



# Zawadi Fund International



2023 Annual Report

[cyec.net](http://cyec.net)

## Background and Mission

The Children and Youth Empowerment Centre (CYEC), Nyeri, is a dynamic and innovative residential and educational program for street-dwelling children and other highly vulnerable young people in Kenya. Created in 2006 as a public-private initiative to address specific gaps in the care and support of disadvantaged children and youth, the CYEC is partnering with local civic organizations, the private sector and Kenyan and U.S. universities to find *effective, sustainable solutions* for this population.

Zawadi Fund International (ZFI) was established in 2009 as a US-based non-profit organization to support the CYEC and affiliated programs in Kenya. ‘Zawadi’ is the Swahili word for ‘gift’ and was selected to represent our desire to develop the gifts of each young person for the betterment of their community.

*The Children and Youth Empowerment Centre (CYEC) is focused on the comprehensive development of its target population, including life skills and entrepreneurship training, to enable these young people to lead fulfilling lives and contribute to the well-being of their communities. Zawadi Fund International partners with the CYEC to create innovative models for program sustainability, including mobilizing local resources and developing entrepreneurial initiatives for the Centre.*

## 2023 Accomplishments and Activities

Sustainability was an overarching theme of 2023, as we further developed initiatives focused on environmental, financial and social sustainability. We expanded our water harvesting capacity and prepared for additional solar panels (installed early in 2024) – these initiatives reduce our costs while benefiting the environment. Notably, the Rathithi Polytechnic was formally registered in 2023, facilitating sustainability of our educational and outreach programs there. Across all our programs, with your support, we cared for, educated and empowered 225 young people in 2023!

### Education and Centre Life

In 2023, we had 43 children in primary school (15 girls and 28 boys) and 57 in high school (24 girls and 33 boys). Seven of our young adults were in college and another 16 were at the polytechnic in Rathithi, along with 78 local youth. We took in 12 children from the streets (or who were at high risk of being pushed to the streets) and seven of our children rejoined their extended families while continuing to receive financial support and guidance from the Centre. An additional 16 youth were also supported by the Centre as they started small businesses, volunteered at the Centre and/or prepared for employment or further education.

In addition to academics, our students participate in co-curricular activities including soccer, agricultural production, arts, acrobatics, community service, religious engagement, and cooking. We



appreciate the ability to provide our young people with opportunities for growth, self-awareness and life-skills development!



Thanks to support of donors, we renovated the boys' bathrooms and built new bunk beds, ensuring our kids have a safe and comfortable home. We also got all the students new backpacks and made new school uniforms for them so they were ready for a new school year!



## Medical Clinic

Our medical clinic continues to serve both our Centre and the community. All of our children are screened as they enter the program, and our clinic provides check-ups, vaccinations and basic healthcare. Our clinic also provides basic care for the community, enabling our neighbors to receive care and strengthening our community connections. ZFI helps purchase medicines and supplies for the clinic so this critical work can continue!

## Rathithi Polytechnic

We are thrilled to report that in 2023, the polytechnic was officially registered through the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA) of Kenya. With this registration, we have the ability to develop new courses, and we have an official board, consisting of community leaders with expertise and experience in a variety of fields.



We had 94 students in 2023, 16 from the CYEC and the remainder from the local area. Our school plays a critical role for young people and the community as it gives students both the technical and leadership skills to be able to provide for themselves and contribute to their communities.

The exceptionally high rates of unemployment (and underemployment) for young people in Kenya, which is even higher for youth from disadvantaged backgrounds, means there is need for special effort to ensure our young people are prepared for their futures. Our programs include catering, tailoring, computer operations, masonry and plumbing, electrical technician, welding,



hairdressing and beauty therapy, all with life-skills and leadership. Of these, the most popular programs are masonry and plumbing, and computer applications. Our agriculture program provides vegetables and milk for the poly and the Centre as well as income from higher value production.

It was a good year for infrastructure development at the poly. Thanks to supporters in Kenya and globally, we installed a computer lab and built a new hall for gatherings – two critical additions! We also refurbished the student housing, added to our water harvesting, refurbished the library and set up a day care for children of our students and staff. Our electric vehicle team purchased a tuk-tuk and converted it to electric power – our e-tuk now provides affordable transportation to and from the poly!

Our library provides activities and events for the local community. We seek to foster a love of learning, especially among children, so our regular outreach programs include story time, board games, art and spelling bees.



## Othaya Eco-Village

Development of the first eco-village site in Othaya started ten years ago, in 2014. Othaya has a beautiful natural environment, and one of our main income-generating activities will be eco-tourism, with hiking, river rafting and biking, as well as agri-tourism. We have built traditional



huts for guest housing, a kitchen facility, a dining hall and latrines. The fertile agricultural land at Othaya produces a variety of vegetables for the Centre and is a key component of our efforts to produce much of the food needed for our program.

## Zawadi Youth Enterprise Programme

Through the Zawadi Youth Enterprise Programme (Z-YEP) youth start businesses (individually or in teams), develop leadership skills, and learn how to manage and grow their businesses. They work in a variety of areas – retail (selling items such as electronics, clothing or food) or services (hairdressing, catering or driving school children). In October we offered an advanced workshop for some of the young people with more experience in business. While many have had businesses for several years, they appreciated the opportunity to learn about financing, marketing and tax compliance. Those who participated in the workshop are eligible for a loan to support expansion of their enterprise. As they pay their loans back, other young people can receive funding as well, keeping the cycle of giving and growth going!



## Partnerships

The Centre continues to benefit from the network of partnerships it has created to bring together creative, dedicated people and institutions to develop and implement innovative programs. Key among these are US and Kenyan universities including Penn State University, Kansas State University, and Dedan Kimathi University of Technology. These collaborations help young people learn and grow and form genuine connections across cultures!

Alumni of the Centre have established a group that supports the Centre through holding events, mentoring and fundraising. This organization is growing to include young people from the community as well.

The Zawadi Society is a Kenyan organization through which local civic groups, businesses, religious bodies and individuals support the Centre's programs through volunteering, mentoring, financial or in-kind support. The CYEC is a valued local institution!



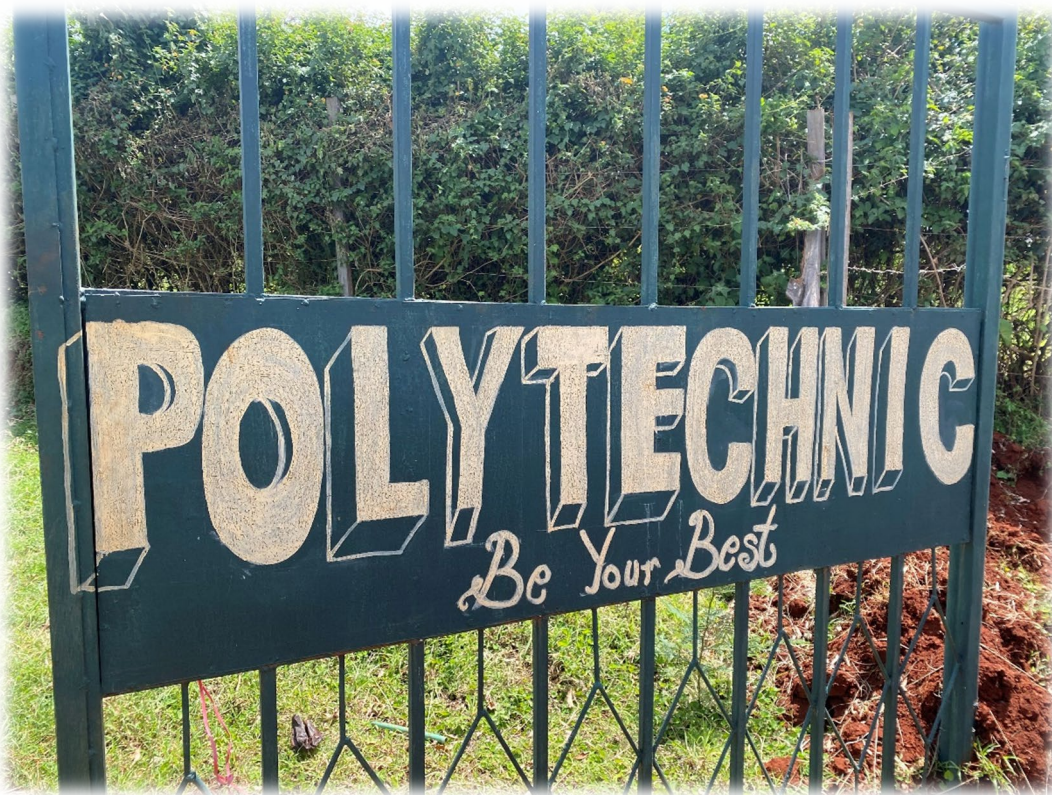


## 2024 Priorities and Initiatives

We are excited to build on our successes in 2023 this coming year. With registration of the polytechnic, we have created a board for the institution, and they are providing advice and guidance on development, administration and outreach. We are also re-activating the board for the CYEC, strengthening community engagement for our programming for the younger students. In partnership with the EKI Foundation, we installed solar panels in January. We love saving money as the sun shines!

The war in Ukraine and devaluation of the Kenyan Shilling have led to dramatic increases in food prices. To generate income while supporting a local need, the CYEC intends to open a flour mill. This mill will supply locals with affordable maize flour for baking, porridge and other uses and support our ability to sustain ourselves.

Your support has enabled us to build a strong foundation, to help us survive and grow through challenging times. Please join in this commitment to our shared future by supporting the vital work of the CYEC as you are able.



## Zawadi Fund International 2023 Financial Statement

<b>Donations</b>	<b>2023</b>
Direct donations	\$145,295.91
Indirect donations (Global Giving & Network for Good)	\$14,612.78
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$159,908.69</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Dispersal to CYEC	<b>\$169,136.83</b>
Residential care	73,904.34
Education	19,743.34
Enterprise Development and Infrastructure (including poly)	75,489.15
Business expenses (PA registration, website, etc.)	\$1,652.49
Bank, transfer and on-line collection fees	\$1,014.59
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$171,803.91</b>
<b>Net Change in Assets</b>	<b>\$-11,895.22</b>
<b>Assets at the beginning of the year</b>	<b>\$34,102.23</b>
<b>Assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>\$22,207.01</b>

ZFI has no paid staff, keeping our overhead expenses to a minimum. That means your donations go straight to support the children and programming at the CYEC!



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## Personnel

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