

Kakenya's Dream

Investing in girls from rural Kenya through educational, health, and leadership initiatives to create agents of change.

WHERE WE WORK

Our programs operate in southwestern Kenya, one of the most marginalized regions in the country, where 66% of girls undergo female genital mutilation (FGM) at puberty, 50% are married before the age of 19, and less than 25% graduate high school.

OUR MODEL

Kakenya's Dream is a nonprofit organization operating a range of holistic education, health, and leadership programs to empower girls and transform communities across rural Kenya. Led by Kenyan women, our wraparound programs are designed to nurture and support the whole girl and all of her unique needs from childhood to adulthood, because we believe an educated and well-supported girl has the ability to transform her family, community, and the world at large.



OUR PROGRAMS

Holistic Education

Our education programs include the Kakenya Centers for Excellence (KCE I and II), which are full-support girls' boarding schools that provide high-quality education to the most vulnerable girls in rural Kenya. When our students graduate from our boarding schools, they enter our Network for Excellence program, which supports our KCE I and II graduates as they make the critical transition to secondary school (high school) and tertiary education (college/university), a time when most girls in our community experience increasing pressure to get married and drop out of school. Through the Network for Excellence, we provide college and career guidance, scholarships and financial aid, tutoring, and social support so that our girls are set up for success in adulthood. As a result, the first cohort of KCE alumni graduated college in 2021. Our work continues to ensure that girls in rural Kenya have more opportunities than ever before.



968 girls educated and supported by our world-class Center for Excellence boarding schools



100% transition rate from primary school to high school



87% transition rate from high school to higher education



420 girls receiving continued financial, academic, and social support to complete secondary and tertiary education through our Network for Excellence program

Health and Human Rights

With extremely limited healthcare resources and education in our region, most community members know little about their bodies or rights. This lack of sexual health and rights-based education leads to increased rates of female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage, unplanned teenage pregnancy, and cyclical intergenerational poverty. Our region has one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the country, which was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdowns that followed. Girls who were isolated at home faced increased sexual violence, and many were forced to resort to survival sex to meet their basic needs.

To combat these problems, we equip our students, as well as boys and girls in partner schools across rural Kenya, with comprehensive sex education, information about the dangers of FGM and child marriage, knowledge of their legal rights, and life skills training through our Health and Leadership Training program. We also work to raise awareness on the community level, through projects like our Linda Dada Campaign ("protect a sister" in Swahili), which includes educational workshops for adults and youth about sexual and reproductive health, safe sex practices, and healthy interpersonal communication and relationships. We partnered with local media to disseminate this information via radio and television messaging to educate and drive behavior change in the adolescent community.

To further meet our region's healthcare needs, we have built the community's first and only youth-friendly health clinic! The clinic provides basic healthcare, mental health support and counseling, stigma-free sexual and reproductive care, and an emergency hotline for reporting incidents of violence to about 10,000 people who previously had little to no access to this kind of care.



32,992 girls and boys
educated on their health
and human rights through
our Health and Leadership
Training program



202 schools across
southwestern Kenya
served through our
Health and Leadership
Trainings



1,525,000 people reached
across southwestern Kenya
via educational radio and
television programming

"Grassroots organizations like Kakenya's Dream are part of a movement of organizations on the ground that have proven their ability to change hearts and minds."

– Michelle Obama, Amal Clooney, and Melinda French Gates

A replicable model for girls' education and empowerment across Africa

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