

# Rafiki Thabo Foundation

## Annual Report & Accounts

For the period 1st January 2024 to 31st March 2025



# RAFIKI THABO FOUNDATION

(Registered charity number 1193124)

## Trustees

Jonathan Uglow (Chairman)

Andrew Uglow (Secretary)

Susannah Carras

Elizabeth Dunford

Paul Evans FCA

Benjamin Hitchens

Lisa Warne

## Director

Janet Hayes

## Bankers

Lloyds Bank, PO Box 1000, Andover, BX1 1LT

## Examiner

Gary Howard, Howard Wilson Chartered Accountants, 36 Crown Rise, Watford, WD25 0NE

# Introduction from Chair of Trustees

On behalf of all the trustees, staff and volunteers at Rafiki Thabo Foundation, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this our annual report and accounts.

Reviewing this extended financial year of 2024-2025, I am filled with pride at what has been achieved, and by equal measure, gratitude for all who join us in the vitally important work of enabling young people in Kenya, Uganda and Lesotho to access education. This of course includes the core Rafiki team, but also I am thinking of the many, many loyal supporters who donate each year, those who volunteer for us at events and those that are always looking to provide support through a helpful introduction or idea. In my mind, every such action speaks loudly against the global headwinds which, in this time of financial pressure and political uncertainty, seem to encourage us to step inwards rather than reach outwards, to pull up our defences rather than mobilise our resources to shape the world to be a better place.



In the words of Nelson Mandela, 'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world' – enjoy reading how with your support, Rafiki Thabo is seeing that lived out over and over again, one Scholar at a time.

With all best wishes

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

*Jon Uglow, Chair of Trustees*



# Our Impact in 2024/25

We support individuals and their communities in Kenya, Lesotho & Uganda through education that embraces their differing abilities by:

## Providing scholarships

In 2024/25, we supported 565 children and young people to continue with their education, of which were living with a disability



### 49 OF OUR SCHOLARS GRADUATED IN 2024/25

and 14 completed secondary school and either found work or waited to continue their education



## Providing school meals

In 2024/25, we provided 12,600 school meals to children in Uganda who would otherwise have gone hungry



### THOSE CHILDREN ARE LESS LIKELY TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL & MORE ABLE TO CONCENTRATE IN CLASS

This means they are more likely to do well in their secondary exams and therefore to proceed onto higher education or secure decent work



## Improving the learning environment

In 2024/25, we continued to work with our partner schools in Kenya, Lesotho & Uganda to improve facilities



### BUILT A GIRLS' TOILET BLOCK AT A PARTNER SCHOOL IN UGANDA

and provided sports equipment, improved the electricity supply to the science lab and purchased a photocopier for our partner school in Lesotho



## Enabling education for children with disabilities

working through partners in Kenya, in 2024/25 we supported around 210 children and their families



### FUNDED TRAINING FOR 160 PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

Those parents can now provide therapy to their children whenever needed and do not have to pay an external therapist to do so

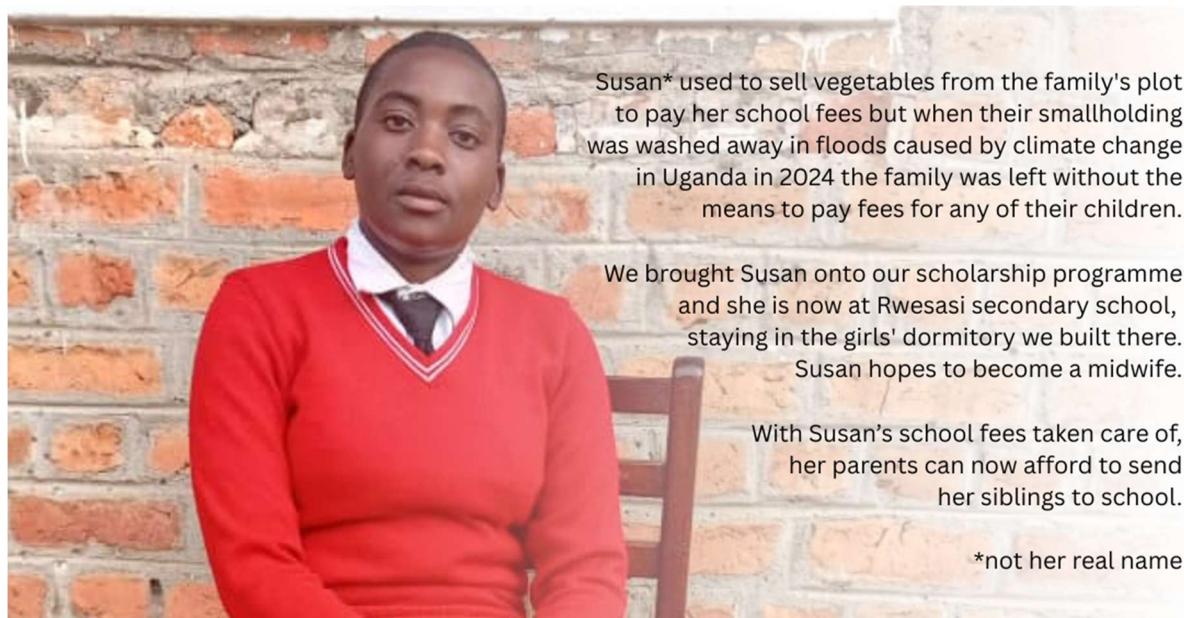


# Highlights of 2024/25

In 2024 and the first quarter of 2025, we continued to implement our work in Kenya, Lesotho and Uganda through four main programmes: our scholarship programme, the 'Eat Well to Learn' school meals programme, our school infrastructure development programme, and a programme to remove barriers to education for people living with disabilities.

## Scholarship programme

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters and donations from our trading subsidiary ACACIA UK, we were once again able to increase the number of students receiving scholarships for their secondary and/or higher education. We also provided scholarships at pre-primary and primary schools for children with disabilities who need more inclusive educational settings rather than attending (free) mainstream primary schools. Over the course of the period, we supported a record **565** scholars to continue with their education, of which 337 were in Kenya, 163 in Uganda and 65 in Lesotho. Of the total number of scholars, 49% were girls and at least 39 were living with a disability. We were also able to accept an additional 21 scholars – like Susan\* featured below – whose families were badly impacted by severe weather events, thought to be caused by climate change, onto our Uganda programme – we had not budgeted for these additional scholars but could not risk them dropping out so managed to find funds to support them.



## 'Eat Well to Learn' school meals programme

Through our 'Eat Well to Learn' school meals programme, we continued to **provide school meals** to at least 70 of the most vulnerable children at Kamugangazi Janan Luwum Memorial Secondary School, one of our partner schools in rural Uganda. These children would otherwise go hungry and as a result would be less able to concentrate during their lessons and learn effectively. The programme has also brought students back into school who had dropped out, has helped to keep students in school who may otherwise have dropped out and has helped to attract new students to the school.



'A meal at school acts as a magnet to get children into the classroom. Continuing to provide a daily meal to children as they grow helps keep them in school... They allow children to focus on their studies rather than their stomachs and boost their education by increasing school enrolment and attendance, decreasing drop-out rates, and improving cognitive abilities.'

(World Food Programme, 2015)

## School infrastructure development programme

We also continued to work with the management teams of our partner schools to find ways of **improving the learning environment for pupils at their schools.**

Following the successful completion of two projects at **Rwesasi Secondary School** in Southwest Uganda in 2023, in 2024/25 we formally adopted the school as our second partner school in Uganda, alongside Kamuganguzi Janan Luwum Memorial Secondary School, and thanks to a grant from a charitable trust, were able to fund the construction of a new girls' toilet block at Rwesasi. The previous toilet block was in such a terrible state of disrepair that girls were put off using it, particularly when they had their periods. Having a new toilet block has given the girls at the school an increased sense of dignity and makes them more likely to attend school throughout the month, leading to better attainment levels due to having an uninterrupted education.



We also continued to work with our longstanding partner school in Voi, Kenya, **ACK St. Bartholomew's School**, with discussions during the period focused on how best to secure a good, reliable supply of fresh water to the school and this important project started in 2025. This will be the first phase in a wider project to bring the school back to its former glory, following the impacts of Covid resulting in reduced fee income which is vital for keeping the school well maintained.

Following a visit to Lesotho in 2023 by trustees Jon and Andy Uglow, we were pleased to be able to fund the purchase of sports equipment for our partner school in Lesotho, Fusi High School. During

the period we also funded some much-needed electrical work in the science lab there, provided funds for a new photocopier, and continued discussions with school management on potential improvements to the learning environment.



## Disability programme

During the period, we consolidated our partnerships with Kenyan-led disability organisations, working closely with the **Autism Society of Kenya (ASK)** and **Dadashi Special Children's Centre** to design projects to remove the barriers to education faced by children with disabilities, as well as continuing to discuss a skills training programme for mothers of children with disabilities with a potential new partner, Life Skills Oasis, which operates in the most economically deprived areas of Thika.

The team at **Dadashi** do an amazing job providing much needed therapy for children with cerebral palsy and counselling to their parents in one of the most deprived areas of Nairobi. Once they have completed their course of therapy, each child is assessed by the Kenya Institute of Education (KISE) to establish the best educational setting for them but unfortunately, many parents are unable to afford to send their children to the recommended schools. In response to this, we are pleased to have several of Dadashi's 'graduates' on our scholarship programme.

During the period, we continued to provide core funding to Dadashi to help them reach financial sustainability, and renovations started on a building they have been gifted by a Kenyan philanthropist – once they have moved into the new premises they will have much more space for expansion and no further rental overhead which will mean they can finally achieve full financial sustainability. We also sent emergency funds for the families who use Dadashi's services whose homes were destroyed by floods thought to be caused by climate change.



Following the success of the **Autism Society of Kenya**'s training of parents and caregivers of children with autism to provide them with therapy throughout Kiambu County between 2021 and 2023, in February 2024 we funded a second round of training of 160 parents and caregivers in neighbouring Murang'a County. They are now able not only to provide much needed therapy to their own children but also train other parents and caregivers of children with autism. The photo below shows some of the children and their parents or guardians who have benefited from the training.



## Fundraising

Our main fundraising event during the period was our **Family Fun Day** at Cokethorpe School in Oxfordshire in July 2024, hosted by CBBC and YouTube star Maddie Moate and our Patron and England Cerebral Palsy Footballer Harry Baker. Unfortunately, the great British summer was not kind to us so we didn't raise as much from this event as hoped but it was still an excellent day with much fun had by all!



We continued to work in partnership with **Hampton Court House School**, who raised funds for us in many ways, including a Rafiki Relay challenge, launched at a school assembly by our Patron and England Cerebral Palsy Footballer Harry Baker, bake sales and a competition in science week.

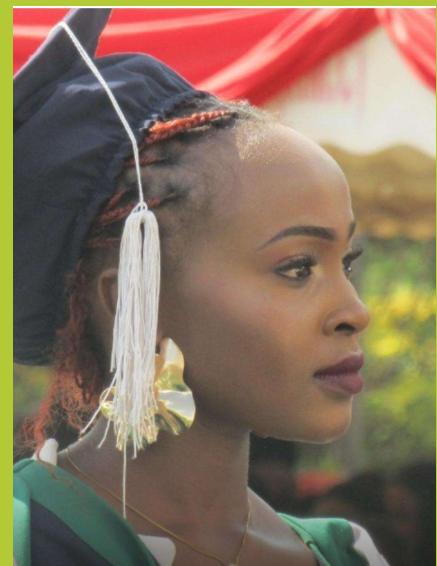


We were so delighted and grateful when seven of our supporters took on the challenge of climbing **Snowdon at sunrise** in September 2024, with trustees Andy Uglow and Lisa Warne and their families taking on the same challenge later in the period. In total, almost £3,500 was raised by our intrepid climbers.



Andy also ran a marathon for us in 2024, raising £1,351, and trustee Zanna did a swimathon for us and raised £901 – super star trustees!

At the end of 2024, we ran our second **Big Give Christmas Challenge** campaign and raised over £15,000. The specific focus of the campaign was the education of women and girls with disabilities and as a result of the funds raised we have been able to support the continued education of 20 women and girls with disabilities in Kenya and Uganda throughout 2025, and a further year of education in 2026 for those who had not yet graduated. One of the young women supported was Rachel (not her real name) whose story is featured below.



Rachel\* was diagnosed with autism when she was 6 – this was a devastating blow to her mother who has mental health problems and severe asthma and was already struggling to pay her school fees. Fortunately, Rachel was able to attend a school with a specialist autism unit, established with our support by our partner the Autism Society of Kenya (ASK), and got the support she needed to complete primary school. ASK then supported her through secondary school and she joined our scholarship programme to study towards a Diploma in Medical Theatre Technology. We were so delighted to see her graduate in 2025 and can't wait to celebrate with her, and ASK, when she gets her first job at a hospital.

*\*not her real name*

Our **ACACIA charity shops** continued to provide us with a reliable and wonderful source of income and we are so grateful to all our shop staff and 100+ volunteers for all their hard work raising funds for us. We were so pleased to open a fifth ACACIA charity shop in Botley, Oxford (pictured below), in July 2024, to increase income levels already generated through our other shops in South Oxfordshire – in Abingdon, Wootton, Grove and Faringdon. We are very grateful to CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP who provided us with pro bono legal advice during lease negotiations for the Botley shop. As costs of running physical shops increase, we also focused on increasing online sales through ACACIA's [eBay shop](#).



The ACACIA charity shops are run by our trading subsidiary, ACACIA UK (Trading) Ltd, and all profits are donated to Rafiki Thabo. In 2024/5, over £150,000 was raised through the ACACIA shops and donated to Rafiki Thabo for the implementation of our programmes.

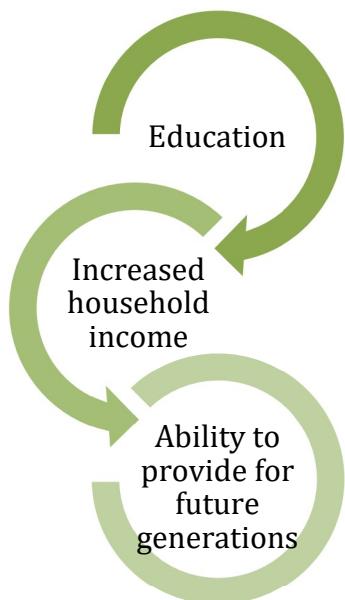
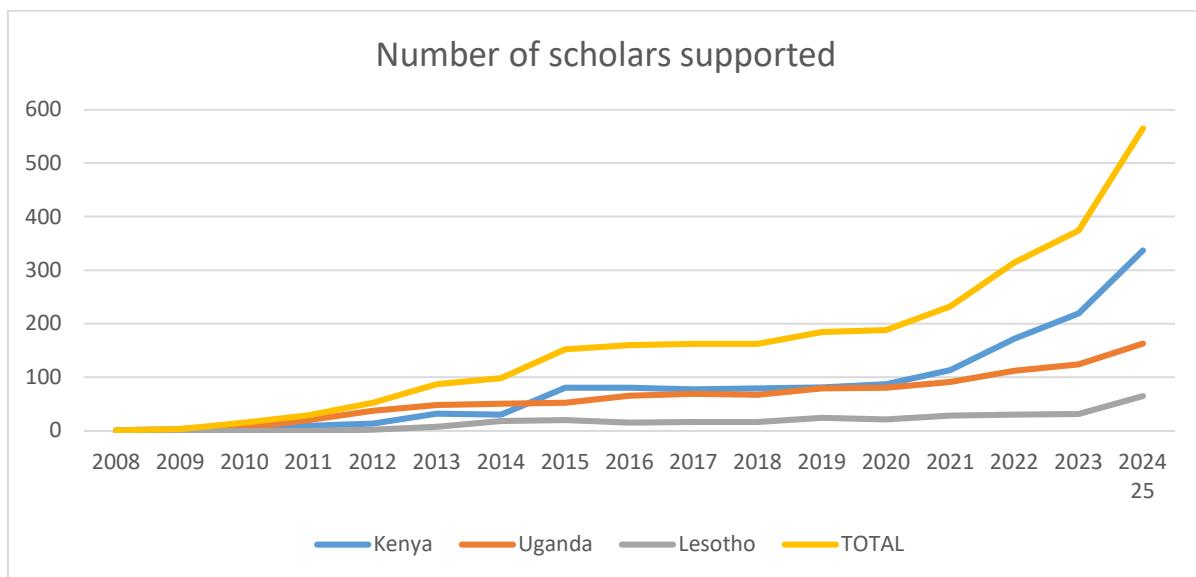
As the fundraising environment becomes ever more challenging, we took a strategic decision to pause our fundraising activities while we undertook a full fundraising review towards the end of the period. Following the review, we are revamping our fundraising approach and activities which we hope will enable us to continue to grow our work and impact.

# Our programmes

## Rafiki Thabo Scholarship Programme

Our core programme is the **Rafiki Thabo Scholarship Programme**. Working in partnership with our in-country committees, we provide grants to promising students from disadvantaged backgrounds to enable them to continue their education at secondary, polytechnic and university levels where otherwise they would be unable to afford the fees. This is not child sponsorship – all students supported by Rafiki Thabo have already qualified for their further education by their own merits. We simply provide financial assistance to enable them to access the education they are qualified to have.

The number of scholars we have supported has grown each year as shown in the chart below:



By the end of March 2025, we had supported a total of **878** Rafiki Scholars to continue with their education. **315** of those have now graduated from higher education and a further **114** have completed secondary school. **46%** of the graduates who have completed our impact survey have secured paid employment in jobs they would not have got without their qualification. Among our graduates we have Teachers, Accountants, Bankers, Doctors, Midwives, Police Officers and Engineers. Others have started their own businesses. By enabling them to get an education, we are giving them a better chance of finding paid work or starting their own business and thus enabling them to break the cycle of poverty in which they, and their families, are trapped.

Hannah is one of 5 siblings and her parents just about managed to cover her school fees but paying for university for her was impossible.

With our support however, Hannah got a business management degree from a Kenyan university and is now a successful business woman with two businesses: one selling shoes in a shop and online and the other providing goods for government contracts.

Hannah now donates some of the school shoes she would otherwise have sold to a local orphanage so the children have shoes to wear to school and also pays the school fees of some of the children in her home village. She is also a proud mum to a daughter who is in school.

With an ever-growing cohort of graduates, we are actively encouraging the development of **Rafiki Alumni Networks** – groups of Rafiki Scholars who want to ‘give something back’ to their communities as a result of being supported by Rafiki Thabo Foundation. In 2024/25, we continued to engage directly with our alumni scholars via Facebook and WhatsApp, and our committees in Kenya and Uganda arranged in person get togethers.

We are particularly excited that, in January 2024, 53 of our Uganda alumni registered their own organisation, called the Rafiki Thabo Uganda Students Association. They meet regularly to support each other, share experiences, and raise money to support others in need and provide an emergency fund for the members of the association. In addition to identifying young people in their community who need a helping hand, the members visit local schools and churches to talk about the importance of education and offer encouragement to children who are struggling. They also provide support and mentoring for Rafiki Thabo’s current scholars and will encourage our scholars as they graduate to join the association and help them continue to pay it forward.

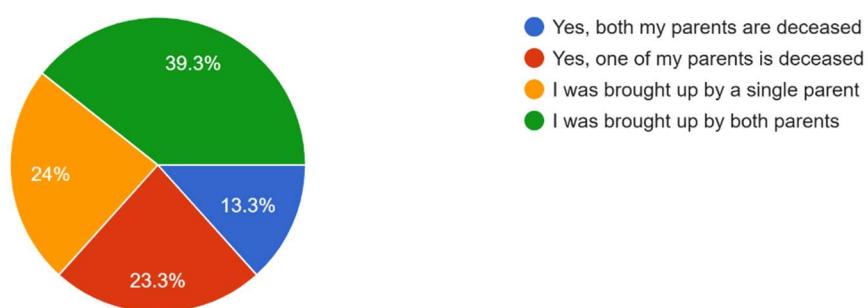


## Of those scholars who completed our impact survey in 2025....

..... **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?

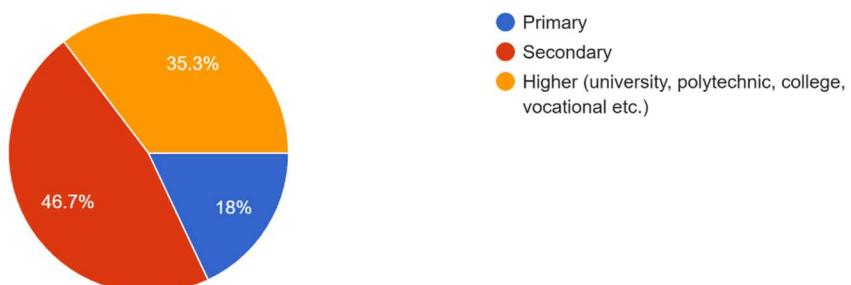
150 responses



..... **around a fifth 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.

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

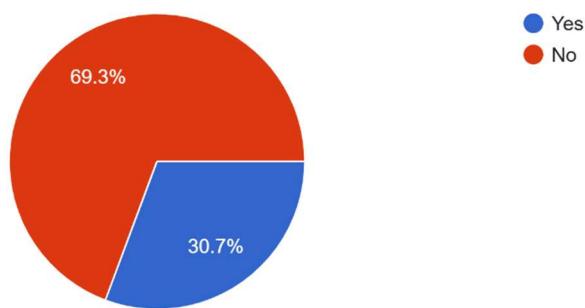
150 responses



..... **seven out of ten 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?

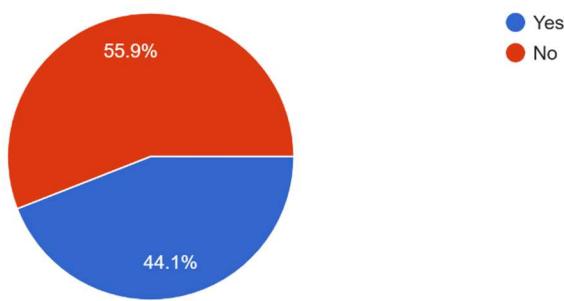
150 responses



44% of respondents to this year's survey report **having a job**. Among this year's respondents 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



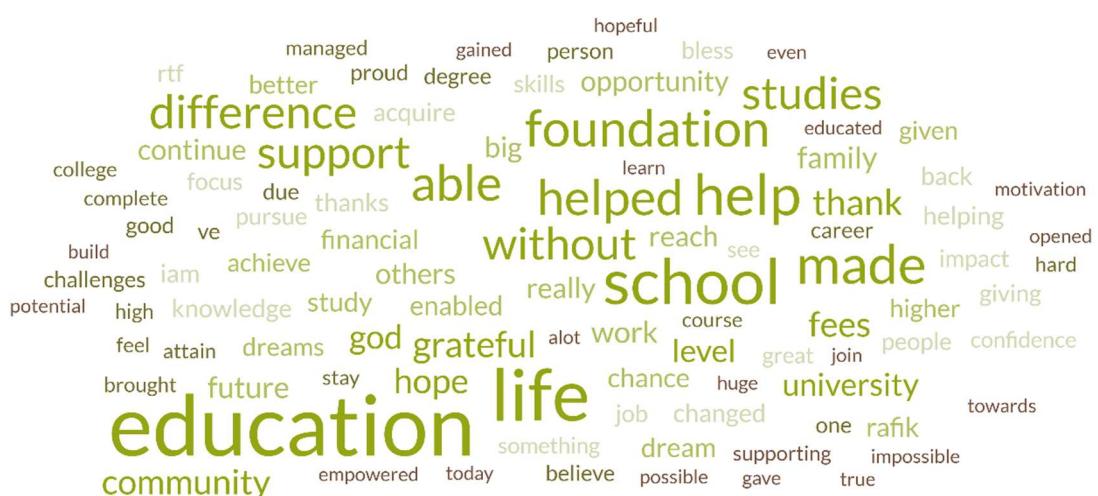
This is a lower level than in previous years. This may be a sign of tougher economic times and contracting labour markets. Clearly we don't have the capacity to influence labour markets in Kenya, Lesotho and Uganda but we do need to think whether there is more we can do to facilitate the transition from education into work. We are seeing an increasing number of scholars undertaking vocational training courses, which hopefully makes they

more 'job ready'. We have also provided small business start-up grants to some scholars with disabilities who have completed vocational training. 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.

**85% of respondents say they are giving back to others in their community as a result of being supported by Rafiki Thabo Foundation.** 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. One scholar wrote:

*'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.'*

Every single respondent said our support had made a difference to their lives – the below word cloud provides a snapshot of the main words used.

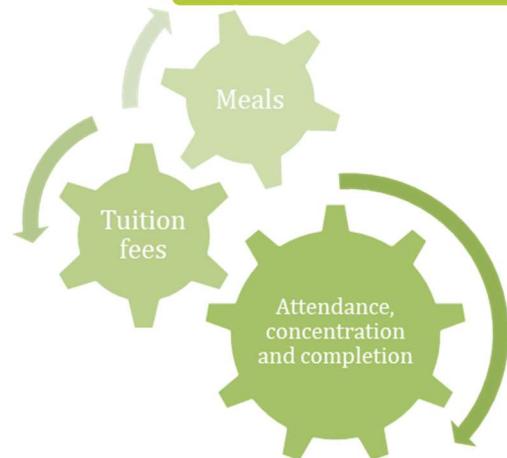
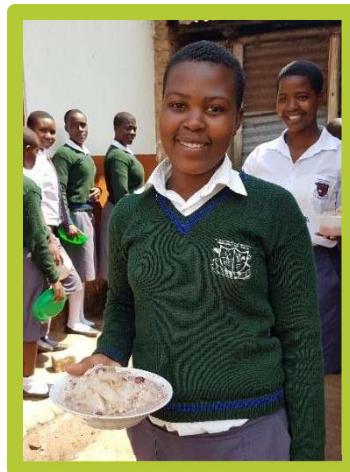


## 'Eat Well to Learn' school meals programme

Through our 'Eat Well to Learn' school meals programme, we provide school meals to at least 70 of the most vulnerable children at Kamugangazi Janan Luwum Memorial Secondary School, one of our partner schools in rural Uganda. These children would otherwise go hungry and as a result would be less able to concentrate during their lessons and learn effectively. The programme has also brought students back into school who had dropped out, has helped to keep students in school who may otherwise have dropped out and has helped to attract new students to the school.

When we started the programme back in 2012, the Principal told us:

*"I want to assure you that life has come again for these students. You cannot believe that even those who are HIV/AIDS victims can now laugh and play with others. You may not know the impact you have made in my school. You have wiped away my tears for these students also. When I heard the news about lunch fees, I walked house to house calling those who had left school because of hunger to come back and I am happy that they can now smile."*



Some of the students we are feeding through the programme are **HIV positive** and are being provided with **more nutritious meals** than the other students. This in turn is helping them to stay **well and active**.

We are working with the school management to find ways to make 'Eat Well to Learn' more sustainable and increase the number of pupils that can benefit – particularly as food prices continue to rise. We supported the school to establish a piggery which is now producing piglets and the funds raised from their sale have enabled more disadvantaged children to receive free school meals and continue to discuss other potential income generating projects.

## School infrastructure development

Rafiki Thabo also supports the infrastructural development of selected schools in each of our focus communities. We work with the school management of those schools to identify key development needs and then fundraise to meet those needs. We strive to provide a better learning environment for the children at those schools. Our current partner schools are:

- ACK St. Bartholomew's Secondary School in Kenya
- Fusi High School in Lesotho
- Kamugangazi Janan Luwum Memorial Secondary School in Uganda
- Rwesasi Secondary School in Uganda.

## Kenya – ACK St. Bartholomew's School

Our links with **ACK St. Bartholomew's School** began in 2012 when Kenya committee Programme Manager, Bishop Liverson Mng'onda, was the school's Headmaster. These links were further strengthened through our merger with the Kazi Mingi Foundation (KMF) in 2015, a charity that fundraised for the construction of the school and has supported its ongoing development. The school provides much needed secondary education to around 100 boys, many of whom are from disadvantaged backgrounds, in the Voi area.

We have funded several projects at the school over the years, including renovating the main dormitory, equipping the IT lab, establishing a tree nursery and building a chicken coop. We look forward to supporting the school to secure a good, reliable supply of fresh water to the school which is the first phase in a wider project to bring the school back to its former glory, following the impacts of Covid resulting in reduced fee income which is vital for keeping the school well maintained.



## Lesotho – Fusi High School

Our links with **Fusi High School** began in 2002 via trustee Andy Uglow. The community of Ha Fusi had already drawn up the plans for a much-needed secondary school to enable pupils in this remote area to continue on from primary education. The community had bought the school site and fenced the compound but then funds ran short. Our links with the school were further strengthened when trustee Elizabeth Dunford taught there from 2009 to 2010. Over the years we have supported several projects, including constructing toilet and kitchen facilities, paying teachers' salaries until the government was able to do so, building classrooms, installing a library and science lab, and facilitating and contributing to bringing an electricity supply to the school, through the generous support of the Southern Africa Church Development Trust (SACDT), extending that electricity supply to all classrooms, building a new staff room to free up classroom space and funding new desks and chairs in order to enable the school to transform to a high school in 2023. We continue to discuss further improvements to school infrastructure with the school management and our committee in Lesotho.



### **Uganda – Kamugangizi Janan Luwum Memorial Secondary School**

We have been working closely with **Kamugangizi Janan Luwum Memorial Secondary School** in Uganda since 2011, including supporting the school meals programme 'Eat Well to Learn' at the school since 2012. The previous Headmaster of the school, Reverend Benon Byaruhanga, is also our Uganda committee chairman. We have undertaken several infrastructure projects at the school over the years, including the renovation of both the girls' and boys' dormitories, a further extension to the girls' dormitory, the completion of the school's main hall, the construction of teachers' accommodation, the installation of solar panels, and the establishment of a piggery.



### **Uganda – Rwesasi Secondary School**

Having supported Kamugangizi Janan Luwum Memorial Secondary School for many years and significantly developed the school's infrastructure, our committee chair in Uganda, Benon, recommended that we start to support another school in a more rural part of the area whose infrastructure is very weak. The school identified was Rwesasi Secondary School, with which we

already had strong links, as its former Principal sits on our Uganda committee and we have supported several scholars there over the years. So far, in 2023 we funded the construction of a girls' dormitory (see photo below) as there was nowhere for girls to stay at the school and most were facing long walks to and from school, with high risk of attack and drop out. We also funded the purchase of 50 bunk beds for the dormitory as well as the installation of solar panels so the girls now using the dormitory could study in the evenings. We are delighted that 140 girls are able to stay safely at school, rather than facing dangerous walks to and from school, leading many to drop out. In 2024, we funded the construction of a new toilet block for the girls. The school Principal wrote to us to explain the impact of all our support to date:

*'On behalf of Rwesasi Secondary School, I write to convey our heartfelt appreciation to you and your organisation for the incredible infrastructural support to this school. The donation of a magnificent Girls' Dormitory, the Metallic Beds and the VIP toilet have increased girls' enrolment from 200 to 290, increased their self-esteem, confidence, safety and security while at school. We sincerely thank you and can only be proud of the entire RAFIKI family.'*



### **Reducing barriers to education for children living with a disability**

As a result of our merger with ACACIA UK in 2022 we adopted partnerships with selected organisations in Kenya with whom we work to reduce the barriers to education for children living with disabilities. Our current partner organisations are the Autism Society of Kenya (ASK) and Dadashi Special Children's Centre. We work with them to identify suitable projects which we fund and they implement. In 2023, we also met with a new potential partner organisation, Life Skills Oasis (LSO), who work with street children and mothers of children with disabilities in Kiandutu slum in Thika. We hope to start working with them when resources allow.

**Dadashi Special Children's Centre** does an amazing job providing much needed therapy for children with cerebral palsy and counselling to their parents in one of the most deprived areas of Nairobi. Once they have completed their course of therapy, each child is assessed by the Kenya Institute of Education (KISE) to establish the best educational setting for them but unfortunately, many parents are unable to afford to send their children to the recommended schools but we are pleased to have several of Dadashi's 'graduates' on our scholarship programme. Over the years, we have provided core funding to Dadashi to help them reach financial sustainability and have explored other ways that we might support them to achieve this. One way of doing this was to establish a skills training centre for mothers of children with disabilities: not only helping those mothers to earn an income through flexible work that they can fit around their caring responsibilities but also increasing their

capacity to pay for the services they receive from Dadashi. We were pleased to attract grant funding to establish the skills training centre and the mothers are now being trained in hairdressing, tailoring and knitting (see photo). We also funded the design and planning of a new centre for Dadashi to use as it has outgrown its current setting and was also hampered by having to pay rent and were thrilled that a Kenyan philanthropist gifted Dadashi the premises for a new building which will enable them to expand their services greatly. Watch our [short film](#) which explains more about Dadashi's work.



The **Autism Society of Kenya (ASK)** is an incredible organisation working to support individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Kenya by raising awareness, advocating for policy changes, building parent/guardian capacity, and initiating support programmes, including therapy and establishing specialised school units, aiming to create a more inclusive society where autistic people can thrive. They offer training, resources, and direct therapy like sensory integration, while lobbying for better government policies, funding, and inclusive education for Kenyans with autism. Following the success of ASK's training of parents and caregivers of children with autism to provide them with therapy throughout Kiambu County in 2021, we have so far funded three rounds of training of



parents and caregivers in neighbouring Murang'a County, as well as home-based follow up visits. In total So far 1,120 parents and caregivers have been trained (see photo) and are now able not only to provide much needed therapy to their own children but also train other parents and caregivers of children with autism. Watch our [short film](#) which explains more about ASK's work.

## We are extremely grateful to the following for their support in 2024/25:

### Corporate and other partnerships

CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP	Hadingham Kirk
Currensea	Scrap Car Comparison
Give As You Live	Snappy Snaps, Richmond

### Schools

Cokethorpe School
Hampton Court House School

### Churches

St. Giles' Church, West Bridgford
St. Luke's Church, Watford

### Other organisations and major donors

CMS Cameron McKenna Foundation	Reed Foundation
Dunmore Charitable Trust	Sargent Charitable Trust
Einar Kvam	Stockwell Charitable Trust
LSEG Foundation	St. James's Place Charitable Foundation
Mazars Charitable Trust	Symondson Foundation
MPM Charitable Trust	Tony and Judith Yarrow

### Fundraisers

Theo Blossom	Mariana Martins
Abigail Boisot	Janne, Maia and Thomas Pilbeam
Susannah Carras	Kate Symondson
Elizabeth Dunford	Andrew Uglow and family
Renate Gjermundsen	Lisa Warne and family
Heather Knight	Nicola Winson

### Auction prize donors

Alice Becker Pilates	Sea Brambles Ceramics
Blenheim Palace	Simon Smith
Bombay Sapphire Distillery	Roger & Ursula Simpson
The Boxing Hare	Trackdays Abingdon
Catherine & David Christensen	Venture Studios Fulham
James Emtage	Laura Woodley
SaltPig Curing Company	

*We would also like to thank our patrons, advocates and all those – too many to list here - who made regular donations, one-off donations, donated gifts in kind, volunteered for us, or supported our fundraisers in 2024/25*

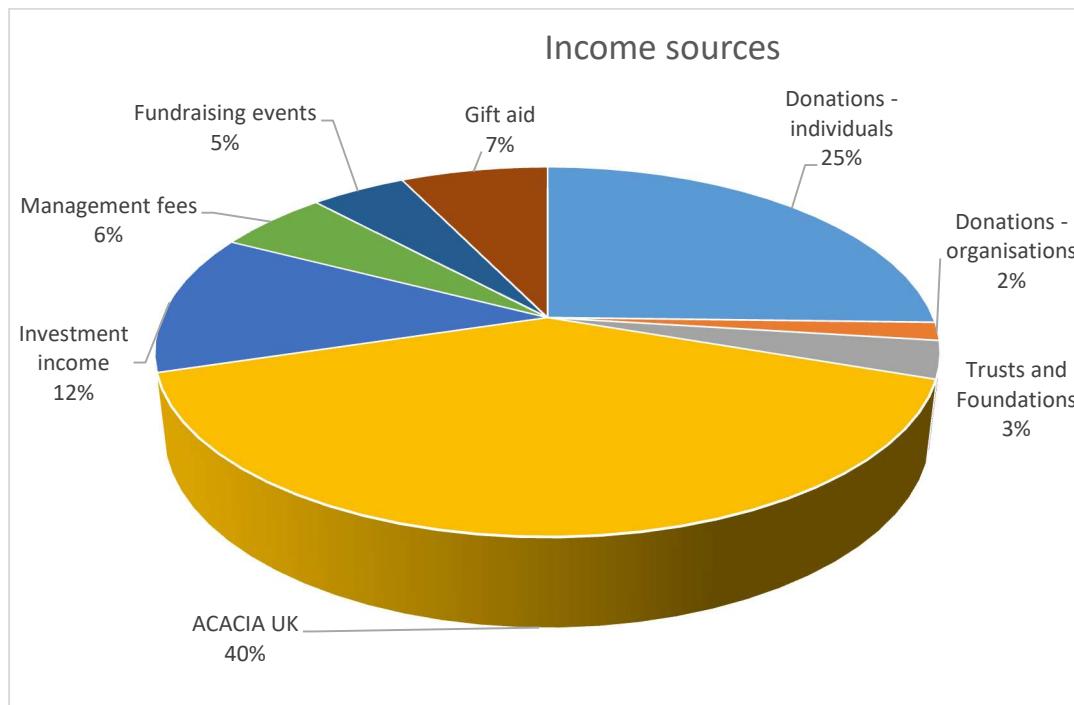
## Financial review

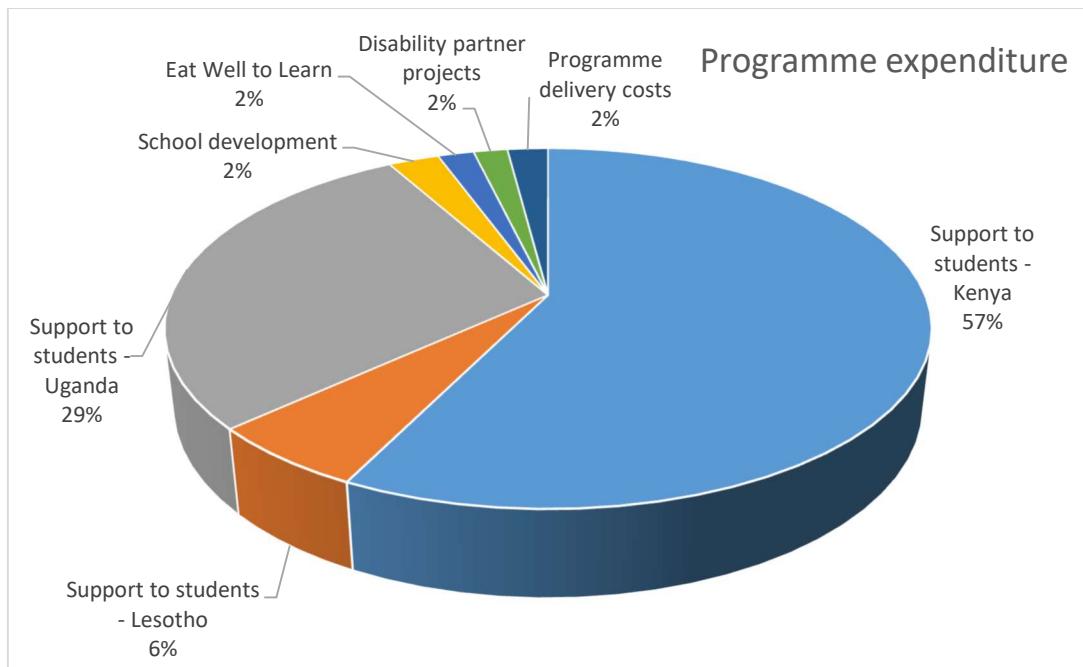
During the period the Charity received donations of £284,367. Of these donations £103,416 was received from the Charity's subsidiary, ACACIA UK (Trading) Limited. A further £49,834 was raised through the ACACIA shops through gift aidable sales. £12,511 was awarded by Trusts and Foundations for specific projects and £47,093 of investment income was received. Fundraising events raised £17,983. We share administration costs with ACACIA UK (Trading) Limited and received management fees of £21,000 from them during the year. The total income for the period was £382,954.

The Trustees made the following payments to our programmes in Kenya, Lesotho and Uganda: support to Rafiki scholars: £365,706; support to our partner schools £17,389; and support to disability partners £6,799.

At 31 March 2025 the Charity held a General Reserve of £36,019. This is below the minimum threshold agreed by the Trustees (£40,000) and is a result of the more difficult fundraising environment and the decision to pause our fundraising activities to devise a new fundraising strategy in order to achieve greater returns in future. As the Charity has an investment fund which it is able to draw down on as required this slight dip below optimal reserve levels does not present a significant concern. With the re-launching of fundraising activities in the next financial year, the Trustees are confident that the General Reserve level will return to being over £40,000.

The below pie charts provide an approximate representation of the various income sources and the different programme areas on which funds were spent.





# RAFIKI THABO FOUNDATION

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total 2025	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023
<b>Income from:</b>							
Donations and legacies	3	284,367	-	284,367	248,158	2,500	250,658
Charitable activities			12,511	12,511	-	-	-
Other trading activities	4	38,983	-	38,983	76,015	-	76,015
Investments	5	47,093	-	47,093	36,569	-	36,569
<b>Total income</b>		<b>370,443</b>	<b>12,511</b>	<b>382,954</b>	<b>360,742</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>363,242</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Raising funds	6	63,556	-	63,556	74,040	-	74,040
Charitable activities	7	428,060	13,463	441,523	304,466	-	304,466
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>491,616</b>	<b>13,463</b>	<b>505,079</b>	<b>378,506</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>378,506</b>
Net gains/(losses) on investments	11	(426)	-	(426)	62,273	-	62,273
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<b>(121,599)</b>	<b>(952)</b>	<b>(122,551)</b>	<b>44,509</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>47,009</b>
Transfers between funds		1,548	(1,548)	-	-	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	8	(120,051)	(2,500)	(122,551)	44,509	2,500	47,009
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>							
Fund balances at 1 January 2024		1,200,772	2,500	1,203,272	1,156,263	-	1,156,263
<b>Fund balances at 31 March 2025</b>		<b>1,080,721</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,080,721</b>	<b>1,200,772</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>1,203,272</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the period. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Our full set of accounts is available on the charity commission website at:

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/5173618/>

# Background to the charity

The Charity is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with a Constitution dated 15 January 2021 and began operating on 1 April 2021 under its new registered charity number (1193124). The Trustees decided to convert the Charity from an unincorporated association (registered charity number 1118430 since 2007) governed by way of a Trust Deed in order to facilitate the merger with ACACIA UK, such that ACACIA UK could become the trading subsidiary of the CIO. New Trustees are appointed by a resolution of the existing Trustees in accordance with the Constitution.

Major strategic decisions are taken by the Trustees but day to day management of the Charity is delegated to an employed Director, who is not a Trustee. The Trustees that served during the year are listed on page 1.

## Public benefit statement

The Trustees have complied with their duty to have regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commissioners in exercising their powers or duties.

## Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing the accounts the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the charities' SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of Rafiki Thabo and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the Trust Deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of Rafiki Thabo and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

# Our work



Our **mission** is to support individuals and their communities in Africa through education that embraces their differing abilities.

Our **vision** is that young people, including those living with disabilities, will be empowered through education to enable them to reach their full potential and initiate positive change in their communities.

Rafiki Thabo Foundation is a UK-based charity which supports a variety of education projects in Kenya, Uganda and Lesotho. Our purpose is to improve the quality of life and increase the life opportunities for members of our link communities. These communities are:



All Rafiki Thabo projects are initiated and managed by committees made up of experienced members of these communities and personally known to the Trustees.

## Our values

- **Partnership** – we are committed to alleviating poverty by working in partnership with local people at grassroots level who are personally known to the charity. We also aim to work in partnership with other organisations that share our vision and mission;
- **Empowering** – we believe in empowering young people and adults to find ways to transform their families and communities. They are best placed to decide what their needs are and how these should be met. Our in-country committees are empowered to make decisions on our behalf, and we let our students choose their own path through their education;
- **Working at the grass roots** – we believe that effecting change on individuals' lives can lead to lasting change not only for those individuals but also their families, communities, countries and, potentially, the world;
- **Being inclusive** – we want to support anyone in need in our focus communities, regardless of their religion, gender, or political beliefs; and
- **Providing value for money** – we aim to get as much of the money donated to us out to the communities we support as quickly and efficiently as possible. We are committed to retaining very low overheads and work through trusted voluntary committees in each country, ensuring that we can account for every penny donated to us.

## Our history

The Rafiki Thabo Foundation's roots lie in a gap-year agency called The Right Hand Trust. This organisation, under the auspices of the Anglican Church, sent young adults into host communities in various countries of rural Africa and the Caribbean for a period of eight months. During this time they were to become as immersed as possible into their local context, living, learning and sharing with their hosts. In a majority of cases, this involved being adopted into a community, given local names and establishing deep-rooted friendships with many return visits. Inevitably informal structures began to be established whereby the former gap-year individuals would arrange for certain school fees to be paid or certain families suffering severe financial difficulties to be assisted. Although small in scale, money was finding its way directly to those who needed it the most, often the very ones who had given so much by way of love and friendship to the individuals during their gap year.

The Rafiki Thabo Foundation was established in 2006 and is the formalisation of these existing structures – for instance, three of the Trustees are former Right Hand Trust volunteers.

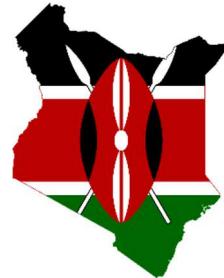
## Our People

In 2024/5, Rafiki Thabo had seven Trustees (all volunteers) who meet three times a year to steer the direction of the charity's work. Our Trustees in 2024/5 were Jonathan Uglow (Chair), Andrew Uglow (Secretary), Paul Evans, Elizabeth Dunford, Susannah Carras, Lisa Warne and Benjamin Hitchens. Janet Hayes continued in her role as Director, Janne Pilbeam as Corporate and Major Events Fundraiser and Roz Chuter as Fundraising Assistant. ACACIA's Finance and Administration Officer, Maite Ramirez, also assisted with Rafiki Thabo's administration.

Our in-country committee members are:

### Kenya

Bishop Liverson Mng'onda (Co-chairman)  
Rev Gibson Mwanganyi (Co-chairman)  
Miriam Mng'onda  
Erasto Mghalu  
Rev. Criswel Mwachia  
Meshack Mwendo (Programme Support Officer)  
Daina Kibera (Programme Manager)



### Uganda

Rev Benon Byruhangwa (Chairman)  
Edwin Babimpa  
Gad Turyahewa  
Judith Kyomugisha  
Irene Tumusiime



### Lesotho

Teboho Ramolapong (Chairman)  
Matanki Morake (vice chair)  
Eleloang Nthimo  
Pakiso Molefi (vice secretary)



Contact us  
Website: [rafiki-foundation.org.uk](http://rafiki-foundation.org.uk)  
Email: [trustees@rafiki-foundation.org.uk](mailto:trustees@rafiki-foundation.org.uk)  
Telephone: +44 07784 248178



Find us on social media @RafikiThabo

