

The Catalyst Chronicles



MARCH 2025

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The Catalyst Chronicles

Message from the Secretariat

Dear Esteemed Members,

It is with great pleasure that we present to you the inaugural edition of **The Catalyst Chronicles, the official monthly newsletter of Impact Philanthropy Africa**. This publication marks a significant milestone in our journey to foster change, innovation, and concerted action within the philanthropic landscape of East Africa. Our goal is to deliver a carefully curated selection of impactful stories, insightful analyses, and timely updates from the philanthropic sector, all aimed at keeping you informed, engaged, and inspired as we work towards creating meaningful and lasting change in our communities.

Each edition of The Catalyst Chronicles will feature a variety of sections designed to highlight the remarkable initiatives undertaken by our members, share best practices, and keep you abreast of the latest developments and events. We believe that this newsletter will not only serve as an informative resource but also as a catalyst for new ideas and collaborative efforts. Together, we can make a substantial impact.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support and dedication to philanthropy. We eagerly await your feedback and contributions to The Catalyst Chronicles.

Warm regards,
Impact Philanthropy Africa Forum Secretariat



Philanthropy in Focus

In this section, we delve into current affairs and their implications for the philanthropic sector. Stay informed with links to pertinent news articles and concise editorials that offer a deeper understanding of the issues at hand. Our aim is to bring you timely and thought-provoking content that will keep you well-informed and engaged.

As USAID Is Gutted, Here's How Philanthropy Can Stop Panicking and Start Helping



With [USAID's abrupt closure under the Trump administration](#), the global philanthropic sector faces a stark new reality: a post-aid world where authoritarianism threatens human rights and democracy. But instead of panicking, philanthropy must step up—shifting from passive grant making to proactive advocacy, funding grassroots movements, and championing equity-driven solutions. [In this compelling analysis, Kellea Miller](#) explores how foundations can pivot their strategies to fill the void left by USAID, protect marginalized communities, and counter rising global repression. Now more than ever, philanthropy isn't just about charity—it's about resilience, resistance, and reimagining a just future.

As USAID grinds to a halt, a new kind of humanitarian effort is emerging: grassroots trackers documenting the real-time fallout of the aid freeze. [In this riveting piece, Thalia Beaty follows Sadie Healy, a global-health consultant who refused to stand by as lifesaving programs were shuttered](#), jobs vanished, and vulnerable communities bore the brunt. From self-funded Zoom meetings to Senate committee collaborations, these volunteers are exposing the human cost of political decisions, proving that even in the absence of institutional support, compassion and accountability endure.

As USAID Is Gutted, Here's How Philanthropy Can Stop Panicking and Start Helping



Christian aid groups receive millions in USAID funds. Now their humanitarian work is collapsing



With USAID's foreign aid freeze in full effect, faith-based humanitarian organizations like [World Relief, Catholic Relief Services, and World Vision](#) are facing a financial freefall, jeopardizing life-saving programs across Africa. From malnourished children in South Sudan to unplanted seeds in Haiti, the ripple effects of halted funding are dire. As faith-based groups struggle with layoffs, funding gaps, and stalled relief efforts, many are now turning to churches and private donors to keep their missions alive. But as the Trump administration's 90-day review drags on, will these organizations survive the wait? This deep dive explores the crisis unfolding at the intersection of faith, philanthropy, and foreign policy.



Innovations in Philanthropy

Explore the latest trends and breakthroughs in the philanthropic world. This section will highlight cutting-edge practices, new research, and innovative approaches that are shaping the future of philanthropy. Stay ahead of the curve and learn about the exciting developments that are driving positive change.

Innovative Philanthropy in Africa: Beyond Traditional Grantmaking

Philanthropy in Africa is undergoing a radical transformation, shifting from traditional grantmaking to more innovative and sustainable strategies that drive lasting impact. As social challenges become more complex, corporations, foundations, and individual philanthropists are embracing dynamic approaches that go beyond financial aid. These new models of giving are redefining philanthropy and positioning Africa as a leader in sustainable social change.

The Rise of Mission-Related Investing (MRI)

Mission-Related Investing (MRI) is gaining momentum across Africa, enabling philanthropic entities to align their investments with social impact goals. Institutions such as the **Tony Elumelu Foundation** and **Africa50** are using MRI to fund businesses and projects that foster economic development while generating financial returns. This approach ensures long-term sustainability, unlike traditional grants, which often have limited reach.

Recoverable Grants: A Game-Changer for Nonprofits

Recoverable grants, structured as repayable loans, are revolutionizing nonprofit funding. Organizations like the **Acumen Fund** provide social enterprises with capital that is reinvested once repaid, allowing funds to be continuously cycled into new projects. This model promotes accountability, sustainability, and greater financial resilience for African nonprofits tackling issues such as poverty and healthcare access.

Strategic Corporate-NGO Partnerships

Businesses are no longer just donors; they are becoming active partners in philanthropy. Corporations like **Safaricom Foundation** and **MTN Foundation** are forging strategic alliances with NGOs, aligning their corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts with national development priorities. These partnerships

enable a more targeted and scalable approach to solving pressing challenges, from digital inclusion to climate resilience.

Flexible Legal Structures for Giving

New philanthropic structures such as **family charitable trusts** and **social welfare organizations** under African tax laws are enabling greater flexibility and efficiency. High-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) are using vehicles like the **Mo Ibrahim Foundation** to channel resources into governance and leadership programs, ensuring long-term impact.

Volunteerism and Skills-Based Giving

Corporate philanthropy is increasingly focusing on leveraging skills rather than just financial contributions. Programs such as **Deloitte's Impact Day** in Africa allow employees to provide pro bono expertise to nonprofits and social enterprises, strengthening institutional capacity and leadership.

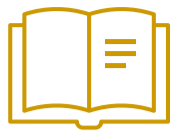
What This Means for Africa's Growth

These philanthropic innovations are fostering a more **self-sufficient Africa**, where social enterprises thrive, local solutions drive change, and philanthropy is more than just charity—it's an investment in the continent's future. By adopting sustainable and innovative giving models, Africa is positioning itself as a leader in impact-driven philanthropy, shaping a future where communities are empowered, economies grow, and development is sustainable.

"Philanthropy obliges us to localize. Are we aware of the needs of our societies? Invest in communities using community resources. Learn best strategies from others."

**Misheck Gondo, Youth Leader, Activist, Writer,
Developmentalist and Political Analyst**

This article is adapted from this article by [Forbes: Innovative Philanthropy](#)



Best Practice Case Study

Each month, we will feature a case study that exemplifies best practices in philanthropy. Learn from the experiences of others and discover practical insights that can be applied to your own initiatives. These case studies will provide valuable lessons and inspiration for all our members.

Lumos Kenya: A Thought Leader in Care Reform in Kenya

In a small village in Embu County, two siblings Enck and Manu receive the loving embrace of their great-grandmother. Something they have both longed for since childhood. Enck and Manu lived in an institution for years, not because there were no family members to care for them, but because of the loss of their mother, poverty and a broken system.

But their story is not unique.

Thousands of children in Kenya have been raised in institutions, often missing out on the love, security and stability of family life. But change is here, and Lumos Kenya is at the forefront of this transformation, by championing the shift from institutional care to family and community-based care solutions.

Lumos is reshaping the national conversation on child welfare through policy advocacy, community engagement, and hands-on reform programs. It is proving that every child can have a home with the right structures in place.

A New Approach: Challenging the Status Quo

For decades, institutions were seen as the best solution for vulnerable children in Kenya. Churches, donors, and even well-meaning charities poured resources into children's homes, believing they were providing a better future. However, the research and experiences of those who grew up in institutions told a different story. Children raised in institutions often struggle with attachment issues, lack of life skills, and difficulties integrating back into society. Worse still, many children in these homes have living relatives who could have cared for them, if given the right support.

This is why Lumos stepped in with a different approach. Instead of building more care institutions, why not strengthen families and communities to care for their own? This simple yet revolutionary idea has positioned Lumos as a thought leader in Kenya and the regional care reform landscape.

So, how did Lumos approach this revolution?

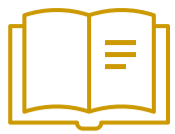


Shaping National Policy

Real change starts with policy and Lumos understood this from the beginning. Since 2018, it has worked closely with the Kenyan government, influencing key policies and frameworks that guide child protection.

When the National Care Reform Strategy (2022-2032) was launched, Lumos was not just a participant. It was a driving force behind it. The organization provided technical guidance, research and training. Ensuring that the shift from institutional care to family and community-based care was not just an idea but a structured, well-supported plan.

Lumos also understood that the shift goes beyond shaping national policy. The organization has helped train government officers, social workers, and community leaders to ensure that the principles of care reform are understood and implemented at every level.



Best Practice Case Study

The Embu Story: Proof That Change Works

Change is difficult, especially when long-held beliefs are being challenged. But if there is one place that proves Lumos' vision works, it is Embu County in Kenya. In 2022, Lumos chose Embu as the pilot county for its care reform approach. What followed was a transformation that has become a benchmark and reference in the care reforms space. Here are some of the key outcomes from the Embu County program.

- 1,147 Children who would have been placed in institutions are now growing up in their own families, foster, or adoptive families. This was achieved in 2024 alone.
- Institutions that once operated as permanent homes are now transitioning into family support centers, helping children stay with their biological relatives.
- 130 Foster Carers were trained, 264 were recruited as prospective foster parents and 139 professionals were trained in care reform implementation.
- Government officers who once saw institutionalization as the only option are now actively supporting families to raise their children.

A children's officer in Embu put it the best, *"I used to think institutions were the only safe place for vulnerable children. Now I see that a well-supported family is the best place for a child to grow up."*

Lumos' approach has been holistic and systematic, ensuring that no child is left behind. From training caregivers to building alternative care networks, the Embu project has provided a scalable blueprint that will be used in other counties. The experience has proven that care reform is not just possible. It is necessary.



A Movement, Not Just a Program

The work of Lumos Kenya goes beyond individual projects. It has inspired and catalyzed a movement that is spreading across Kenya and beyond.

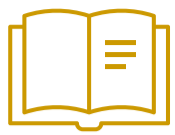
One of the key events that was a testament to Lumos' thought leadership was the official launch of the National Scale-Up of Care Reform Implementation that took place in 2024. The event brought together government agencies, UNICEF, and key stakeholders, all committed to rolling out care reform nationwide.

Media campaigns, faith-based partnerships, and community training sessions have shifted public perception, ensuring that more Kenyans understand why family-based care is the future.

And the influence goes beyond Kenya's borders. Policymakers across Africa are looking at Kenya's progress, with Lumos sharing its expertise regionally and influencing how care systems are reimaged.

Lumos is not just implementing change; it is leading the conversation on what sustainable child protection should look like.

"I used to think institutions were the only safe place for vulnerable children. Now I see that a well-supported family is the best place for a child to grow up."



Best Practice Case Study

The Future: Scaling Impact, Transforming Lives

The world is changing, and Kenya is at the forefront of a global movement toward family-based care. In the UK, the Foreign Secretary recently led a campaign to advocate for family-based care for all children across the globe, echoing the very principles that Lumos has been implementing in Kenya. This shows that the organization is not just following trends but setting them.

But there is still a lot of work to be done and here's what Lumos is now focusing on:

- Expanding its reach beyond Embu County to other counties, to ensure that every child in Kenya has a chance to grow up in a loving home.
- Advocating for funding shifts, to ensure that donor resources move away from institutions and into family-strengthening programs.
- Strengthen partnerships with the African Union (AU) to shape continental policies on child care.

With government support, community buy-in, and a growing network of partners, Lumos is assured to make family-based care the norm and not the exception.



Conclusion: A Future Where Every Child Belongs

Lumos Kenya has done more than just implement a program. It has shifted mindsets, influenced policies, and proven that care reform works. From the halls of government to the homes of families in Embu, its impact is undeniable.

The two siblings Enck and Manu, now live with their great grandmother who once thought she couldn't care for him. With the right support, she has become their safe place, their family. The two boys are also happier. Manu is growing his talent for playing football while Enck has a great sense of belonging.

Their story is the story of thousands more, and thanks to Lumos, it is a story of hope, belonging, and a brighter future.

Lumos Kenya's message is clear: Every child deserves a family. Every child belongs. And it is leading the way to make that vision a reality.



Best Practice Case Study

Call to action

To maintain momentum and expand our impact, the following are key areas where working in partnership will make a huge difference;

To maintain momentum and expand our impact, the following are key areas where working in partnership will make a huge difference;

- **Embu County Work:** Enhancing the ongoing work in the following areas: supporting the 16 institutions of care to transition to a family-focused care model. This includes the training of staff, supporting families, conducting child and family assessments, and facilitating family case conferences. Focusing on preventing further separation through supervision, mentorship, and technical guidance on delivering holistic and systematic care reform and establishing Positive Parenting Training Service Centres in all the sub counties in Embu County.
- **Regional scale-up:** Conducting a post-scale-up workshop with all regional coordinators to address challenges raised during and after the care reform scale-up workshop. This will include deep dive training of the all Eastern Region lead state agencies professionals, finalising and harmonising care reform implementation roadmaps, along with sharing county care reform action templates. Eastern region hosting over 7000 children in

the institutions of care.

- **Establishing Gatekeeping mechanisms:** These structures are crucial for preventing family separation and will equip key stakeholders to continue driving care reform at the community level.
- **Enhancing alternative care:** Strengthening referral mechanisms for alternative care, such as foster care, in collaboration with Embu authorities. Additionally, we will bolster the “Train the Trainers” programme to ensure government officials and foster carers are equipped to provide high-quality care. Support all trained foster parents to ensure they are certified and registered within the government system.
- **Sustaining long-term change:** Our strategy is focused on sustainability. We will continue advocating for care reform principles to be embedded in national policies, child protection practice, securing budgetary support, and strengthening county-level Children Advisory Committees. This will empower local authorities to lead and sustain care reform efforts well into the future.

So, how can organizations and individuals get involved?

You can get involved by partnering with Lumos Kenya to scale up its work to other regions and counties. You can also get involved by creating awareness and driving impactful conversations around care reform to shift mindsets, influence policies and funding family and community-based care options as opposed to investing in institutions of care.

For more information, please visit our website at www.wearelumos.org or get in touch with **Grace Mwangi, Country Director, Lumos Foundation Kenya,** at grace.mwangi@wearelumos.org





Member Activities

In the past month, our members have been actively engaged in various impactful initiatives. Here are some highlights:

Bridging Minds, Building Futures: Giants Twiga's Literacy Mission in Trans Nzoia

In a heartwarming initiative to promote literacy and a reading culture, Giants Group Twiga extended its generosity to five schools in Trans Nzoia County, equipping them with vital learning resources.

With a donation worth Kshs 2 million, the group, led by Chetna Desai, Tejal Desai, and Mukesh Desai, received accolades from Trans Nzoia Governor H.E. George Natembeya and Professor Dr. Nangole, Chairman of the George Natembeya Foundation. The leaders expressed deep appreciation for the group's dedication to education, emphasizing the transformative impact of books in shaping young minds.

During the presentation at the Foundation's Kitale office, headteachers from the beneficiary schools received the books before a series of visits to the institutions. The initiative is far from over—Giants Twiga pledged to expand the program, donating books to an additional 10 schools.

As the Journey of Service continues, Makindu is set to be the next destination, ensuring that more students gain access to knowledge, one book at a time.



Empowering Girls, Enabling Education: A Gift of Dignity in Taita Taveta

In a transformative act of service, Lord Mahavir Swami Followers, in partnership with Giants Group Twiga and Vanik Vaishnav Mahajan, brought relief to 2,956 girls across six schools in Taita Taveta County by donating sanitary towels to ensure uninterrupted education for the next 12 months.

These schools, spread within a 70-kilometer radius of Voi, welcomed the initiative, which aims to combat period poverty and reduce absenteeism among young girls. The donation is a lifeline, empowering students to focus on their dreams without the worry of missing school due to lack of menstrual hygiene products.

Special appreciation was extended to Tiju Aziz of Voi for her unwavering support in making this initiative a success.

As Giants Group Twiga's Journey of Service continues, the mission moves next to Kitale, ensuring that education remains a right, not a privilege, for every student.





Member Activities

Strengthening Impact: Nation Media Foundation Expands Partnerships for Change

January marked a significant step forward for Nation Media Foundation (NMF) as it expanded its Impact Philanthropy collaborations, forging new partnerships to drive transformative initiatives across Kenya.

Celebrating Impact with Safal MRM Foundation

NMF joined hands with Safal MRM Foundation at their Kwale plant, witnessing firsthand the incredible work of the MRM Technical Institute and the Mabati Medical Centre. These initiatives continue to empower communities through education, skills training, and healthcare, and NMF congratulates the Safal MRM team for their dedication to lasting social change.

New Partnership with Davis & Shirtliff

A milestone MOU signing between Nation Media Foundation and Davis & Shirtliff officially launched a collaboration focused on sustainable solutions for education. Through the Impacting Lives Initiative, D&S will support the NMF Library Project in Kiambu, integrating solar energy and water solutions to enhance learning environments for students.

With these powerful partnerships, NMF reaffirms its commitment to education, community development, and sustainable impact. The journey continues, and we look forward to transforming more lives together!



to apply a duty rate of ten percentum (10 percent) for twelve (12) months," he said in a notice. Kevian Kenya Limited, malts and tomato sauce and ketchup. Patco Industries Limited got clearance to ship 6,000 tonnes of industrial products. Also, every manufacturer, other than where that manufacturer only volume, quality, and price. → mrsitawa@ke.nationmedia.com

NMG Foundation, Davis & Shirtliff ink solar solutions partnership

Nation Media Foundation Lead Daisy Maritim Maina (left) and Davis & Shirtliff Managing Director Edward Davis, during the signing of a partnership agreement yesterday. In the partnership, Davis and Shirtliff will provide borehole equipment and solar lighting solutions to the Nation Media Foundation Library project in Githunguri, Kiambu County.

FRANCIS NDERITU

allenges in the cane sector, such as low funding for sugarcane development and milling, weak outgrower institutions, low availability of quality planting material, weak research infrastructure and poor farmers/millers relations.

The brief detailing the sugar reforms seen by *Nation* indicates the government has already started facilitating access by sugarcane farmers to subsidised fertiliser, thereby improving sugarcane yields and bringing down the cost of production, a move that will result in the low prices of sugar in the market.

In terms of provision of infrastructure, the government has developed Draft Regulations on the quality based sugarcane payment system, which seeks to incentivise the growers to deliver and earn from good quality cane.

"Apart from setting stage for quality based cane payment, these regulations provide for the management of sugarcane collection centres to ensure fairness," reads the document.



Upcoming Events

Stay informed about the latest events and opportunities in the philanthropic sector. From conferences and workshops to webinars and networking events, this section will keep you updated on what's happening and how you can get involved. Don't miss these valuable opportunities to learn, connect, and grow.

**SHREE JAIN YOUTH LEAGUE**
THIKA

A VISA OSHWAL COMMUNITY PROJECT

43RD SHAH FREE EYE & E.N.T. CAMP



Eyes (Macho) Nose (Pua) Ears (Masikio) Throat (Koo)

SCREENING

**07 - 12 APRIL 2025**

**THIKA**
M.P. SHAH CHANIA GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL



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Impact Philanthropy Africa

P.O. Box 46821-00100, Nairobi, Kenya

[Kabasarian Avenue, Hse No. 10](#)

[Email: membership@impactphilanthropy africa.org](mailto:membership@impactphilanthropy africa.org)

info@impactphilanthropy africa.org

www.impactphilanthropy africa.org

About Impact Philanthropy Africa

Impact Philanthropy Africa is a forum of self-funded corporate and private charitable foundations working across Africa to create social impact. Registered in Kenya, the aim of Impact Philanthropy Africa is to increase the societal impact of corporate and private giving in Africa, to transform lives by improving the social and economic status of communities in alignment with achieving the SDGs. Impact Philanthropy Africa members aim to build a culture of philanthropy in Africa and influence policy through advocacy and thought leadership.

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