

Rafiki Thabo Foundation - 2025 online impact survey data



Introduction

We sent a link to our online impact survey to all scholars and graduates that we hold email addresses for (via our CRM), posted it on the different country scholars' WhatsApp groups, and asked our in-country representatives to share it with as many scholars as possible. We received a total of 150 responses, of which 90 were from males and 60 from females. 66% of respondents live in Kenya, 29% are from Uganda 5% from Lesotho. This is partly reflective of the number of scholars we are supporting in each country and partly how many we have up to date contact details for. 61% of respondents are still in education, of which 88% are in higher education and 12% are at secondary school. The higher response rate of those at university/ college is due to them being more likely to have an email address or to have joined one of our scholar WhatsApp groups. This report sets out the findings from the 2025 online survey only: a fuller impact report (drawing on previous years' survey data) is included in our annual report each year.

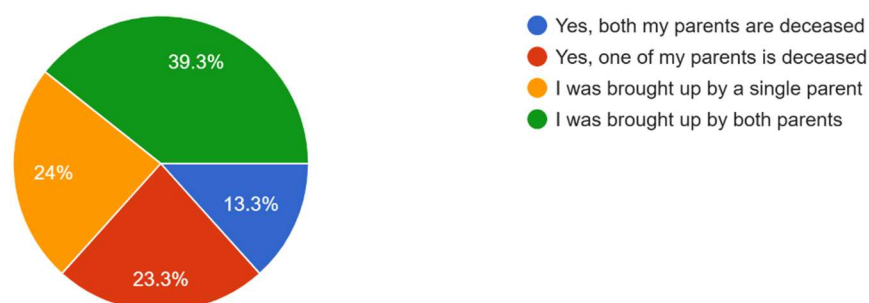
Our impact

1. Parental status

Of the 150 respondents to this year's online impact survey, 37% have lost either one or both their parents and a further 24% were/ are being brought up by a single parent. It goes without saying that, in countries where school or college fees are payable, it is extremely difficult for a child or young person with either no parents or just one parent to pay their school or college fees to continue with their education. Some may be taken in by wider family members but they are often already struggling to make ends meet, including sending their own children to school. Having one parent can also make it more difficult for children to continue with their education as the family are reliant on one income – and that income needs to be generated by someone who is also the only caregiver.

Are you an orphan or were brought up by a single parent?

150 responses



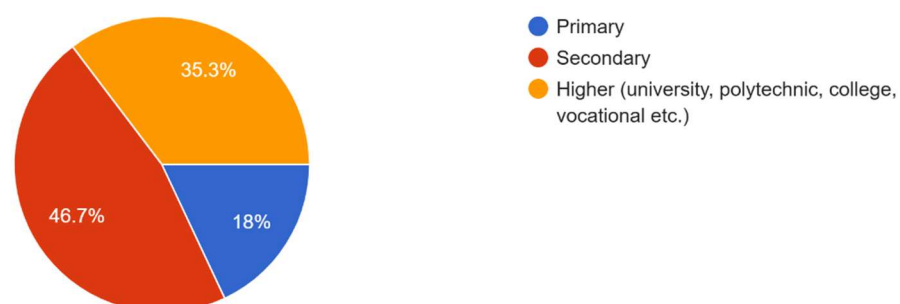
2. Household - educational status

Around a fifth of the survey respondents come from households where the highest level of education achieved (apart from by the respondent) was primary school and almost half were from households where secondary school was the highest level achieved. Statistically, the chances of earning a decent income are affected by the level of education achieved: it is extremely difficult to find work with only primary education, there is more access to jobs with a secondary education but career choices are likely to be very limited. People stand a much better chance of securing decent work if they have some kind of higher education qualification, whether that is a degree, a diploma or certificate, or vocational training. By enabling access to higher education to as many of our scholars who aspire to learn at this level we believe we are contributing to them being able to break the cycle of poverty in which they and their households had become trapped.

It should be noted, however, that this year's data shows a higher percentage (compared with previous years) of scholars from households with others who have completed higher education, which we would hope would mean they had found jobs – indeed 28 of the scholars with someone else in the household with higher education also report that someone in the household has a job. We need to check with our committees, and through our due diligence processes, that we are definitely supporting those who are genuinely in need of our support.

Not including yourself, what is the highest level of education anyone in your household has completed?

150 responses



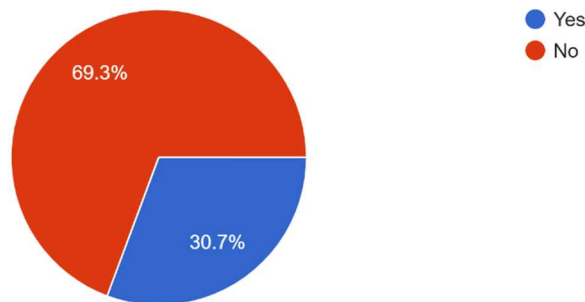
3. Household - employment status

Seven out of ten survey respondents come from a household where nobody else has a job. Without a stable source of income, it is very difficult for families who are struggling to make ends meet find enough money to consistently pay school fees (let alone much higher college fees) as incomes fluctuate – before we started supporting them, some of our scholars will have been continuing with their education but at a much slower rate as their attendance in school from term to term will have depended on their families' ability to pay their fees. Many will have been 'chased away' from school for lack of fees,

forcing them to miss a term or more before being able to get back into the classroom. This leads to a great deal of disruption to their education, slower progress, and a much greater risk of dropping out altogether.

Not including yourself, does anyone in your household have a job?

150 responses



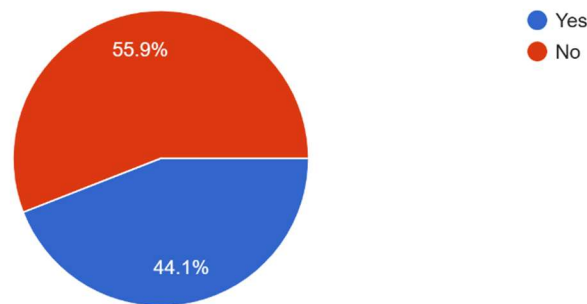
4. Respondent employment status

Worryingly, only 44% of respondents to this year's survey report having a job: this is significantly down compared to previous years. This may be a sign of tougher economic times and contracting labour markets but it is a cause for concern: our assumption has always been that getting an education will lead to securing a decent job or starting a business but this clearly no longer holds. Clearly we don't have the capacity to influence labour markets in Kenya, Lesotho and Uganda but we do need to think whether there is more we can do to facilitate the transition from education into work. We are seeing an increasing number of scholars undertaking vocational training courses, which hopefully makes them more 'job ready'. We have also provided small business start-up grants to some of the scholars with disabilities under Daina's watch who have completed vocational training – should we do more of this? We are also hoping to introduce a coaching scheme through which our graduates can have access to experienced coaches in the UK who may be able to provide support and guidance to transition into the world of work.

Among this year's respondents there are seven teachers, a Finance Officer, a Prisons Officer, a Journalist, a Police Officer, a Social Worker, a Library Assistant, a Radiographer, a Receptionist, a Hairdresser, a Clerical Officer, a Human Resource Officer and a Programme Support Officer.

Do you have a job?

59 responses



5. Giving back to others

85% of respondents say they are giving back to others in their community as a result of being supported by Rafiki Thabo Foundation (this is 7% higher than last year's survey). Examples of the kind of support they are giving include paying school fees for others in the household/ community; giving school items (pens etc to children who are struggling); guiding, tutoring, helping and counselling those still in education; advising against drug use; helping street children; providing hope and inspiration to others; planting trees in the local community; donating clothes; and volunteering as teachers, in hospitals, or with organisations helping others. One scholar has started a savings group and another has started a small project in his village which provides employment for others.

Here are some of the responses received:

'Yes, absolutely. Rafiki Thabo Foundation supported me at a critical point in my academic journey, and this inspired me to give back. I now mentor younger students in my community, especially those from underprivileged backgrounds, encouraging them to stay focused in school and believe in their potential. I also volunteer in community clean-up activities and participate in digital literacy initiatives, helping others gain basic computer skills. The support I received taught me the power of opportunity, and I strive to pass it on.'

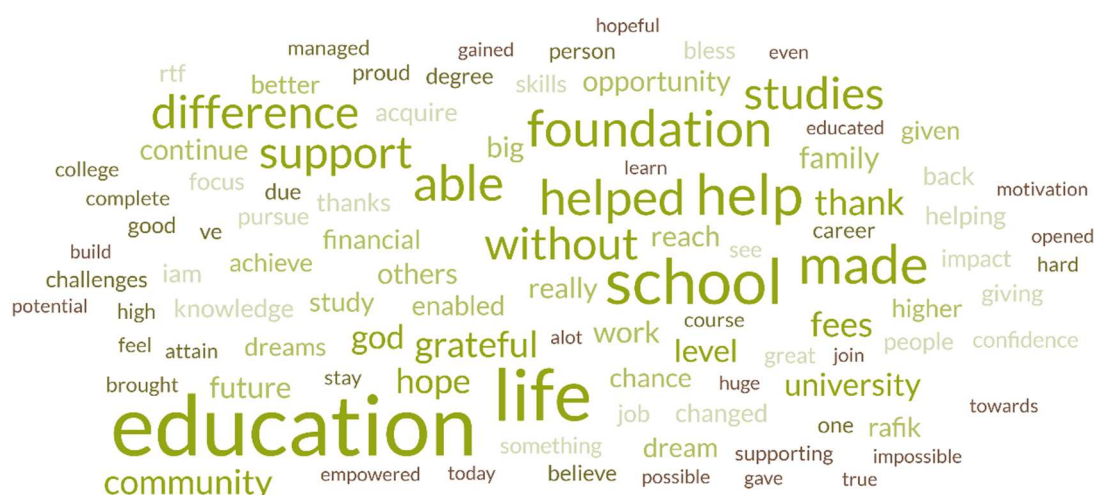
'Yes, I believe I am. I may not be making headlines or doing great things, but in my own small ways, I try to make a difference each day. Whether it's through guiding young people, offering a listening ear, teaching life values, or simply showing up for those who need support: these are the ways I contribute. I believe that helping society doesn't always have to be through massive projects or donations; sometimes, it's in being available, being kind, being a role model, or just choosing to do the right thing even when it's hard. I carry the responsibility of those who look up to me. especially the younger generation, and that alone pushes me to live intentionally and to give back however I can. So yes, I may not be perfect, but I am committed to being a positive influence in the spaces I occupy.'

‘The foundation's support in paying my school fees has not only lifted a heavy burden off my shoulders but also inspired me to give back in every small way I can. I currently support fellow students who are struggling by sharing food, offering academic help in areas like programming and data science, and providing a place to stay when they are in need. I also aspire to help even more in the future by empowering others through technology and education, just as Rafiki Thabo has done for me.’

‘Yes. RTF economically empowered me and in turn I have been able cater for various children school fees in my region. I have an orphan who I am paying for her school fees and also live with her. Others in my neighborhood from less privileged homes whom I support in paying school fees, other I purchase stationary and one in university who is my niece but an orphan so my husband and I took her as our daughter. We have sponsored her education to university level.’

6. The difference being supported by Rafiki Thabo has made

Every single respondent has written about the difference made – the below word cloud provides a snapshot of the main words used.



Here is a selection of the responses received:

‘Your support has made a huge difference in my life: not just in terms of education, but in the way I see myself and my future. Before, pursuing education felt like a distant dream, something I wasn’t sure I could fully manage on my own. But with the organisation’s help, I now walk with confidence, knowing I have people who believe in me and are walking this journey with me. It’s more than school fees or material support: it’s the encouragement, the motivation, and the sense of belonging you’ve given me. You’ve reminded me that I matter, that my dreams are valid, and that I have a responsibility to make something good out of this opportunity. For that, I am deeply grateful. You’ve planted a seed that I hope will grow into something impactful not only for me, but for others I’ll be able to help in future.’

'Without the help from Rafiki I wouldn't be a strong and dedicated lady that I am of today. With the help I got I managed to do very well in my high school level and that

opened the doors for me to secure a spot in the university of accounting, where I studied General Accounting hoping to do chartered Accounting in the future.'

'RTF has really made me believe in better days and humanity. I'm so grateful for having this opportunity and I look forward to help many others achieve their dreams someday. May God bless the founders and all stakeholders for making things possible. Thank you very much.'

'Rafiki Thabo Foundation changed the course of my life. Their support enabled me to pursue higher education when it felt nearly impossible due to financial constraints. With their help, I am now working towards a degree in Business Information Technology. Beyond academics, the foundation restored my hope and dignity. I have gained confidence, purpose, and a deep sense of responsibility to impact others positively. Their belief in me has fueled my ambition, and I will forever be grateful.'

'I have been able to achieve higher education, bachelors degree, which has transformed me to acquire good behaviour, skills and knowledge which I believe is important not only to me but also i have impacted my other young family members and people around my community who see me as role model.'

'They changed my life by funding my studies, boosting my self-esteem, and helping me realize I can succeed despite challenges.'

'Rafiki Thabo's support also gave me stability, motivation, and the chance to build a better future through education and hard work.'

'Rafiki Thabo has helped me to reach the level which I could not expect. I am the first person to reach at this level in my family and I am proud of this.'

'Giving me access to my education that I would be struggling to afford. It has eased the financial burden to my family by this it has made me to work harder because I know someone believes in my potential. Rafiki Thabo has empowered me to dream bigger and am confident to pursue my goal and have a better life.'

'Rafiki have made me achieve all I did regardless of being orphan and coming from unemployed family.'

'Rafiki Thabo Foundation has brought light in my life since now I can be able to help my family and the society at large.'

'Without their support, I would not have been able to continue my university education. They stepped in at a time when I had no other options, and thanks to them, I am now pursuing my degree with hope and determination. Their help has given me the stability to focus on my studies and the inspiration to work hard and help others in return. I will always be grateful.'

'From a street kid to an educated employed person.'

'I am learned and I am in more enlightened which makes me make more sound decisions.'

'The community is proud of me and see potential in me despite being a person with disability.'

'First of all I want to take this opportunity to appreciate rafik thabo foundation for what it has done for me .I completed secondary school and I spent 3 years home lacking school fees to continue with my education journey until I was called to go and look for the admission at the university: it was a miracle to me because in my family no one has ever completed primary school and I am an example. I feel grateful and proud for being a teacher being helped by Rafiki Thabo Foundation. If you were not the ones I would have stopped at the end of secondary school but your support has made me feel proud and grateful.'

'Rafiki has enlightened me and obviously has turned me from hopeless to a hopeful gentleman.'

'Without their support, I would not have been able to continue with my education due to financial challenges. They have given me hope, stability, and the chance to focus on my future. Because of their help, I am now able to attend school regularly, perform better in my studies, and work towards my goals with confidence.'

'Rafiki has transformed into a respected person in my community. I have a degree and am also a director of studies at a school where I work.'

'Rafiki Thabo has made my dreams come true because of having educated me and now am employed as a professional person.'

'It has also helped me to build self love because before these Rafiki Thabo people started helping me I had self negligence.'

'It did restore my hope and unlocking my dream career.'

'If it were not for Rafiki I wouldn't have completed my college studies seamlessly. The fact that my fees were catered for I had full concentration in my studies and excelled with flying colours which I believe largely contributed to my being shortlisted to my current job interview. Also I'm able to support my family and community in my own little ways.'

'Rafiki Thabo has greatly changed my life by supporting my education. Because of their help, I have been able to stay in school and focus on my studies without worrying about school fees. Their support has also motivated me to work hard and give back to my community after my high school exams I didn't have hope to join college for two years but rafiki Thabo stepped in am so grateful.'

'Rafiki Thabo has made a life-changing difference in my life. Without their support, I would have struggled to continue with my education due to financial challenges. Their help allowed me to stay in school, focus on my studies, and work towards my goals without the constant stress of school fees. I have grown more confident, hopeful, and determined because I know someone believes in me. Their support has not only opened

doors academically but has also inspired me to believe in my potential and want to uplift others in return.'

'It has give me an opportunity to prove myself to the community that I can be of help and make a difference in the community.'

'Rafiki has made my life to be amazing and a testimony to others. They have educated me from secondary to university and secured me a job which I am enjoying.'

'I was almost losing hope in life but through the help of Rafiki Thabo am encouraged and now I have hope in life.'

'Rafiki Thabo has made a huge difference in my life because I am now able to focus on my studies without any financial barriers.Thank you for making my dreams come true.'

'Rafiki Thabo has made a huge difference in my life. Without their sponsorship, I would not have been able to continue with my education due to financial challenges. Their support has allowed me to stay in school, focus on my studies, and work towards a better future. I now have hope and confidence that I can achieve my dreams and support my family one day. I'm truly grateful for the opportunity they have given me.'

'Rafiki Thabo brought light to my life at some point I lost hope and viewed life to be meaningless but through RTF I am whom I am today God Bless RTF do so much.'

'So much difference. I'm an educated girl now with a career path to follow different from my past as a girl in the village lost with no hope of education.'

'Rafiki Thabo has made a big difference in my life by giving me the opportunity to continue with my education. Without their support, I might not have been able to stay in school. Their help has also built my confidence and inspired me to work hard so I can one day help others the same way they have helped me. I now feel more hopeful about my future and motivated to make a positive impact in my community.'

'Rafiki Thabo changed my life by giving me the chance to complete my university education, something that would have been impossible without their support. The foundation not only lifted the financial burden but also gave me hope and motivation to keep going.'

'Without their support, I would have struggled or even been unable to continue my education. They gave me the opportunity to focus on my studies without the constant stress of financial pressure. Because of them, I've gained not only knowledge but also confidence, purpose, and hope for a better future.'

'Their support has opened doors for me that I never thought were possible. I now believe in my potential, and I'm determined to use what I've learned to build a better life for myself and to give back to my community.'

'Thank you for believing in me.'