Dear Sponsors and Supporters,

Greetings! I am pleased to share with you updates from this year of tremendous progress. The work we support has matured and is being seen across Kenya as a model to emulate. We are thrilled to see entire families rising to a better place. During this time of giving thanks, we are grateful for your commitment to making the world more equitable, kind, and hopeful. Thank you!

You may recall 3 years ago we moved from supporting individual students to assisting students’ families. Family Care consists of supporting education, living conditions, livelihoods, agriculture, and better health.

**Family Care works! 62 families are standing strong and will soon step out from our programs**
- At the end of this year 62 families will complete Family Care. They have businesses to provide sustainable income, farms that thrive, access to healthcare, home environments that are healthy, and students who will continue schooling through support from their families’ own incomes.

**Families are earning more and growing closer to financial independence**
- Staff in Kakamgea use the *Street Business School* curriculum to elevate micro-entrepreneurs with a focus on ensuring robust livelihoods among families who will soon be standing on their own.
- We are seeing a remarkable variety of successful new business ventures run by families we serve.

**Education remains the cornerstone of our work and the area where we focus most**
- Together, we support over 350 students in high schools, vocational centers, and universities.
- Family Care helps parents and guardians to earn and pay fees for over 500 primary students.
- Our new Education Fund helps students continue learning when sponsors are not available.

All this progress is thanks to you, our sponsors and supporters, and also thanks to our fantastic partners in Kakamgea. The amazing work we see taking place is achieved through Kenyan leadership and Kenyan staff who work tirelessly to help students and their families rise out of poverty to achieve stability.

**We need your support to continue this incredible project.** It’s needed more than ever because inflation is forcing Kenyans to choose between food or school. The main ways you can support this work are:

- **Sponsorships** that provide ongoing assistance to families and offer a unique opportunity for a sponsor to see a family’s progress and correspond through letters. Sponsors, your annual 2023 sponsorship is now due.
- **General Donations** that fill gaps across program, staff, and operational needs. Donations of any amount are highly valued and will go to areas of greatest need.
- **The Education Fund** helps students continue in school when we don’t have a sponsor for that student and family. You can have a tremendous impact by supporting students through this Fund.

A donation card is enclosed to guide your giving. We also need new sponsors for families. Questions? Call me at 978-999-2683 or Carra McFadden at 802-490-0522, or email us at info@friendsofkenyarising.org.

**To all of you, we express enormous gratitude.** Whatever the size of your gift, it makes a big difference in the lives of the students and families we serve. Your support helps break an enduring cycle of intergenerational poverty, creating a more equitable and brighter future for the next generations.

With warm gratitude,

John Chisholm, Executive Director
2022 in review: students & families growing, thriving, and rising

Three years ago we embarked on an ambitious new direction called “Family Care.” We want to thank our supporters for walking with us during this transition, with special thanks to our sponsors who understood that it’s more just, sustainable, cost-effective to help a whole family than to assist only one child from a family with several kids.

62 families are finishing our three-year Family Care program at the end of this year. A similar number will finish next year. Some students from those families will continue learning through scholarships from our Education Fund, while the majority will move forward in school through their families’ own financial support. We are proud to see these families standing on their own, and we will continue to stay in touch with them to ensure progress is maintained.

Gladys moves toward successfully completing our Family Care program

Gladys works tirelessly to provide for her six children. She started selling dried fish three years ago and saved enough to rent a small room and open shop as a M-Pesa mobile money agent.

Sharlet, Gladys’ eldest daughter, has been sponsored in school by our program since 2017. She is now finishing her third year of high school with fees provided by sponsorship. Sharlet’s older brother Brian has enrolled in a vocational course to become an electrician with help from our Education Fund, because Family Care sponsorship isn’t enough for his tuition as well.

Gladys’ M-Pesa agent business thrived in its first year and she earned $40 per week in profits. This money supported her four youngest children in school and helped Brian with rent and food near his trade school so that United Kenya Rising (UKR) only paid his tuition. Last December, Gladys’ business was robbed and she lost everything. Fortunately, with encouragement, business training, and a financial boost from UKR, she was able to reopen the business at a safer and busier location. Since then it has grown and she has also started stocking daily staples like cooking oil and soap. Sales are good, and Gladys is a dutiful saver and meticulous financial planner. A better future is already here for this family.

We are proud that through Gladys’ hard work and support from Family Care, this family has greatly improved their situation. Gladys’s family are on track to stand on their own and complete Family Care at the end of 2023.

Kays’s first paycheck

Kays is the first person from his family to reach post-secondary education. His younger brother Joseph was originally sponsored in school through our program (and still is). When we switched to Family Care this young man Kays was also able to enroll in a culinary training program through our Education Fund. He is now employed as a chef with a Catholic parish, and received his first $100 monthly salary in September. Kays immediately sent half of the money home to his grandmother so she can provide more for his three younger siblings. This is a perfect example of how family members support each other and why we we say with confidence that Family Care works.

Enjoy more updates by following us on Facebook:
Search Facebook for “Friends of Kenya Rising” and click the “Follow” button.
Protus and his sons, reunited and thriving

Charles and Elphas lost their mother in 2019. Their father, Protus, had been working day-labor jobs in the city to provide for them but he returned home to raise his children when she died. Initially the family says they lost hope, with Protus explaining that during this time they encountered “total poverty.” The family was selected for our Family Care program in early 2021.

Elphas (now in fourth grade) and Charles (now in first grade) are no longer missing school for lack of uniforms, books, and fees. The family has moved from an old, crumbling grass-thatched house with a rotten roof to a new mud house with a durable leak-free roof. Protus has also built a new latrine and washroom. The homestead was renovated with the help of iron roof sheets and bags of cement from our Healthy Homes program.

With agriculture training, encouragement, and inputs, the small family farm is now producing record harvests which means they can all finally eat three meals per day.

Protus says the changes in their life as a family have been a dream come true. His children now smile and laugh in a way he couldn’t even imagine two years ago. He proclaims confidently that hope is restored.

Consolata finishes medical school through our Education Fund

Consolata has been in our programs since primary school. Six years ago her mother died and then Consolata’s grandmother, who took over her care, soon passed as well. It was these two events that formed a dream in Consolata to work in medicine in order to prevent such losses for others.

Consolata began striving in earnest to make her dream come true. With a stellar score on her high school exit exams, she was admitted to a clinical medicine program at a well-respected university. She has now finished with four years of medical training and will soon begin a one-year hospital internship. Once she completes her internship, she will be a fully registered and qualified clinical officer, akin to a physician’s assistant in the US.

Consolata has not been sponsored since she finished high school. Instead, she has gone through university with support from our Education Fund. This fund helps students continue in school despite fluctuations in sponsorship.

"If it were not for UKR, I don’t think I would have been here. I say thank you and may God bless you," beams Consolata. As for us, we say thank you to all of our dedicated supporters because without you, we would not be here to assist Consolata.

Rose bounces back from a road accident to fully provide for her kids

A few years ago Rose was hit by a motorcycle and lost the ability to walk. Her business making and selling doughnuts collapsed because she couldn’t walk to the market. UKR helped her pay for medications and ongoing treatment, and also helped her with her three children and two young grandchildren’s schooling.

Rose can now walk short distances, and she’s almost finished with a tailoring course at a vocational school with tuition provided through Family Care sponsorship.

She is already getting clients as a tailor and can once again provide food and support most of her children’s school costs. Her family will wrap up its time in Family Care at the end of this year after Rose graduates and has more time for her work. She is incredibly grateful for the help received, and she looks forward to fully providing.
In-depth farm business training proves a success
A two-year, $69,000 grant initiated by the Rotary Clubs of Kakamega and Freeport, Maine has allowed us to provide intensive agriculture business training for 120 families, but the program ends in late 2023. We are looking for people willing to help underwrite this program beyond its startup phase.

In 2022, with your support, our accomplishments included...

1,567 people supported, from 320 families
15 different food crops, on average, grown by families for diet diversity & income
9,940 fruit trees grown by families we serve
83% of small family businesses are profitable
65% of families with health insurance, covering 352 children

708 primary & high school students supported
98.6% of primary & high school students advanced to their next grade in school
201 high school scholarships
126 vocational training scholarships
56 university scholarships

You are now invited to visit Kakamega and see these monumental changes first-hand

We are pleased to announce two “learning visit” trips to Kakamega next year. And we’re inviting you! The first will be in the summer, and the second will be in the fall. Dates will be confirmed based on what works for people who want to travel.

These will be our first donor visits since Covid-19 struck. We invite you to consider joining us to learn about the work we support together and the impact that it has. If you have always wanted to go, or are just considering it now, you can express interest and get more info by contacting Carra McFadden (802-490-0522) or John Chisholm (978-999-2683), or email us at info@friendsofkenyarising.org.