

RAFIKI THABO FOUNDATION – STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026

1. Introduction

This strategic plan aims to provide a framework for Rafiki Thabo Foundation's work for the next five years (2022-2026). It has been developed in consultation with the Trustees of the charity, as well as the in-country committee members. The plan will be used to guide our work and define our future direction, setting out where we would like to be in five years' time. It will be used as the basis for more detailed annual business plans.

The intended audience for this strategic plan is: all those involved in the running of the charity, our supporters, other organisations working in similar sectors and countries in Africa, and potential donors.

2. Who we are

The Rafiki Thabo Foundation is a UK-based charity (registration number 1193124) which supports a range of education projects in Kenya, Uganda and Lesotho.

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.

Our work focuses on particular communities. These communities are:

- In **Kenya**: Taita-Taveta county, which lies approximately 200 km northwest of Mombasa and 360 km southeast of Nairobi. As a result of our ongoing merger with ACACIA UK, we also have an increasing focus on Thika Town in Kiambu County which is north of Nairobi;
- In **Lesotho**: Teyateyaneng town in Berea district, which is located about 40 km north of the capital, Maseru; and
- In **Uganda**: Kabale district in the south west, near the Rwandan border.

We have a committee based in each of these communities. Our committees guide our and manage our work in each country. Our committees are voluntary and are comprised of experienced members of these focus communities and personally known to the Trustees. We also work with three partners in Kenya who implement projects aimed at reducing barriers to education for children living with disabilities: these projects are developed and managed on behalf of the charity through a local consultant.

We have a lean staff team in the UK, comprised of a Director, Fundraiser and Administrator, all of whom work part-time for the charity. Our finances are managed on a voluntary basis by our Treasurer who is a trustee and a Chartered Accountant. We are also in the process of merging with another small charity, ACACIA UK, which runs charity shops in Oxfordshire. ACACIA UK has one full-time and seven part-time staff members and a number of shop volunteers. Our aim is that ACACIA UK will become the trading arm of Rafiki Thabo Foundation and as such will provide unrestricted income to our programmes which, since April 2021, have also incorporated the work of ACACIA UK.

3. What we do

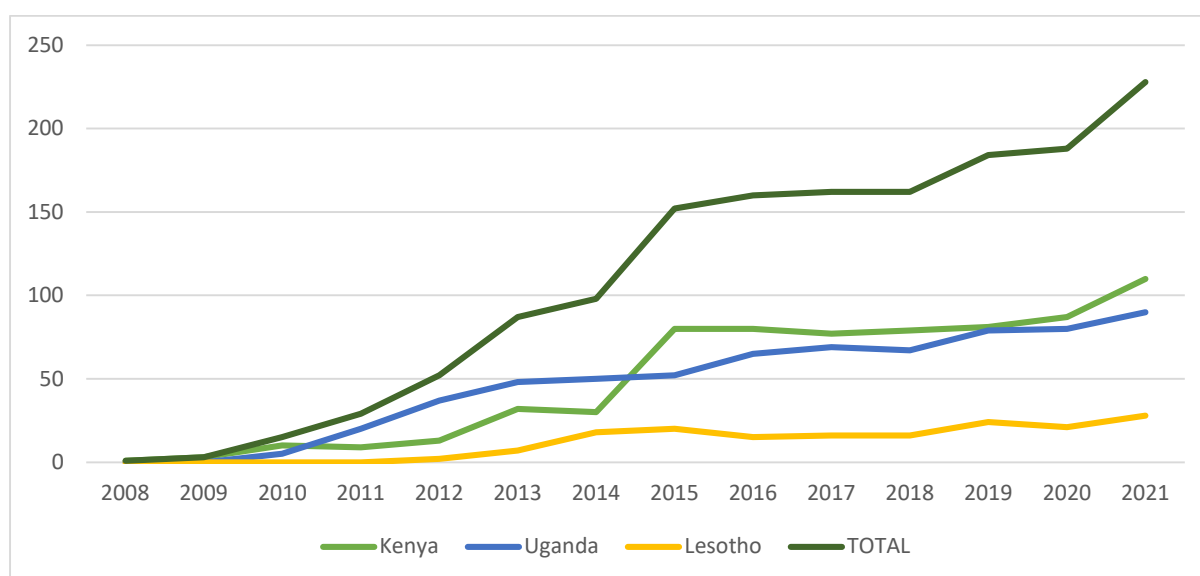
All our projects have an education focus and we are increasingly integrating disability into our programmes as part of the merger with ACACIA UK. All projects we implement are in line with our mission and contribute to the achievement of our vision. Our work falls into four main programmes:

Rafiki Scholars Programme

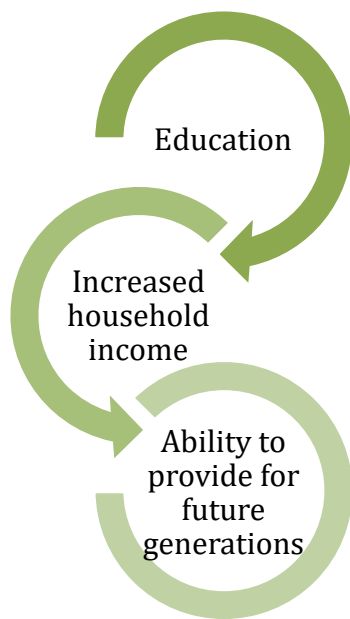
Our core programme is the **Rafiki Scholars Programme**. Working in partnership with our committees, we provide grants to promising students from disadvantaged backgrounds to enable them to continue their education at secondary, polytechnic and university levels where otherwise they would be unable to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

Figure 1 – number of scholars supported



By the end of 2021, we had supported a total of **439** Rafiki Scholars to continue with their education. In 2018, we started bringing children and young people living with disabilities onto our scholarship programme and so far have supported **40** children/ young people living with disabilities.



139 of our scholars have now graduated from higher education and a further **74** have completed secondary school and have either opted not to continue with their education or have qualified for government support for higher education. Over half of the graduates who have completed our impact survey have secured paid employment in jobs they would not have got without their qualification. The jobs our graduates are currently doing include: Teachers, Accountants, Bankers, Doctors, Midwives and various office jobs. Some have started their own businesses.

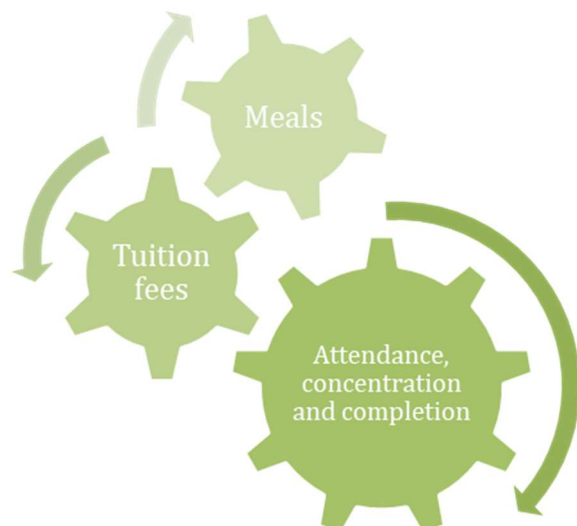
By providing these scholars with the means to get an education, we are giving them a better chance of finding paid work or starting their own business and thus enabling them to break the cycle of poverty in which they, and their families, are trapped.

By enabling our scholars' social mobility we have a positive ripple effect on their families, households, communities and wider societies. Our hope is that this ripple effect will stretch to country level and eventually to global level, bringing about lasting political and economic change. We dream of one of the Rafiki scholars becoming a political leader and bringing about long-term and lasting change for their country. Thus our micro-level intervention would bring about macro-level change.

We also aim to inspire people to help others. We are bringing our beneficiaries together **into in-country alumni networks** which then work to help others in their communities.

'Eat Well to Learn' school meals programme

We are enhancing students' **ability to concentrate** on studies, and **getting them into and keeping them in school**, through the '**Eat Well to Learn**' programme we support at Kamuganguzi Janan Luwum Memorial Secondary School in Uganda. We provide meals to at least 70 of the school's most vulnerable students who 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.



We are working with the school management to find ways to make 'Eat Well to Learn' more sustainable. In 2016 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 contributed funds to the school's building development projects.

School infrastructure development

Education does not exist in a vacuum, and at Rafiki Thabo we also support the development of school infrastructure and other 'holistic' projects in order to improve the environment in which children are learning. Projects we have supported include training girls to make reusable sanitary kits, reequipping an IT lab, constructing pig sties and chicken coops to generate income for the schools, electrification of classrooms, and the renovation of dormitories. We work with the school management of those schools to identify key development needs and then fundraise to meet those needs. Our partner schools are:

- ACK St. Bartholomew's School in Kenya
- Ha Fusi Secondary School in Lesotho
- Kamuganguzi Janan Luwum Memorial Secondary School in Uganda.

We also provided one off support to the special needs unit of Shigaro primary school and St. Barnabas Nursery School in Kenya.

Reducing barriers to education for children living with a disability

As a result of our merger with ACACIA UK, in April 2021 we adopted partnerships with three organisations in Kenya with whom we work to reduce the barriers to education for children living with disabilities. Our partner organisations are the Autism Society of Kenya (ASK), AIC Kajiado, and Dadashi Special Children's Centre. We work with them to identify suitable projects which we fund and they implement. So far, we have funded ASK to provide training to parents and caregivers of children with autism so that the children are better able to attend school and concentrate in class. We have also provided funding to Dadashi to enable them to open for an additional day each week, in order to provide much needed therapy for children with cerebral palsy and counselling to their parents. This results in increased mobility for the children, enabling them to attend school and parents who are better equipped to care for their children and more inclined to send them to school.

4. Our History

Rafiki Thabo was set up by Jon Uglow who, after having spent 8 months living in a rural community in Kenya – on a placement with the Right Hand Trust gap year organisation – realised that as he and his gap year peers all headed home to their university education and safe futures, his Kenyan friends just did not share the same opportunities, no matter how bright or driven they were. For the majority, affording an education and all the social and economic opportunities that it would bring was a remote possibility: their parents were subsistence farmers, they would be subsistence farmers. It was Jon's passion to help change the outcome and break the poverty cycle – even for just a few – that resulted in Rafiki Thabo being set up, working closely with people he and his fellow trustees had lived with and got to know extremely well in Kenya, Uganda and Lesotho.

In its early years, Rafiki Thabo supported a handful of young people known to the trustees to continue with their education and also fundraised for the development of Fusi School in Lesotho, where Rafiki Thabo trustee Andy Uglow had worked during his gap year placement. The trustees also responded to particular needs within the community, for example funding vital medicines for people living with HIV/AIDS. As the work grew, the trustees recognised the need to work through an established

voluntary committee in each country. These committees were, and remain, led by the personal contacts established during the gap year placements who are joined by other community leaders.

In 2014, the trustees recruited a paid Director, Janet, who has further grown and developed the charity. She was joined in 2017 by a Fundraiser, Janne. Along with the trustees, they have developed the programmes and increased the charity's income significantly since those early days.

Rafiki Thabo merged with Kazi Mingi Foundation (KMF) in 2015. KMF fundraised for the building of our partner school in Kenya (ACK St. Bartholomew's School in Voi), provided scholarships to some of the boys at the school, and had close links with some of our committee members in Kenya. The trustees of KMF had reached the difficult decision to close the charity but were delighted that Rafiki Thabo was able to continue to support the school's development and provide scholarships to some of its pupils.

As mentioned above, we are now in the process of merging with another charity, ACACIA UK. ACACIA also operates in Kenya and has a strong focus on education, particularly of those with developmental disabilities. During a visit to Kenya in 2017, our committee told us of their desire to accept children with disabilities onto our programme. We were excited, therefore, when the trustees of ACACIA UK approached us to discuss pooling resources and working in partnership.

5. Our values

Our work is based on values, shared by our Trustees, staff, in-country committee members and delivery partners. Our **key values** are:

- **Partnership** – we are committed to alleviating poverty by working in partnership with local people at grassroots level who are personally known to the charity in Kenya, Uganda and Lesotho. 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. We aim to empower our in-country committees and partners to make decisions on our behalf, and we empower our beneficiaries to 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 low overheads and work through trusted voluntary committees in each country, ensuring that we can account for every penny donated to us.

6. Learning from the past

In order to decide on our future strategic direction, it is important that we learn lessons from the past. In 2021, we have undertaken a full review of our first strategic plan (2015 to 2020) and reflected on our achievements and challenges. During a trustee meeting in September 2021, the trustees identified the following key achievements during the last strategy period:

- We have managed to increase the number of scholars we have supported year on year;
- We have built a strong team in the UK to implement our programmes;
- The ACACIA merger has enabled us to fulfil a programmatic end (to increase the number of scholars with disabilities on our programmes) and provided us with a source of significant unrestricted income;
- We have built a strong pipeline of fundraising opportunities and are reaching new audiences, thanks to increase social media usage and key events like the gala dinner and the forthcoming Radio 4 appeal;
- We have had good success with trusts and foundations, including several instances of repeat funding from the same trusts/ foundations; and
- Our solid financial standing enables us to respond to needs as they arise (e.g. Covid-19 support) and to plan for the future.

We have also analysed our key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, as shown in the SWOT analysis below.

Table 1 SWOT analysis

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversified income streams, mainly unrestricted • Personal relationships and experience = high trust levels • Dedicated and trusted in-country committees • Dedicated and skilled human resources • Committed Trustees, with relevant professional skills • High impact on individuals • Able to hear voice of beneficiaries direct and share with supporters • Simple model/approach – appealing and easy to sell to individual supporters/community groups etc • Sustainable funding in place (endowment/dividends) • Regular supporter base • Provide good value for money • Nimble approach to programming (e.g. able to pivot quickly to respond to Covid-19) • Increasing presence on social media 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliant on volunteers in-country. No resourced/paid staff in-country – other commitments/priorities • Lack of reconciliation of fees sent, especially in Kenya = significant risk • Limited screening of students. Could lead to us supporting students who don't genuinely need our support • Time poor – voluntary trustees and part-time staff members • Difficult to sell model/approach to institutional donors – tend to look for innovation/'systemic change' • Name – difficult to pronounce, not catchy, misunderstanding of the nature of our work (the word 'foundation' is often used for grant making organisations); confusion with Rafiki Foundation in USA.
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant unrestricted funding from ACACIA shops • Good track record with a number of Trusts and Foundations and corporates • Radio 4 appeal – opportunity to reach much wider audience • Limitless expansion – high demand; other communities/countries? • Few organisations focusing on secondary/higher education – niche • Taking supporters/potential supporters on overseas trips = 'advocates' to fundraise for us • Good alignment with Global Goals • Education, especially of girls, is a common donor priority • New focus on disability – could lead to new funding opportunities • Development of alumni networks • Development of further partnerships with like-minded organisations 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shrinking pot of trust funds/ foundations: lots of charities chasing diminishing funds, especially post UK Aid cuts and effect of Covid-19 • Potential for fraud – lack of systems in place to mitigate this. Could worsen as we grow our programmes/our teams in-country • Trustee and staff fatigue • Committee members leaving – trust levels may diminish • Vagaries of economy, exchange rate fluctuations, bank charges etc • Vagaries of in-country policies, e.g. Kenya university fees going up • Impact of other events (e.g. Covid, natural disasters, regime change) • Stock crash, drop in % on dividends

7. Response to SWOT

Strengths: what we must continue to do and why

Rafiki Thabo has much to be proud of in its work so far and it is important to acknowledge what we have done well and must therefore continue to do:

- Our greatest asset is **our people and relationships**: our trustees, our staff, and our in-country committees, as well as our scholars and graduates. We have capable and experienced employees, trustees with relevant skills, and trusted voluntary in-country committee members. We must ensure all our people feel valued and their efforts appreciated;
- We have formed effective **in-country committees**. These are grounded on personal relationships and high trust levels. We must maintain a close working relationship with our committees, ensuring they feel empowered and not overwhelmed by an increasing workload as we expand. We will start introducing paid administrators to support our committees and bringing trusted Rafiki graduates onto the committees in future as they understand our work and values. We must protect our high trust levels with the committees as we grow. We will also ensure we have succession plans in place for each committee;
- We have built up **diversified income streams**, most of which are unrestricted. We receive donations (both one off and regular) from several individuals, and from schools, churches, corporates and other groups. We have a strong track record of innovative and high quality events, strong relationships with a number of trusts and foundations, dividends from our endowment, and income from three charity shops as a result of our recent merger with ACACIA UK;
- We have built a base of **regular supporters** who contribute financially every month and therefore provide us with long-term, consistent funding which enables us to plan our work more effectively. We have successfully grown our regular supporter base in recent years, including attracting a number of regular donors from charities we have merged with (Kazi Mingi Foundation and ACACIA UK). We must continue to professionally steward our current supporters and attract new supporters;
- We are fortunate to have secured an **endowment** which enables us to draw down dividends to fund much of our work. We need to manage and use this endowment prudently, seeking to grow it in order to increase the dividend to spend on activities;
- We are able to take a **nimble and flexible approach to programming**, listening to our committees on where needs lie and responding accordingly – and quickly. This was evidenced by our swift response to Covid-19 in 2020/21; and
- As communications are becoming easier with our link communities as a result of increasing use of email/social media among our scholars and committees, we are able to tell our **scholars' stories** and share them with our supporters. This enables our supporters to understand our work better, hopefully changing their attitudes and prompting them to donate. We will continue to share these stories, through our website, social media and other publicity and increase the number of case studies we have on record.

Addressing our weaknesses

We will take the following measures to address the weaknesses identified in the SWOT:

- We will start introducing paid administrators to support our in-country committees in order to reduce our **reliance on volunteers** with other commitments;

- We will consider building up our resource base (e.g increasing our fundraising capacity) in the UK to ensure we are less **time poor** and can therefore grow our programmes;
- We will seek to **involve trustees in activities** which play to their particular strengths, skills and areas of interest rather than expecting all trustees to get involved in everything;
- We will try to package our various work streams as ‘projects’ to better **sell them to donors**. As we aim to provide more holistic support to our students (see below) distinct projects that may appeal to donors should arise. We will push the individual stories of students and better demonstrate the impact on their lives, and the potential impact on others’ lives/the wider society. We are hopeful that our model will gain credibility as we grow and have an impact on more people, following the example of CAMFED; and
- We will reflect on the **name and overall ‘brand’ of Rafiki Thabo Foundation**, particularly in light of the merger with ACACIA UK and potential for confusing messaging through social media channels and the shops, which have retained the ACACIA name and branding as it is well recognised in South Oxfordshire.

Key opportunities to exploit

Although we will keep all the opportunities identified in the SWOT in mind over the next 5 years and actively seek opportunities to exploit, we have identified the following key opportunities to prioritise:

- As a result of the recent merger with ACACIA UK, we are now receiving **significant unrestricted funding from the ACACIA shops** and have also adopted a new focus on disability. This provides us with a good opportunity to think differently about our programmes and how we spend our funds;
- We have built strong **partnerships** with two other charities (Kazi Mingi Foundation and ACACIA UK) and will pragmatically seek to build partnerships with other organisations with shared goals or working in the same geographical areas. We must always ensure partnerships are beneficial (e.g. sharing of resources or relationships and enabling us to achieve more) rather than just becoming a diversion or distraction and absorbing staff members’ already limited time or leading to ‘mission drift’;
- We have built a strong track record in **attracting funds from trusts and foundations**, evidenced by repeat funding from several. Our new programme focus on disability is an opportunity to attract funding from new trusts and foundations and the general development of our programmes should lend itself to attracting larger grants from funders;
- We have laid excellent groundwork in attracting **funding from corporates** and have all systems in place to be able to take on new corporate partnerships. With an excellent corporate pack and several new corporate partnerships started over the last few years, we can demonstrate to other potential corporates that we are a charity that is worth supporting; and
- **Alumni organisations:** we will support the growing alumni groups in Kenya, Lesotho and Uganda to encourage them to ‘give back’ to their communities and seek longer-term change. We will empower them to decide the best way they can give back as they know the greatest areas of need. We will seek to bring an alumnus in Kenya and Uganda onto our committees, possibly in the capacity of a paid administrator.

Threat mitigation

Although we will keep all the threats identified in the SWOT in mind over the next 5 years and constantly seek to mitigate them, we have identified the following key threats we need to address:

- We will **continue to diversify our income streams** so we are not dependent on funding from institutional donors (such as UK Aid) and trusts and foundations, whose funds are under increasing competition as the aid sector contracts;
- We will **ensure the systems we have in place protect us against fraud** – both in terms of bank fraud/email hacking and false applications from students. We are currently very dependent on the personal relationships we have with our committees and the resultant high trust levels but as we expand we need to ensure we do not lose these close connections/ trust levels. The introduction of paid administrators would help to increase accountability (e.g. timely provision of supporting documentation) and we must ensure we introduce/maintain robust administrative and finance systems across our country programmes and in the UK. We need to be able to account for every penny donated to us and can only do this with robust systems. We will also develop a risk register to identify the main risks facing the Foundation and how we will mitigate them;
- We will **have clear succession plans for each of our in-country committees in place** and seek to bring Rafiki graduates on to our committees in order to maintain our high trusts levels and strong personal relationships. We will also ensure (Covid permitting) that each country is visited by a trustee/ staff members at least every two years in order to maintain existing relationships with existing committee members and build new ones with those who join our committees; and
- **Ensure staff and trustees share the workload and avoid over committing** – we need to make the best use of the resources we have and ensure our people do not get burnt out. We need to make careful choices about what we pursue and ensure we do not take on more than we can realistically deliver, and to a high quality.

8. Considering the future

8.1 Where we want to be in 5 years time

Over the coming five years, we will continue to build, develop and consolidate our programmes aimed at increasing access to education for children and young people in Kenya, Lesotho and Uganda. We will retain a focus **on supporting scholars** in secondary and higher education but will remain open to supporting children in other levels of education if there is a clear rationale for doing so (e.g for children living with disabilities who would not be properly catered for in mainstream ‘free’ primary schools). We will also continue to work with our committees to proactively identify children living with disabilities to bring onto our scholarship programme. We will aim to continue to increase the number of scholars we support year-on-year but recognise that we will need to invest in more resources in-country to facilitate this (more below).

We will also aim to take a **more holistic approach** to meeting the educational needs of the individuals we support. More holistic support might include providing funds for extra resources to help them study (e.g. books, stationery etc), providing sanitary towels to prevent girls from missing school or dropping out altogether, supporting the economic development of their wider household, meeting healthcare needs or ensuring they are in a safe and secure home (e.g. that orphans are housed by relatives). We will also seek to capitalise on overlaps between our scholarship programme and our work with partners supporting children with disabilities, for example bringing children ‘graduating’ from Dadashi Children’s Centre who are assessed as being ready to access education but whose parents cannot afford their school fees onto our scholarship programme.

Over the next five years, we will continue to **develop the disability angle of our programmes**. This is a relatively new area of focus for us, which has come about as a result of a request from our Kenya committee to include more children with disabilities onto our programmes and has been made possible by our (ongoing) merger with ACACIA UK. We will deepen our relationships with the three partners in Kenya (Autism Society of Kenya, AIC Kajiado and Dadashi Children's Centre) who had previously been supported by ACACIA UK, working closely with them to identify suitable projects for us to support. All projects we support must have a clear aim of reducing barriers for children with disabilities to accessing education.

We will continue to work with our committee in Uganda **to increase the sustainability of the 'Eat Well to Learn' school meals programme**, with the overall aim of increasing the meals provision to more students while decreasing our contribution to it. We will continue to discuss the possibility of incorporating the cost of meals into the school fees and will also seek to support further income generating projects for the school, building on the success of the piggery that we supported the school to construct in 2015, the piglets from which the school management has been able to sell in order to purchase food supplies for the school.

We will also continue to seek opportunities and funding for **individual projects which will enhance the educational setting** of our students and/or their communities with a particular focus on our partner school in each country (ACK St. Bartholomew's School in Voi, Kenya; Ha Fusi School in Teyateyaneng, Lesotho; and Kamuganguzi Janan Luwum Secondary School near Kabale, Uganda). This was an area of significant growth during the previous strategy period with several projects completed and funding from trusts and foundations awarded.

With an ever increasing cohort of Rafiki graduates, we will continue to **support and nurture alumni groups in all three countries**. We will create a sense of being part of a wider 'Rafiki family' through our Facebook and WhatsApp groups and by facilitating scholar and graduate gatherings whenever a trustee/ staff member visits our programmes. We believe that our graduates can be a force for good in their communities and wider society: we know that most are already helping others in their community (e.g. by paying school fees for relatives, by providing books and stationary to children to attend school, by mentoring children and young people to help them continue with their education etc) and think that collectively they could do so much more. We will continue to explore ideas that both our Kenya and Uganda alumni have indicated they would like to implement, e.g. setting up a fund which they all contribute to to purchase educational items for children in school, and will also explore setting up a mentoring scheme whereby our graduates mentor our scholars who are still in school or making the sometimes difficult transition to higher education.

We will also continue to seek to **change attitudes towards Africa** in the developed world. Africa is often seen as the 'dark continent,' with rampant corruption and no positive developments. We want to share the many positive aspects of Africa with our audience and celebrate the successes and future potential of the students we support. We will do this through our work in schools – changing the mindset of the next generation – as well as through our fundraising events and our other communication channels (including our website, newsletters and social media).

We would like to **facilitate visits, and potentially long-term placements, to our country programmes**. Self-funded visits from supporters to the programmes would enable them to experience our work first hand, thus converting them into 'advocates' who could then fundraise on our behalf back in the UK and contribute to the shift in attitudes towards Africa we are seeking to achieve. Building on the success of Cokethorpe School's visits to Fusi School, a visit from church youth in the Chipping Norton area to ACK St. Bartholomew's School, and visits to the same school by Nicholsons (a previous

corporate supporter) staff we will aim to facilitate school visits to key schools we work with in our focus communities in Kenya and Uganda. We will also seek funding to bring teachers and students from those schools to the UK, ensuring two-way cultural exchange and learning. Long-term placements could be established in our focus communities, to address particular gaps and needs in terms of educational provision – again building on the success of the placement of one of our Trustees at Fusi School in Lesotho. It may make more sense to build links with existing volunteer organisations, such as VSO or ICS, than managing our own placements as this is not an area of expertise for us and there is an inherent risk in doing this ourselves.

In order to deliver an expanded and more holistic programme, we will need to **increase our human resource base**, both in the UK and overseas. This might include increasing the time spent working for Rafiki of the current two part-time staff members in the UK and/ or introducing additional fundraising resources and will definitely include introducing paid administrators/coordinators in each of the countries in which we work. These administrators would support and report to the committee in-country, enabling us to retain the close and trusted relationships we enjoy with our committee members, but relieve them of the inevitable increase in administrative duties resulting from expanding our student numbers and increasing our project work. As stated above, we want to continue to increase the number of scholars we support in each country but recognise we cannot do this with the current structure we have of purely voluntary committee members in country: as shown in Figure 1, the number of scholars we are supporting in each country is growing year-on-year, particularly in Kenya and Uganda, and our committees (particularly in Kenya) are struggling to cope with the increased workload of managing these scholars (distributing and accounting for fee payments, processing applications, providing mentoring support to the scholars etc). Ideally the administrators would be Rafiki Thabo graduates who has not yet found work so would also constitute an employment opportunity. We will pilot this new approach first in Kenya and then, if successful, roll it out to Uganda. It is unlikely that Lesotho will need administrative support as our programme is much smaller there but we will consider introducing additional support if the programme expands significantly. We will also test different models of programme management in Kenya, e.g. with ACACIA's former field consultant managing scholars in Thika and Dadashi's Development Officer (who is also a Rafiki graduate) managing the scholars graduating from Dadashi who we bring onto our scholarship programme.

Over the coming five years, we will continue to **increase and diversify our funding base** in order to enable the intended growth and development of our programmes. We have built a solid funding base which means we are not overly dependent on one income source but the Covid-19 pandemic has taught us that no funding base is completely secure. We will continue to seek ways to add to our lump sum investment in order to increase the annual dividend we draw down. We will also consider further mergers, drawing on the success of mergers with Kazi Mingi Foundation and ACACIA UK during the previous strategy period, although recognise the risk of overloading both staff and trustees and of mission drift. Further details of our plans to increase and diversify our funding base are included in the Fundraising and Communications plan which accompanies this strategy.

8.2 Strategic Objectives

In order to get to where we want to be in 5 years' time, we will pursue the following 5 strategic objectives:

1. To increase access to, and completion of, education for more students at secondary school and in higher education, including for children living with disabilities

- We will continue to support all our current scholars as far as they want to continue their education, up to graduate level;
- We will work with our committees to identify the most vulnerable children and young people that need our support, with a particular focus on girls (given the additional multiplier effect of supporting girls' education) and children living with disabilities; and
- We will continue to try to prevent children and young people from dropping out of education, whether that is through paying their fees through our scholarship programme, providing them with a school meal, or improving the environment within which they are learning.

2. To take a more holistic approach to supporting the education of the children and young people we support

- We will try to understand and address the wider barriers, apart from school fees, hunger and poor infrastructure, that prevent our scholars thriving in their educational settings;
- We will seek to work in partnership with other organisations who are well placed to provide certain elements of this more holistic support (e.g. the organisation in Scotland that provides sanitary towels to our partner school in Uganda); and
- We will capitalise on overlaps between our scholarship programme and our work with partners supporting children with disabilities.

3. To develop future leaders & our alumni

- We will encourage our students to 'aim high' and inspire them to want to bring about change within their own communities and in their wider societies;
- We will continue to support and develop our alumni groups in Kenya, Lesotho and Uganda so that they will be able to encourage each other, as well as current students, to 'aim high' and bring about lasting change;
- We will ask all graduates (once they have found paid employment) to pledge to support at least one child with school fees; and
- We will encourage our alumni groups to contribute financially to Rafiki Thabo, via a 'local fund' so that they can help other students in their countries.

4. To inspire supporters and engage others to help us work towards our vision

- We will build on our existing schools programme to work with more schools in the UK - including those who support/ have supported ACACIA UK and took part in the Rafiki Relay. Not only will this help us to raise funds but it will also educate and inspire the next generation about Africa;
- We will give talks to groups within our local communities (e.g. at churches, Rotary, Probus, Lions, WI etc) in order to raise funds, raise awareness of development issues and provide a more positive view of Africa;
- We will encourage our supporters to run fundraising events on our behalf (see Fundraising and Communications Strategy for further details); and
- We will capitalise on our unique opportunity to share our students' stories, photos and audio clips regularly in order to engage our supporters better via social media and our e-newsletter (see Fundraising and Communications Strategy for further details).

5. To build sustainable growth – and a funding base to support that growth

- We will increase our sustainable income, for example through growing our endowment, building our regular supporter base, and working with ACACIA UK to ensure the income from the shops continues to grow (see Fundraising and Communications Strategy for further details);

- We will complete the merger with ACACIA UK, such that ACACIA becomes the trading arm of the Rafiki CIO;
- We will develop optimal operations and funding structures to support our growth, taking steps towards growing our team in the UK as required;
- We will improve our organisational structures in-country, including introducing paid staff to support our committees and establishing and equipping an office in each country; and
- We will have succession plans in place for each in-country committee.

8.3 Delivering our strategy

For each of the above strategic objectives we will carry out a number of activities and wish to see particular outcomes. A summary table of the strategic objectives, activities and outcomes is provided in Annex A.

8.4 Communications and Fundraising strategy

We will only be able to meet our strategic objectives and produce the desired outcomes if we have effective communications and fundraising activities. To this end, and as a reflection of the importance of fundraising and communications, we have a separate Communications and Fundraising strategy. Please contact janet@rafiki-foundation.org.uk to request a copy of this strategy.

8.5 Monitoring and evaluating our progress

In order to keep track of our progress towards reaching our strategic objectives we have developed a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. This is provided in Annex B. Before the beginning of each calendar year, we will devise an annual business plan with specific objectives, which will work towards the overall strategic objectives. At the end of each year, we will review the annual business plan and devise a plan for the following year – each year moving closer towards achieving our overall strategic goal and desired outcomes.

In 2022, we will also create a ‘Theory of Change’ which will demonstrate how our activities will lead to the overall impact we are aiming to achieve.

Annex A Summary of strategic objectives, activities & desired outcomes

Strategic objective	Activities/notes	Desired outcomes
1. To increase access to, and completion of, education for more students at secondary school and in higher education, including for children living with disabilities	We will continue to support all our current scholars as far as they want to continue their education, up to graduate level	1a. Scholars and graduates are empowered through education
		1b. Graduates are able to secure decent jobs or start their own businesses; graduates' household income increases, enabling them to break the cycle of poverty
		1c. Graduates are inspired to give something back to their communities/ wider society
		1d. Scholars are prevented from dropping out of education and are able to study without disruption and therefore achieve the best results they can
	We will continue to try to prevent children and young people from dropping out of education, whether that is through paying their fees through our scholarship programme, providing them with a school meal, or improving the environment within which they are learning	1e. Most vulnerable in society are able to access/ continue with education and achieve all outcomes 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d
		1f. Increase in proportion of girls and children living with disabilities benefiting from our programmes
We will work with our committees to identify the most vulnerable children and young people that need our support, with a particular focus on girls (given the additional multiplier effect of supporting girls' education) and children living with disabilities		
2. To take a more holistic approach to supporting the education of the children and young people we support	We will try to understand and address the wider barriers, apart from school fees, hunger and poor infrastructure, that prevent our scholars thriving in their educational settings	2a. Barriers removed so scholars/ graduates can achieve outcomes 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d

Strategic objective	Activities/notes	Desired outcomes
	We will seek to work in partnership with other organisations who are well placed to provide certain elements of this more holistic support (e.g. the organisation in Scotland that provides sanitary towels to our partner school in Uganda)	
	We will capitalise on overlaps between our scholarship programme and our work with partners supporting children with disabilities	2b. Children with disabilities provided with support from different programmes that address their needs, so they can achieve outcomes 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d
	We will work with partners to provide more holistic support to our scholars (e.g. school meals, sanitary towels, household economic development, meeting healthcare needs, protection for vulnerable students, improving quality of education etc)	2c. Scholars benefit from more holistic support as a result of partner programmes so that they can achieve outcomes 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d
3. To develop future leaders & our alumni	We will encourage our students to 'aim high' and inspire them to want to bring about change within their own communities and in their wider societies	3a. Our graduates achieve leadership positions in their communities/ wider society
	We will continue to support and develop our alumni groups in Kenya, Lesotho and Uganda so that they will be able to encourage each other, as well as current students, to 'aim high' and bring about lasting change	3b. Our alumni form effective groups that encourage each other and work together for long-term positive change in their communities
	We will ask all graduates (once they have found paid employment) to pledge to support at least one child with school fees	3c. Our alumni give back to Rafiki Thabo – either by contributing to a 'local fund' to provide uniforms, books, sanitary towels etc to our neediest students or by sponsoring a student.
	We will encourage our alumni groups to contribute financially to Rafiki Thabo, via a 'local fund' so that they can help other students in their countries	
4. To inspire supporters and engage others to help us work towards our vision	We will build on our existing schools programme to work with more schools in the UK - including those who support/ have supported ACACIA UK and took part in the	4a. Increase in number of schools we work with leading to increased income and awareness of next generation about Africa

Strategic objective	Activities/notes	Desired outcomes
	Rafiki Relay. Not only will this help us to raise funds but it will also educate and inspire the next generation about Africa	
	We will give talks to groups within our local communities (e.g. at churches, Rotary, Probus, Lions, WI etc) in order to raise funds, raise awareness of development issues and provide a more positive view of Africa	4b. Increase in number of talks delivered by trustees, staff members & others, resulting in more funds, raised awareness of development issues and a more positive view of Africa
	We will encourage our supporters to run fundraising events on our behalf	4c. Increase in number of fundraising events/ sponsored events run by supporters leading to increased income
	We will capitalise on our unique opportunity to share our students' stories, photos and audio clips regularly in order to engage our supporters better via social media and our e-newsletter	
5. To build sustainable growth – and a funding base to support that growth	We will increase our sustainable income, for example through growing our endowment, building our regular supporter base, and working with ACACIA UK to ensure the income from the shops continues to grow	5a. Increase in number of regular supporters, resulting in increased income
	We will complete the merger with ACACIA UK, such that ACACIA becomes the trading arm of the Rafiki CIO	5b. Increase in income coming from ACACIA shops to the CIO
	We will develop optimal operations and funding structures to support our growth, taking steps towards growing our team in the UK as required	5c. Optimal operations and funding structures in the UK in place to support our growth
	We will improve our organisational structures in-country, including introducing paid staff to support our committees and establishing and equipping an office in each country	5d. Improvements in efficiency/ reporting from in-country teams; ability to further grow our programmes
	We will have succession plans in place for each in-country committee	

Annex B Monitoring & Evaluation Framework

	AIM	INDICATOR How is it calculated?	BASELINE What is the current value?	TARGET What is the target value?	DATA SOURCE How will it be measured?	FREQUENCY How often will it be measured?	RESPONSIBLE Who will measure it?	REPORTING Where will it be reported?
Strategic Objective	1. To increase access to, and completion of, education for more students at secondary school and in higher education, including for children living with disabilities							
Outputs/ outcomes	1a. Scholars and graduates are empowered through education	Number of students being supported by RTF to further their secondary/higher education [assumption that all students nominated are vulnerable]	228	350	Scholars database (info taken from application forms)	Annually	Director	On website, newsletters, social media, annual report
	1e. Most vulnerable in society are able to access/ continue with education and achieve all outcomes 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d							
	1b. Graduates are able to secure decent jobs or start their own businesses; graduates' household income increases, enabling them to break the cycle of poverty	Number of graduates getting paid jobs or starting their own businesses relevant to their qualification level	63%	70%	Impact survey	Annually	Director	On website, newsletters, social media, annual report (impact section)
	1c. Graduates are inspired to give something back to their communities/ wider society	Number of graduates reporting that they are giving something back to their communities/ wider society	91%	95%	Impact survey	Annually	Director	On website, newsletters, social media, annual report (impact section)
	1d. Scholars are prevented from dropping out of education and are able to study without disruption and therefore achieve the best results they can	Number of scholars transitioning to next grade/ academic level	Not currently quantified but estimated at at least 95%	95%	Scholars database	Annually	Director	On website, newsletters, social media, annual report

	AIM	INDICATOR How is it calculated?	BASELINE What is the current value?	TARGET What is the target value?	DATA SOURCE How will it be measured?	FREQUENCY How often will it be measured?	RESPONSIBLE Who will measure it?	REPORTING Where will it be reported?
	1f. Increase in proportion of girls and children living with disabilities benefiting from our programmes	Number of girls on our scholarship programme	107 (48%)	175 (50%)	Scholars database (info taken from application forms)	Annually	Director	On website, newsletters, social media, annual report
		Number of girls benefiting from our other programmes (EW2L, infrastructure development, disability)	Not currently quantified but estimated at at least 500	1,500	Final reports from partner projects	Annually	Director	On website, newsletters, social media, annual report
		Number of children living with disabilities on our scholarship programme	28 (13% of total)	50 (14% of total)	Scholars database (info taken from application forms)	Annually	Director	On website, newsletters, social media, annual report
		Number of children living with disabilities benefiting from our other programmes	Not currently quantified but estimated at at least 350	1,000	Final reports from partner projects	Annually	Director	On website, newsletters, social media, annual report
Strategic Objective	2. To take a more holistic approach to supporting the education of the children and young people we support							
Outputs/ outcomes	2a. Barriers removed so scholars/ graduates can achieve outcomes 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d	Number of projects to improve school learning environment	13 (in previous strategy period)	15 (in current strategy period)	Final reports and receipts from partner schools	At end of strategy period	Director	In review of this strategic plan
		Number of children receiving school meals through EW2L	70	100	Update from Uganda committee	At end of strategy period	Director	In review of this strategic plan
		Number of disability projects implemented by partners	3 (2021)	3 per year	Final project reports from partners	Annually	Director	Review of annual business plan

	AIM	INDICATOR How is it calculated?	BASELINE What is the current value?	TARGET What is the target value?	DATA SOURCE How will it be measured?	FREQUENCY How often will it be measured?	RESPONSIBLE Who will measure it?	REPORTING Where will it be reported?
	2b. Children with disabilities provided with support from different programmes that address their needs, so they can achieve outcomes 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d	Number of children living with disabilities benefiting from our programmes	Not currently quantified but estimated at at least 350	1,000	Scholars database, final reports from partner projects	Annually	Director	On website, newsletters, social media, annual report
	2c. Scholars benefit from more holistic support as a result of partner programmes so that they can achieve outcomes 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d	Number of scholars benefitting from partner programmes	Not currently quantified but estimated at at least 50 ¹	100	Partner reports, feedback from committees in country	Annually	Director	On website, newsletters, social media, annual report
Strategic Objective	3. To develop future leaders & our alumni and engage others to help us work towards our vision							
Outputs/ outcomes	3a. Our graduates achieve leadership positions in their communities/ wider society	Number of graduates in leadership positions	Approx. 6?	12	Impact survey	At end of strategy period	Director	Review of current strategic plan
	3b. Our alumni form effective groups that encourage each other and work together for long-term positive change in their communities	Number of graduates in our alumni groups	42 in FB group; 31 in Kenya WhatsApp group; 10 in Uganda group; 7 in Lesotho group = total 90 (but there will be overlaps)	150 in total by end of strategy period	Number in various groups	At end of strategy period	Director	Review of current strategic plan

¹ Girls receiving sanitary towels donated through Scottish charity through partner school in Uganda

	AIM	INDICATOR How is it calculated?	BASELINE What is the current value?	TARGET What is the target value?	DATA SOURCE How will it be measured?	FREQUENCY How often will it be measured?	RESPONSIBLE Who will measure it?	REPORTING Where will it be reported?
	3c. Our alumni give back to Rafiki Thabo – either by contributing to a 'local fund' to provide uniforms, books, sanitary towels etc to our neediest students or by sponsoring a student.	Number of graduates contributing financially to others' education	5	30	Impact survey	At end of strategy period	Director	Review of current strategic plan
Strategic Objective	4. To inspire supporters and engage others to help us work towards our vision							
Outputs/ outcomes	4a. Increase in number of schools we work with leading to increased income and awareness of next generation about Africa	Number of schools we are working with	6 (during last strategy period)	10	Email correspondence	Annually	Director	On website, in annual report, in annual business plan review
	4b. Increase in number of talks delivered by trustees, staff members & others, resulting in more funds, raised awareness of development issues and a more positive view of Africa	Number of talks given	3 PA	5 PA	Report back from person giving talk	Annually	Director	Review of annual business plan
	4c. Increase in number of fundraising/ sponsored events run by supporters leading to increased income	Number of fundraising events run by supporters	5 PA	7 PA	Fundraising income/ pages	Annually	Director	On social media, in annual report, in annual business plan review
Strategic Objective	To build sustainable growth – and a funding base to support that growth							
	5a. Increase in number of regular supporters,	Amount donated by regular supporters	£16,980 PA	£25,000 PA	Accounts	Annually	Treasurer	Annual accounts

	AIM	INDICATOR How is it calculated?	BASELINE What is the current value?	TARGET What is the target value?	DATA SOURCE How will it be measured?	FREQUENCY How often will it be measured?	RESPONSIBLE Who will measure it?	REPORTING Where will it be reported?
Outputs/ outcomes	resulting in increased income							
	5b. Increase in income coming from ACACIA shops to the CIO	Amount donated by ACACIA	£77,773 ² (2021)	£85,000 PA	Accounts	Annually	Treasurer	Annual accounts
	5c. Optimal operations and funding structures in the UK in place to support our growth	Sufficient staff and structures to carry out work required	3 part-time staff members working total of approx. 7 days per week	No numeric target – target is to have 'sufficient'	N/A	Annually	Director	To trustees
	5d. Improvements in efficiency/ reporting from in-country teams; ability to further grow our programmes	Organisational structures in place (paid staff, offices)	N/A	N/A	Email correspondence with committees	Annually	Director	Review of annual business plan

² Actual amount transferred from ACACIA to the CIO in 2021 was £105,792 but £28,019 of this was from ACACIA's existing reserves at the time of the initial transfer, leaving the remainder (£77,773) as profits from the shops.