and had received their business start up grant. They have set up a variety of businesses from general stores, fruit and vegetable stalls, food stalls, second hand clothing and homeware stores, basket weaving, mat making, tailoring, farming and many more!



Photo: Nelius, guardian of one of the children, at her new stall selling beans and pulses.

Our goal is that these families will be running successful profitable businesses that enable them to generate income to support their children's basic needs and education costs by the end of 2021 so they will be fully self-sufficient and independent.

This training and opportunity to become financially independent was more important since COVID-19. Many families rely on casual labour jobs which are often irregular and poorly paid. Sadly due to lockdown restrictions most of these jobs were lost and families lost their only source of income. We provided emergency support such as food and hygiene products. For some families we paid their rent as they'd lost all income and were at risk of becoming homeless. Having the opportunity to set up and run their own family business, and not be reliant on anyone else, is a huge stepping stone towards independence.

This is the final hurdle in a long and emotional journey for 63 children who have been reunited with their families after growing up in a children's home. With this support, these families will never be torn apart by poverty again.

Plans for 2021

Thanks to the Waterloo Foundation for a grant towards developing a new strategy, we are well underway with developing a new 3 year strategy which will be finalised in 2021 ready to be implemented from 2022.

Our needs assessment in November 2020 showed a huge demand for business and financial literacy training courses, along with requests for computer training. In response to this, we will be introducing a new course; 'Business, Financial Literacy and IT Skills Training', at all three Seed of Hope centres to focus on providing the essential skills and knowledge needed to set up a small business. Feedback from the community was that many would like to learn how to set up a business but can't commit to learning a skilled vocational trade. This new 2 month short course will enable people to set up a wide variety of businesses in their local communities. This will help the local economy by circulating money locally and improving poverty levels in the area. We will run this course 6 times a year which means more people can take part in the training and we can target all young people in the community rather than just school leavers. We hope to train 450 young people on this course in a year. We will be offering childcare vouchers to enable young parents to attend the training.

Our vocational training courses will be condensed into 6 or 12 month courses which will enable graduates to start their business or secure employment quicker which will help their household income and help to reduce poverty in the community.

A new Business Hub in our Kitui Seed of Hope centre will be a base for graduates to launch their business from. It will have the tools, equipment, textbooks and computers they need to get their business started. Once they have saved enough they can buy their own tools and set up on their own. The Hub will have a full-time Business and IT teacher available for guidance and support and graduates will be able to ask their vocational training teachers for technical advice. We think the hub will become the perfect stepping stone between full-time education and running a successful business. The building work for the Business Hub will begin in early 2021. We are very grateful to the British & Foreign School Society for supporting this project. Funding towards this was received at the end of 2020 although the building will begin in 2021 which is why our income looks higher than our expenditure this year.

As an organisation we are committed to tackling racial and social injustice and will be doing everything we can in 2021 to address inequalities and to become better allies to all marginalised members of society. We have established a UK/Kenya Trustee working group to ensure our two Boards work collaboratively together and have an opportunity to make suggestions and to voice any concerns or issues.

Thank you

As always, the progress made with our projects is only possible thanks to our hardworking and dedicated partner organisation Vision Africa NGO. Mary Mwangi, Florence Olwenge, Winnie Kavutha, Sherry Waweru and all of the dedicated teachers and support staff continue to push for progress across all our programme areas and we are very grateful for their continued energy and hard work.

We continue to prioritise the development of our organisation both in the UK and that of our partner organisation in Kenya and we recognise the importance of capacity building at all levels to ensure we are the most efficient and effective organisation we can be. In 2020 we have worked closely alongside our partner organisation in Kenya to further build their capability and independence and will continue in 2021 as we develop our strategic plans for the next era.

Our fundraising in 2020 was very good mainly thanks to wonderful supporters of our emergency COVID-19 appeal, and for several grants received at the end of 2020 for projects starting in 2021. Unfortunately we are anticipating an uncertain couple of years as major funders are withdrawing their funding for international projects which increases competition for the same small pots of funding, and individuals have changes in the circumstances which may impact their ability to donate.

On behalf of myself, Kirsty and everyone at Raising Futures Kenya we would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank everyone who has contributed to helping us through this year and being able to support the most vulnerable people when they needed us most. Every donor, volunteer, staff member, funder and Trustee has played an integral part in helping us to achieve our mission to create opportunities for vulnerable children and young people in Kenya to break the cycle of poverty and inequality and fulfil their potential. Thank you.



Andy King, Chair of Trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AKING'.

Finance report

The Charity Trustees received no remuneration for their work as Trustees, they were reimbursed for travel expenses in line with our expenses policy.

Receipts from all sources (income) between 1st January- 31st December 2020 was **£227,845**. It is worth noting that £42,872 was income received at the end of 2020 is restricted for projects beginning in 2021.

Payments (expenditure) for the year was **£195,015**.

£171,838 was spent on charitable activities which accounts for 88% of expenditure.

The financial statements have been prepared on the receipts and payments basis plus a statement of Assets and Liabilities in accordance with the charity's constitution and in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011. The accounts have been audited by an independent examiner.

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 approximately 3-6 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 restricted reserves at the end of the year to cover 3 months UK running costs.

Risk Management

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

Public Benefit Statement

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. Our Chairman's report details how we have delivered our purposes for public benefit.



Photo: Seed of Hope Fashion Design student

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of our dedicated supporters and donors, without your commitment and generosity we wouldn't be able to continue our much needed work supporting vulnerable children and young people in Kenya. Thank you.



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
Raising Futures Kenya

On accounts for the year
ended

31st December 2020

Charity no
(if any)

1181670

Set out on pages

11-12

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Susan Forde

Date:

14/06/2021

Name:

Susan Forde

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

ACCA

Address:

1 Hurston Grove

Storrington

RH204HQ

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name Raising Futures Kenya	No (if any) 1181670
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CC16a



Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date 01/01/2020	To	Period end date 31/12/2020
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	64,297	2,632	-	66,929	61,654
Grant income	15,163	138,804	-	153,967	67,576
GiftAid	6,947	-	-	6,947	9,755
Bank Interest	2	-	-	2	15
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	86,409	141,436	-	227,845	139,001
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	86,409	141,436	-	227,845	139,001
A3 Payments					
Charitable activities	56,185	115,653	-	171,838	106,289
Cost of raising funds	16,647	-	-	16,647	14,735
Administration	2,675	2,350	-	5,025	1,830
Overheads	366	295	-	661	1,401
Governance	844	-	-	844	603
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	76,717	118,298	-	195,015	124,858
A4 Asset and investment purchases. (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	76,717	118,298	-	195,015	124,858
Net of receipts/(payments)	9,692	23,138	-	32,830	14,143
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	32,114	19,734	-	51,848	-
Cash funds this year end	41,806	42,872	-	84,678	14,143

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Barclays Account 1 RFK	31,444	42,872	-
	Barclays Account 2	2,614	-	-
	RBS	6,592	-	-
	Total cash funds	40,650	42,872	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	See B2 note	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	PAYE Payable (refund due in 2021)	932	-	-
	Pension Payable (refund due in 2021)	224	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		Andrew King	11.06.2021	
		Michael Doris	21.06.2021	