



# EDUCATION WORKS



**911 + 100**  
Full Sponsorship Partial Sponsorship



**455,139**  
School Lunches Served



**100%**  
Transition Rate



**43,115**  
Mentorship Hours

**IRENE** grew up in Musenke, a pastoral village where child marriage and gender inequality have long limited girls' choices and chances. Many girls from Musenke Primary School did not continue into secondary education, and families faced cultural and economic pressure to marry their daughters while still young. When Kenya Works began engaging Musenke through distributions of Kenya Works' reusable Makini Pads, empowerment trainings, and an Anti-Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) forum, Irene encountered a new message: that her life and education had value, and that she had rights as a girl.

Through a partnership with a boarding school designed to help girls escape cutting and child marriage, Kenya Works sponsored girls from Musenke and taught them about safety planning and where to seek help. During one school holiday, Irene learned that her father and brothers were planning to offer her for marriage. Remembering her safety plan, she acted with remarkable courage—calling her Kenya Works social worker and arranging to be transferred into Kenya Works' care so she could stay safe and continue her education.

Not long after Irene's rescue, her younger sister Joy was sold into child marriage for a dowry, showing just how real and persistent the risk remained.

## Irene refused to be silent.

She reported Joy's abduction to Kenya Works, triggering a rescue that brought Joy to safety and into the Education Sponsorship Program. Together, the sisters began to heal—supporting each other through counseling, returning to school, and rebuilding their sense of security and self-worth.

As Irene regained her footing, she grew into a mentor and advocate. She began guiding other girls in Kenya Works programs, helping them understand their rights and the power of having a safety plan. She later shared her story publicly on Kenyan television, using her own experience to raise awareness and inspire other girls at risk of child marriage and FGM to seek help.

Irene has now completed secondary school with results that qualify her to join university and pursue her dream of becoming a nurse. Beyond academics, one of the most powerful parts of her journey is her safe return home. Through extensive family engagement, counseling, and careful reintegration work, Irene and Joy can now safely return to their family of origin. The same family that once planned Irene's marriage now proudly supports her education and future. Today, when Irene walks back into Musenke, she is welcomed as a role model and a source of hope—evidence that with sustained community investment, families can learn to walk with their daughters instead of standing in their way.