



Edmund Rice
FOUNDATION
Liberating Lives Through Education

2025

IMPACT REPORT

Liberating Lives Through Education



WHO WE ARE

Since 1987, Edmund Rice Foundation has been working to liberate lives through education. Our vision is for access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Globally, we partner in bold and sustainable change that addresses systemic barriers to education and equality. We know that education is one of the most powerful ways to alleviate poverty and empower communities to determine their own futures.





Vision

Access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all, supporting empowered communities who determine their own futures.



Purpose

To support the education, sustainable livelihoods, economic empowerment and rights of those who have been marginalised.

We harness the goodwill of the Edmund Rice network and supporters to walk with communities towards sustainable change.



Values

Presence, Compassion and Liberation

Find out more by scanning the QR code.



erf.org.au/about/

WHAT WE DO

Together, with Australians like you, we help make a lasting difference through access to education for communities who need it most.

Our work includes:



Community Education

Skills building to support sustainable livelihoods and economic empowerment.

34,010

People reached through community education

14

 Projects

Formal Education

Improving access and participation to schooling and vocational training.

5,782

People reached through formal education

7

 Projects

Development Education

Grassroots advocacy including gender equality, disability equity, human rights and environmental sustainability.

9,901

People reached through development education

7

 Projects

These focus areas are further enhanced by cross-cutting themes which sit across our thematic priorities and include gender equality, disability equity, human rights and environmental sustainability.



Human rights & advocacy



Capacity sharing



Disability equity



Economic empowerment



Women and girls



Health education



Vocational training



Skill-building



Agriculture



Infrastructure

2025 AT A GLANCE

Together we're creating lasting impact



Student at Ruben Centre performing in the strings ensemble

49,693

People directly impacted and hundreds of thousands more indirectly impacted

6

Countries: Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, Timor Leste, the Philippines, and Australia

28

Projects delivered in partnership with local communities through formal, community and development education needs

\$3,768,609

Disbursed to liberate lives through education

25,976

Women and girls were supported through partner projects

1,428

People living with disability were directly supported through partner projects

630

Employed in paid and volunteer work through partner projects

28 PROJECTS IN 6 COUNTRIES



East and Southern Africa

We worked tirelessly towards sustainable change for remote and under-resourced communities across Kenya, Uganda and South Africa.

49,587 Direct beneficiaries

18 Projects

\$2,582,997 funds disbursed





The Philippines + Timor Leste

Our work in the Philippines and Timor Leste focuses on skills building for economic empowerment to break the cycle of poverty in marginalised communities.

106 Direct beneficiaries

3 Projects

\$109,795 Funds disbursed



Australia

Our commitment to Australian communities saw collaboration with Edmund Rice Community Services and EREA Flexi Schools.

7 Projects

1 Grant

\$284,397 Funds disbursed



Select projects are supported by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

MILK WITH MEANING



KENYA
Edmund Rice Dairies

In the township of Embulbul, Edmund Rice Catholic Education Centre has provided primary and secondary education for over 25 years. Historically reliant on donor funding, the need to establish a sustainable income stream was identified to support the school's operations and maintain the quality of education into the future.

With support from the Noel and Carmel O'Brien Family Foundation, Edmund Rice Dairies was established to generate income for the school while also creating vocational and economic opportunities within the community.

Training in sustainable dairy farming allows students and community members to gain vocational skills and practical experience.

In 2025, Eddie's Cafe was opened, offering products including ice cream, milkshakes, and fermented milk. In its first full year of operations, the dairy and cafe generated a combined revenue of Ksh 6.379 million (AUD\$69,165).

With facilities now established and operational, production and revenue are expected to continue increasing as the enterprise expands.

165

litres of milk per day

41

cows at Edmund Rice Dairies

855,415

Kenyan shilling in revenue from Eddie's Cafe

6,378,723

Kenyan shilling in revenue



Community Education



Agriculture



Development
Education



Human rights
& advocacy

Empowering the next generation through knowledge and guidance

Stories of Strength

PILLARS OF HOPE

For Robert*, growing up in the township of Bonteheuwel, South Africa, violence and gang activity dominates daily life. Harmful ideas about masculinity fuel cycles of violence and gender-based abuse. For two years, Robert's parents kept him home, fearing for his safety. But in doing so, they also feared the loss of his potential.

Robert heard about the iNtsika YeThemba project – translated as "Pillars of Hope" – through a local community leader. This initiative offers young men like Robert an alternative path.

The project's mission is to support young men in defending women's rights and creating safer communities, challenging the very roots of gender-based violence.

Through regular sessions, Robert began to rediscover himself. He learned about rights and responsibilities, and with this knowledge, Robert found a renewed sense of purpose and made a courageous decision to return to school.

Now 17, Robert is nearing the completion of the iNtsika YeThemba project alongside many others. He is recognised in his community as a positive male role model, standing firm against adversity and lighting the way for others to follow.

*Not their real name



SOUTH AFRICA
iNtsika ye Themba

80

direct beneficiaries

8

big brothers (alumni – 2024 cohort) participating in the project

4

workshops on positive parenting and gender norms to 120 parents/guardians

Australian Aid 

iNtsika yeThemba (Pillars of Hope) Young Boys Ending GBV in South Africa receives support from the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) and Edmund Rice Foundation.



Formal Education



Disability equity



Human rights & advocacy

Students engaging in classroom activities at Kurt Fearnley Special Needs Unit at Ruben Centre

Stories of Strength

FROM ISOLATION TO INCLUSION



KENYA
Kurt Fearnley
Special Needs Unit

Life isn't easy for Zane* and his family. They live in Mukuru, a large and densely populated industrial slum in Nairobi. Daily life is shaped by constant struggles to meet basic needs, alongside widespread poverty, crime and human rights violations.

Zane was born with Down syndrome. Like many children living with disabilities, he faced enormous barriers to inclusion, education and independence. Stigma, unsafe spaces, and lack of specialist support keep many in Mukuru from learning and thriving.

Four years ago, Zane was introduced to the Kurt Fearnley Special Needs Unit. He was unable to walk, talk or perform basic self-care tasks.

The Unit provides inclusive education and care so children with disabilities can learn and participate with dignity.

Students and their caregivers receive therapy and psychosocial support, and teachers are trained to meet diverse learning needs.

Today, Zane's life is transformed. He can move freely, walking, jumping and joining in co-curricular activities. Zane has developed communication skills and gained independence in his daily routines. Once isolated, now Zane socialises with peers and participates in his community while his family feels supported and connected.

**Not their real name*

64

direct beneficiaries

\$63,627

funds disbursed

STRENGTHENING OUR NETWORK



Reengagement in Timor Leste

In 2025, we began a renewed chapter in Timor Leste, reconnecting with communities that have long been part of the Edmund Rice network. This return builds on the legacy of the Christian Brothers, whose early partnerships with five communities in Railaco, Ermera District, laid strong foundations for community-led development.

For many years, Edmund Rice Foundation collaborated with farmers in the 'Beans of Hope' project culminating in cooperatives to grow, process, package and sell vanilla. This project established a sustainable industry, bringing significant economic impact to the region and long-term benefits to local communities.

As we look to future programming, our priority is clear: listening deeply to community voices. In partnership with Timor Unearthed, we commenced community consultation with families across Railaco to gain rich insight into community strengths, daily realities, emerging challenges, and hopes for the future.



The next phase will be shaped by local priorities and grounded in what communities say they need most.




Community Education

Early years students engaging in the classroom

OUR SUPPORTERS

Long-time friend of Edmund Rice Foundation, Kurt Fearnley AO, returned to East Africa in 2025.

During his visit, Kurt spent time at the Kurt Fearnley Special Needs Unit at Ruben Centre, a project named in his honour.

The Unit supports children living with disability in contexts of poverty, providing tailored education, therapy support, and a learning environment where every child is seen, valued, and encouraged to thrive.

Children learn alongside their peers in an inclusive setting, building confidence, friendships, and a strong sense of belonging. Families also receive practical training and support, helping them to better care and advocate for their children.

Kurt shared how meaningful it is to see children living in Mukuru experiencing inclusive education and opportunity.

We are grateful for Kurt's ongoing advocacy, presence, and belief in what is possible when every child is given the chance to learn and grow.



“ I love that kids in the Kurt Fearnley Special Needs Unit are able to experience an inclusive education. ”

Kurt Fearnley, AO





In 2025 Steve Graham celebrated an incredible milestone — 80 years young, a life of purpose, compassion, and achievement.

A successful businessman, ambassador and friend to Edmund Rice Foundation and, a man of great generosity, Steve has devoted much of his life giving to others.

Steve has been guided by a deep sense of gratitude for the opportunities Edmund Rice education gave him. His philosophy is simple yet profound;

“
When life gives you opportunities,
the greatest reward is to give back.
”

Steve Graham

Supported by his wife Margaret and family, Steve has an unwavering passion to help others. Steve has touched countless lives and built a legacy that continues to inspire all who know him.





Partnership for good

Paywise are proud to be a long-term partner of Edmund Rice Foundation. Their contributions extend far beyond financial support.

Paywise actively encourages employee involvement, facilitating corporate volunteering through immersions and promoting a culture of giving and compassion. Over the years, they have shared many experiences, from staff immersion trips in Africa to powerful storytelling that offers real insight and inspiration.

In 2025, Paywise team members, Nina Gao and Peter Antonazzi travelled to Kenya spending time working with students in classrooms, visiting agri-businesses and immersing themselves in the culture of local communities.

Paywise's unwavering support has been instrumental to our work in East Africa and has forged deep personal bonds with people across Australia and East Africa. We are profoundly grateful for their enduring commitment and their impact on our vision.

“

Spending time learning from people who live so differently leaves a lasting impression, shaping perspectives, deepening understanding, and staying with you long after you return.

”

Peter Antonazzi

Corporate partnerships like the one with Paywise are essential to our strategic growth goals. They provide access to expertise and resources, boosting supporters and amplifying the impact of our work.

A corporate partnership with Edmund Rice Foundation is more than just a philanthropic endeavour; it's a strategic alliance that benefits both parties and makes a tangible difference in the world.

A SAFE PAIR OF HANDS

Our expertise in international development ensures that the projects you support result in lasting change for communities.

Donors can feel confident that funds are only going towards carefully monitored and evaluated projects.

Your generosity makes a lasting impact.

Thank you for your support.

We are base level accredited by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), responsible for managing Australia's development program.



We are a Member of ACFID and as such committed to the ACFID Code of Conduct for Australian aid and development organisations.



We walk with communities towards sustainable change.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals are at the heart of our work.



Sustainable Development Goal #1. To end poverty in all its forms everywhere.



Sustainable Development Goal #4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.



Partnering with local communities to support them in identifying strengths they can build on and providing them with the training, skills and resources to take control of their own lives without the need for long-term external support.





Immersion participants engage with secondary students at St Joseph's in Uganda

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In our development work, we are committed to:

- Partnering with local communities to support them in identifying strengths they can build on and providing them with the training, skills and resources to take control of their own lives without the need for long-term external support.
- Giving priority to projects which engage with the most marginalised.
- Being inclusive and upholding human rights and dignity to ensure justice for all.
- Promoting and advocating children's rights and participation, gender equality and disability equity.
- Promoting and advocating sustainable living and prudent use of the earth's resources.
- Continuing to provide innovative and meaningful ways to connect our supporters with our work to facilitate a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities; and to engage and motivate them to be a force for positive change.
- Establishing financial transparency and an effective and efficient use of supporter funds; investing in the expertise and skills of our staff; and an efficient and well-run organisation.





Providing access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all, supporting empowered communities that determine their own futures.



Thank You

Every supporter, partner and donor who walked with us in 2025.
Together, we are liberating lives through education.



Edmund Rice
FOUNDATION
Liberating Lives Through Education

Edmund Rice Foundation (Australia) is accredited by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), responsible for managing Australia's development program. To maintain accreditation, ERF's systems, policies and processes are rigorously reviewed by the Australian Government. ERF receives support through the **Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)**.

Edmund Rice Foundation is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct, which is a voluntary, self-regulatory sector code of good practice. As a signatory we are committed and fully adhere to the ACFID Code of Conduct, conducting our work with transparency, accountability and integrity. Complaints alleging breaches of the ACFID Code of Conduct can be made to the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee via <https://acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct/complaints/>



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MEMBER