



Nice Place Foundation
Dream. Learn. Lead.

JANUARY – DECEMBER 2025

Annual Report 2025

Empowering Girls & Young Women to Live Dignified Lives

Figure 1: Nice Place leadership academy Cohort 10 and 11 during graduation ceremony, October 11 celebrating the International Day of the Girl child and our 4th anniversary (photo credit: Emmanuel Jambo)

www.niceplacefoundation.org



HIGHLIGHTS

140

Girls Trained as Champions of Change

300+

Girls in Scholarship Program

8,400

Students Reached in SRHR Sessions

100+

Girls Supported at Safe Shelter

Nice Place Foundation would like to give special thanks to our donors: Swedisch PostCode Lottery, Amref Health Africa-Italy, Amref Health Africa-Netherlands, Stitching Mebi, Stitching Saphir, AjiraDigital, Stitching de Hoorn, individual donors and partners that funded our projects and helped us progressively achieve our mission to empower girls and young women live dignified lives.

SECTION 1.0

Introduction & Background

Nice Place Foundation (NPF), founded by Nice Leng'ete, the International Postcode Lottery ambassador, Nice Nailantei Leng'ete International Ambassador and Laureate Freedom from Want Award recipient and Four Freedoms Awards, is dedicated to promoting gender equality and social justice. We provide a safe space for girls and young women, protecting them from harmful cultural practices such as Female Genital Mutilation/Cut (FGM/C), child forced marriages and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV) while using leadership and education for long term sustainable change.

Our team, comprising experts in programming, gender, education, public health, counseling, and social work, employs a comprehensive approach that includes a rescue center and scholarships for girls escaping GBV. These efforts help girls access the education they deserve and fulfill their dreams.

Our integrated approach through the leadership academy nurtures young talents and develops advocates of change, fostering a grassroots community movement. Our school-based program empowers adolescent girls and boys with sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR) to strengthen peer education and rights-based information to make informed choices about their health, bodies and future. It integrates knowledge, attitude and skills so that girls can also become peer educators and community advocates prevent GBV.

We collaborate with partners, government departments, right holders, and duty bearers to create sustainable solutions, breaking socio-cultural norms and progressively ending harmful cultural practices and other forms of GBV.



Figure 2: Empowered girls from NPF leadership academy raising awareness on outcome of the training to the leaders and parents during graduation on October 11, 2025



SECTION 2.0

Kajiado County Context

Kajiado County Kenya is home to pastoralist Maasai community who grapples with deep-rooted traditions that undermine girls and women health and rights leading to gender inequality. Harmful practices like female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C and child forced marriages) curtail educational opportunities, expose girls to poverty and violence, and perpetuate patriarchal norms.

The 2022 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS, 2022) shows some progress with FGM/C dropout rates from 78% to 24% in Kajiado County. However, alarming trends threaten these gains including cutting girls at younger ages, performing the cut secretly without ceremonies, medicalization of FGM/C, cross border to Tanzania and performance by traditional birth attendants in a less severe manner (typically Type 1 of FGM/C).

According to a UNICEF-UNFPA joint report (2023), over 230 million girls and women globally have undergone FGM/C, with an estimated 27 million additional girls at risk in the next five years. In Kajiado County, the Maasai community's patriarchal structure and reliance on livestock for income have perpetuated the practice. The region has experienced three consecutive droughts (as a result of climate change) devastating livestock and livelihoods, particularly affecting women and girls. This economic strain has led to increased GBV, as families resort to marrying off young girls to secure dowries. The psychological impact on these girls is profound, leading to mental health issues and further marginalization.

"Deeply embedded within the community, our project collaborates with local leaders, schools, and families to foster a shared commitment to change."

We collaborate with the Ministry of Education to increase in-school sessions, reaching more adolescent boys and girls in secondary and primary schools. We train teachers as Trainers of Trainers (TOTs), increase advocacy and awareness, support more girls in the scholarship program to enhance retention and transition rates, and engage the community to strengthen GBV prevention.

By scaling up leadership and advocacy training and reinforcing partnerships with stakeholders, our project seeks to create sustainable, long-term improvements in educational outcomes and overall well-being for girls and young women to lead empowered and independent lives.

78% → 24%

FGM/C dropout rate reduction in Kajiado County (KDHS, 2022)

230M+

Girls and women globally who have undergone FGM/C (UNICEF-UNFPA, 2023)

27M

Additional girls at risk in the next five years

SECTION 3.0-KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

3.1 Rescue Center / Safe Shelter

The reporting period has seen major improvement in the safe shelter rescue program with more rescued girls taken through medical and psycho social support and eventually back to different institutions of learning. The girls were enrolled in technical vocational training institutions (TVETs) to undertake various technical skills including hairdressing, tailoring, catering, plumbing, social work and child protection so that they can become self-sustaining once reconciled and reintegrated back to the society.

The reporting period has also seen close monitoring and mentorship to strengthen their completion rates. It is expected that the skills acquired will enable them get apprenticeship and job opportunities in the long term.

The safe shelter program however has experienced emerging trends including increase in cross border child marriages, cutting girls at young age without their knowledge, medicalization of FGM/C and performing the cut without ceremonies all this to evade the Kenyan law. The situation has also seen self-reporting of girls seeking justice, a greater outcome for the program

SUCCESS STORY 1

Sarah Manei – "Once a child bride, now a champion of hope"



16-year-old Sarah Manei from Imurutot village, Loitokitok was rescued by police from early forced marriage to a suitor against her wish. After going through trauma and defilement in her arranged marriage, she decided to run away to unknown destination citing denial of childhood rights. Sarah had been denied an opportunity to continue with her education to secondary school. The police rescued her after running away seeking help and through the department of children services, Sarah was rescued and got a safe space at Nice Place Foundation where she had to undergo medical check- up and treatment and provided with psycho social support over time. Her story is that of resilience and hope where reconciliation with her parents took place. Over time, the psycho social support provided an opportunity for her healing and eventually Sarah was enrolled to Kimana Girls secondary school (with continuous mentorship and full scholarship) to continue with her education and currently has completed her form 2. Sarah is pursuing her dream to complete her education, be empowered and live a dignified life.



SUCCESS STORY 2

Emily Naserian Sakimba — "From a shy timid girl to a smile of dignity and empowered champion"



Meet Emily Sakimba, an 18-year old girl from Entonet village Loitokitok a survivor of cross border FGM/C and child marriage along the Kenya-Tanzania border. Against her will Emily succumb to peer pressure, stigma related to FGM/C and her parents lacking school fees to continue with her education after secondary school. Initially she managed to complete her high school in 2023 thanks to bursaries. With no fees to continue with her education, she got married against her will and the suitor had to hide her in Tanzania to escape the Kenyan law. Though she was a bright girl in school, the area chief got fond of her story and began tracing her with the police, who sought help from their Tanzania counterparts. Emily was found, rescued through the department of children services, she was placed at Nice Place Foundation safe shelter program. She went through various medical and psychosocial support until she regained her confidence, self esteem and agreed to go back to school.

Through the support of Nice Place Foundation, Emily was enrolled to pursue her career in Education at Machakos University so that she becomes a teacher. She intends to complete her education and become a role model to other girls and young women in her village.

NPF Participation in Stakeholders Care Reforms Meeting

During the reporting period, NPF participated in a stakeholders' care reform meeting that was convened by the county department of children services chaired by Ms. Ann Kang'ethe the county director of children services and sub county children officer. The meeting emphasized on the care reforms that the government intends to take to ensure children are reconciled and reintegrated back into the society in the long term. NPF was applauded for being in the forefront to comply with care reforms after reconciling and reintegrating girls who have been accepted back into the community and supporting more in the scholarship program.

The partnership with charitable children institutions, the department of children services and other non-state actors was seen as important in prevention of GBV while considering the best interest of the child.

Notably, the increase in rescue cases during the reporting period was brought about by emerging trends and intersection between poverty, effects of climate change, male dominated patriarchal society, increase in new HIV/AIDS infections among young people and cross border FGM/C and child marriage meant to evade the law. At NPF, we provided immediate safety and strengthen our psycho social support for girls' at our safe shelter rescue center, infected and affected by trauma related to forced child marriages, FGM/C, child defilement, stigma and ensure they acquire justice in the long term.

Our safe shelter currently offers basic necessities (food, clothing, sanitary pads), medical treatment, and continuous counseling and psychosocial support to over 100 girls. We conduct home visits to assess family vulnerability and facilitate structured dialogues for reconciliation and reintegration. We also strengthen access to treatment, psycho social support, give them education or skills they desire to sustain their lives in the long term and to be able to reclaim their dignity. NPF also works with court users' association, security agents and the community to strengthen prevention and acting upon GBV cases.



SECTION 3.2

Leadership Academy



Figure 3: Computer coding class going on for the girls at the leadership academy

During the reporting period, Nice Place leadership academy trained 140 girls as champions of change. The training was designed to empower out-of-school girls with leadership capacity, social advocacy, sexual reproductive health and health, critical life skills, computer coding and environmental conservation. The program also provided a safe, inclusive learning environment where participants explored topics ranging from self-awareness and emotional intelligence to financial literacy, advocacy, and employability.

The training also responded to the pressing need for holistic empowerment of out-of-school girls, a vulnerable group often affected by limited education access, early marriages, FGM/C, unemployment, and gender-based discrimination. The program integrated leadership, advocacy, personal development, and financial literacy and entrepreneurship skills to support confidence building, and community leadership equipping them to make informed career decisions, manage relationships effectively, and engage in safe, meaningful community advocacy for positive change.

Academy Description

The academy is designed for girls aged 17–19 who have completed secondary education within the last year. It provides an immersive residential experience where leadership is ignited, explored and nurtured. Girls are trained to become ambassadors of change in their communities, with a specific mission: to confront the social norms and structural barriers that hold women and girls back, especially in rural and marginalized areas. In Kajiado County for example, only one woman was elected out of 33 elective positions in the 2022 general election, this program fills such a critical gap.

During the selection process 140 girls were given the opportunity for cohort 10 and 11 guided by a careful review of academic background, demonstrated leadership potential through past involvement in school or community activities, and desire for impact. Girls who showed initiative in helping others and geographic diversity — with the goal of identifying change-makers from the 22 counties in Kenya were selected.

Curriculum

Leadership Development: This course helps girls understand different styles of leadership, personal values, ethical decision-making, and how to lead with empathy and vision. It includes training on public speaking, confidence building, teamwork, time management, and goal setting.

Advocacy: This course introduces girls to the fundamentals of advocacy, including human rights, the constitution of Kenya, policy and lawmaking processes, and grassroots mobilization.

Personal Development & SRHR: This segment builds self-awareness, emotional regulation, resilience, and effective communication.

Computer Coding & Digital Literacy: Girls are equipped with tech skills to access global opportunities.

Environmental Conservation: This module links conservation with climate justice, teaching girls to become stewards of the land.



Objectives & Outcomes

Specific Objectives	Outcomes
Strengthen leadership, advocacy, and communication skills among out-of-school girls	Improved teamwork and collaboration through understanding group dynamics
Foster self-awareness, self-esteem, and goal-setting capabilities	Increased awareness and ability to prevent, report, or respond to GBV and harassment
Build personal and professional competencies for employability and entrepreneurship	Strengthened decision-making and problem-solving competencies
Increase awareness and response capacity on GBV, mental health, and SRH	Basic counselling and listening skills developed, enabling peer emotional support
Develop facilitation, teamwork, and advocacy project management skills	Heightened digital literacy and interest in content creation for advocacy and income generation
Provide participants with digital literacy and content creation exposure	Enhanced career planning skills and motivation to pursue personal development opportunities
Enhance participants' ability to plan, implement, and monitor ward-level advocacy projects	Created a business model canvas that opened creative thinking and enhanced knowledge on different opportunities for income generating activities including agribusiness
Strengthen participants' understanding of group dynamics and effective teamwork	Confident advocates ready to face leaders and overcome challenges related to inequality and GBV



Figure 4: Girls at the leadership academy showing courage and self-drive for change after training while graduating on October 11, 2025

Post-Evaluation Findings

68%

Average improvement in leadership & advocacy knowledge

85%

Reported increased confidence in public speaking

60%

Had a plan to initiate advocacy activities in their wards

Overall Trend & Impact

Thematic Progress	Observed Progress and impact
Leadership and Confidence	Progressive growth in self-expression, public speaking, and initiative-taking
Advocacy and Civic Engagement	Participants developed and refined 15 ward advocacy projects addressing education, GBV, environment, and youth empowerment Improved self-awareness, goal-setting, and self-esteem
Personal Development Emotional Health	Better emotional intelligence and stress management observed
Employability	Acquired skills in communication, financial literacy, and professional conduct
Digital Skills	Introduced to online advocacy and basic content creation for awareness
Peer Support Networks	Strong friendships and peer-mentorship circles formed for ongoing encouragement

Graduation Ceremony – October 11, 2025

The graduation ceremony also served as the 4th anniversary of NPF coincided with the International Day of the Girl Child with the theme **"The Girl I am the change I lead – girls on the frontline of crisis."** The day was marked with pomp, color, dances, songs and began with blessing of NPF and girls by the cultural elders as a symbol of prosperity and support for the skills and knowledge gain to continue in their respective communities.

Graced by Hon. Edwin Sifuna (Senator, Nairobi County) as the guest of honor, he emphasized on the importance of women leadership and his support for girls and women leaders in Kenya. The ceremony was also attended by other political leaders including Kajiado county deputy governor Hon. Martin Moshisho, members of county assemblies, partners from Amref Health Africa, stakeholders, and other dignitaries.



Figure 5: Cultural elders blessed Nice Place Foundation and the graduate girls to symbolize acceptance as leaders and advocates of change



Figure 6: Hon. Edwin Sifuna award a certificate to a graduate at the leadership academy, October 11, 2025



SECTION 3.3

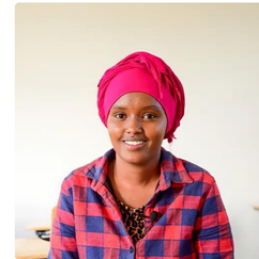
Scholarship & Education Support for Girls

During the reporting period, the project supported over 300 girls in our scholarship program. The girls who are academically talented but financially disadvantaged to continue with their education are currently at various levels of education including primary, secondary, tertiary and university levels pursuing their dream. These girls are selected based on vulnerability, family background, risk of harmful practices, academic performance and those orphaned by HIV/AIDs.

The scholarships support the girls' educational journey and enhance their performance and retention rates bridging the gender inequality gap and empowering them in the long term. Mentorship was done during the school holidays to address gaps and any challenges that may arise to strengthen the retention, completion and transition rates. NPF worked closely with education stakeholders, the scholarship committee and parents to make this journey a success.

SUCCESS STORY Shamsa Adan's Journey

"Overcoming Challenges to Pursue her Dreams through NPF Scholarship"



In her own words: "My name is Shamsa Adan, I come from Rombo, a small village where I was born and raised. We are seven children in our family, and I'm the firstborn. I started my education at a Nursery school called Nkasakinnoi, then transited to Rombo Girls Primary School from 2009 to 2011, then moved to Rombo Mixed Primary from 2012, where I completed Class 8 in the year 2016. I worked hard and passed my national exams.

After that, I joined Rombo Girls Secondary School from 2017 to 2020. Due to the Corona virus pandemic, the National exam was delayed. During high school, life became really hard. My father lost his job, became depressed and violent. My mother had to take care of all of us alone. Paying school fees was a big challenge. But we didn't give up. Despite all the struggles, we both passed our KCSE exams.



Shamsa Adan's Journey — continued

I was selected to join Pwani University, and my sister got a place at Egerton University. But because of our poor financial situation, we couldn't join. Then, our uncle suggested that I get married off so the family could get some money for my younger sister's education. My father agreed, but deep down, I wanted to continue with my studies.

I was so overwhelmed that I even tried to run away from home. That's when I remembered my former high school principal. She listened to me, understood my situation, and stepped in to help. In January 2022, my mother approached Nice Place Foundation seeking help. I first got enrolled into the Leadership Academy training. When I came to NPF, I met Nice Nailantei Leng'ete, who listened to our story with kindness. Nice helped us clear the fees so we could get our documents. Later, she helped us apply to Kenya Medical Training College (KMTC). In September 2022, I was called to join KMTC Msambweni to study Community Health Nursing. Nice Place Foundation gave me a full scholarship.

I studied hard for three years. In July 2025, I did my final qualifying exams and passed well. I have just completed my Nursing Council exams to get my license to practice, and I'm waiting to graduate in December 2025 as a Registered Nurse. I am so grateful to Nice Place Foundation for believing in me and supporting me when I had no one else. Because of them, my dreams are alive."

SECTION 3.4

School-Based SRHR Program

The program was designed to equip girls with accurate, age-appropriate and rights-based information to make informed choices about their health, bodies and future. It integrates knowledge, attitude and skills so that girls can also become peer educators and community advocates. Currently we have reached 8,400 students in our SRHR in school sessions and we intend to reach more annually. The program also engaged boys in schools to change their mindset towards placing value on girls and supporting them to complete their education.

In addition, NPF also conducted an Inception meeting with Head of Institutions for the 24 schools that the program is implemented to discuss measures to incorporate the SRHR program within the school curriculum. We also deliberated on measures to engage mentor teachers who will act as trainers to sustain the health clubs and reach more adolescent girls and boys within the selected schools.



BASELINE STUDY

Key Findings & Policy Recommendations

The In-School SRHR Baseline Survey conducted in September 2025 by Nice Place Foundation (NPF) in Kajiado South Sub-County assessed the knowledge, attitude, perceptions, and behavior (KAPB) of 459 students aged 10–19 on SRHR, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C), and child marriage. The study also engaged teachers, education officials, and community leaders to identify gaps and pathways for policy and programmatic action.

1. Entrenched Gender Inequalities

- 77% of respondents believe women are primarily responsible for domestic work.
- 75% believe men should have the final say in household decisions.
- Girls themselves internalize discriminatory norms, showing acceptance of violence and unequal power relations.
- Nearly half (48.9%) of the girls are married by age 17, reflecting deep-rooted norms linking marriageability to FGM/C.

2. Prevalence and Acceptance of GBV

- Boys (27.5%) were more likely than girls (19.2%) to agree that domestic violence is a private matter.
- 26% of boys and 19% of girls agreed that women should tolerate violence to keep their families together.
- FGM/C: 6.9% of girls surveyed reported undergoing FGM/C. However, 50–54% believe the practice brings social or marital benefits.
- Child Marriage: 48.9% of respondents reported that most girls are married by age 17.

3. Menstrual Health & Hygiene Management

- 55% of young girls in school had reached menarche; 28.6% experienced difficulties in accessing sanitary products.
- 32.8% experienced menstrual pains with most young girls reporting lack of menstrual hygiene management products including poor WASH infrastructure.
- Young menstruating girls reported not attending school for up to 3 days during their menstrual period due to a lack of sanitary pads, leading to absenteeism.

Key Recommendations

- Scale up SRHR education across all primary and secondary schools in Kajiado South.
- Strengthen community engagement to shift harmful gender norms and attitudes toward GBV and FGM/C.
- Improve menstrual health infrastructure and ensure consistent supply of sanitary products in schools.
- Develop targeted interventions for boys to challenge patriarchal attitudes and promote gender equity.
- Enhance data collection and monitoring systems for tracking GBV and FGM/C prevalence at the community level.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships & Stakeholder Engagement

The reporting period saw NPF engagement with new partners to undertake school-based program, youth mentorship, community advocacy and awareness and commemoration of international days. Key partners include Critical Conversations Project, Dandelion Africa, Basic Needs Basic Rights that paved way to complement efforts to reach more people so that we can have more impact.

Partnership with Ajira Digital

NPF partnered with Ajira for She program and provided a 3 months apprenticeship that provided young girls with skills and opportunities to thrive in the digital economy through online-enabled jobs such as email marketing, content creation, graphic design, and web development. A total of 45 girls benefited.

Governance: Appointment of New Board

The implementation period saw lobbying and appointment of new board members effective from October 10th, 2025. The new board is chaired by Mary Anne Mackenzie with five members for a period of four years and the meetings will be held quarterly. The first meeting was held on October 10 where members introduced each other and deliberated the agenda for the day including understanding NPF programs, financial statements and deliberated on plans underway with various action points on how to support NPF with its growth.

CELEBRATION

Graduation Ceremony Photos



Figure 8: Kajiado County Deputy Governor H.E Martin Moshisho with community members during our celebration for leadership academy graduates emphasizing on importance of education and support for the girls



Figure 9: Nice Place Foundation founder Nice Leng'ete with Maasai community members, partners, and stakeholders celebrating the leadership academy graduation and the foundation's 4th anniversary on October 11, 2025



Thank You

We extend our deepest gratitude to our donors and partners whom make our mission possible.

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