



Annual Report

April 2025 - March 2026



Breaking barriers, transforming lives, inspiring dreams: Girls' rights matter!

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About Catalyst Foundation



VISION

Empowering every vulnerable girl across Africa through education by ensuring each S.H.E. girl is fully sponsored, supported and developed into a confident leader.



CORE VALUES

Compassion

We treat every girl with dignity, empathy and respect.

Impact

Everything we do must measurably improve the life of a girl.

Stewardship

We honour the trust placed in us by donors, partners and communities by using resources responsibly and transparently.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees meet regularly and holds responsibility for setting the strategic direction of Catalyst Foundation and overseeing its overall governance. Their passion, guidance and unwavering support drive our work, ensuring that positive change and impact are consistently achieved in families, schools and the communities we serve.



Trevor Mapondera
Chairman and Co-founder
CEO of Catalyst Care Group



Mayda Mapondera
CEO and Co-founder
Catalyst Foundation



Ashleigh Fox
Transforming Care Director
Catalyst Care Group



Bertha Kabengele
Programme Manager
'Save the Children International' -
Zambia Country Office



Mandhla Dhlodhlo
General Manger
Private Voluntary Organisation
(PVO)

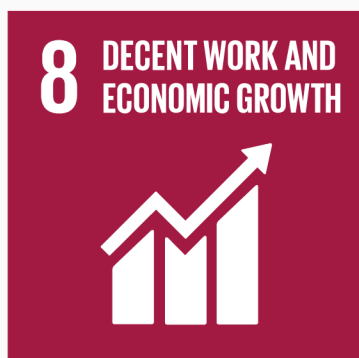
About Us

The Catalyst Foundation is a non-profit organisation dedicated to empowering vulnerable girls across Africa through holistic education and leadership development. The foundation's core vision is to transform every "SHE girl" into a confident leader by providing bespoke support that ensures they not only attend school but thrive academically, emotionally, and socially. Operating with the core values of compassion, impact, and stewardship, the organisation ensures that every resource is used transparently to measurably improve the lives of the girls they serve.

The programme model is built upon three strategic pillars:

- **Education Access:** Removing financial barriers by covering school fees, providing learning materials, and offering academic mentorship.
- **Whole-Girl Development:** Going beyond the classroom to deliver leadership camps, life skills training, and career exposure through mentorship from established women leaders.
- **Community Transformation:** Creating a self-sustaining cycle of empowerment where alumni return to mentor younger girls and take on leadership roles within their communities.

Our Programme activities are aligned to the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):





A Message from the CEO of Catalyst Foundation



The past year has been one of reflection, growth, and reaffirmation of why Catalyst Foundation exists. Our journey has never simply been about delivering charity or providing isolated support. It has always been about something deeper: building systems of support that allow individuals, families, and communities to thrive with dignity and opportunity.

Over the past year, we have continued to strengthen our commitment to holistic impact. Our work has increasingly focused not just on meeting immediate needs but on ensuring that every intervention contributes to long-term outcomes for the young people and communities we serve.

Through our flagship girls' programme, SHE – Secure, Hope, Empowered, we have continued supporting girls to remain in school, pursue academic excellence, and grow in confidence as future leaders. Education remains one of the most powerful tools for breaking cycles of vulnerability, and we have seen firsthand how the right support at the right time can transform a young person's trajectory.

One particularly proud milestone this year was seeing one of our SHE programme beneficiaries successfully pass her examinations and gain admission into a STEM-focused school. This achievement represents far more than academic success. It is a powerful reminder that when girls are given the right support, encouragement, and opportunity, they are capable of stepping into fields where they have historically been underrepresented.

Moments like these affirm why our work matters. Behind every milestone is a journey of resilience, support, and belief, from the learner herself to the mentors, teachers, sponsors, and families who walk alongside her.

However, our approach has always recognised that education alone is not enough. Behind every learner is a household, a family, and a set of circumstances that can either support or hinder their progress. Over the past year, we have therefore strengthened the wrap-around support that underpins our programmes, from nutrition and school supplies to mentorship, life-skills development, and talent development opportunities.

One of the most encouraging developments has been seeing our learners grow not only academically but also in confidence, leadership, and resilience. Whether it is in the classroom, on the sports field, or through leadership opportunities, these young people are beginning to see themselves not as beneficiaries, but as individuals with potential and purpose.

Our work has also been made possible through the continued support of partners, sponsors, and volunteers who believe in our mission. Their contributions allow us to extend our reach and deepen our impact. Partnerships remain central to our model because lasting change is never achieved in isolation.

Internally, the past year has also been a time of strengthening our systems and strategic direction. As an organisation, we have continued building the structures needed to sustain and scale our work responsibly. This includes refining our operational processes, strengthening our fundraising and partnership pipelines, and aligning our teams around a shared commitment to ownership and accountability.



One of the themes that has increasingly shaped our work is the concept of “Owning Outcomes.” It is not enough to simply deliver programmes; we must remain accountable for the impact those programmes create. This mindset challenges us to continuously evaluate what we do, improve where needed, and ensure that our efforts translate into measurable and meaningful change.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on deepening our holistic approach to youth development and strengthening the communities we serve. Our priority is to continue building programmes that address not only educational access but also the broader factors that influence a young person’s ability to succeed, including household stability, mentorship, life skills, and personal development. Another key focus moving forward will be strengthening how we measure and communicate our impact. Behind every statistic is a human story, a young girl who stayed in school despite hardship, a family that regained stability, or a student who discovered her confidence and leadership potential. These stories remind us that meaningful change is not abstract; it is personal, visible, and deeply transformative.

As we continue this journey, partnerships will remain central to our work. Sustainable impact is not created by one organisation alone. It is built through collaboration with individuals, institutions, and organisations that share a belief in investing in the potential of young people and the resilience of communities.

We are deeply grateful to our partners, sponsors, and supporters who have chosen to walk this journey with us. Your support does more than fund programmes; it creates opportunity, restores dignity, and opens doors for young people who may otherwise never have had the chance to pursue their dreams.

The work ahead remains significant, but so too is the potential for impact. With the continued support of our partners and the dedication of our team, we remain committed to building programmes that do more than provide assistance; they create pathways for lasting transformation.

At Catalyst Foundation, we believe that real change happens when compassion is matched with structure, accountability, and a shared commitment to outcomes.

As I often say, transformation does not happen because help was given; it happens because opportunity was created and someone chose to believe in the potential of another human being.

That belief is what drives our work every day.

Together, we are not simply supporting communities; we are investing in futures.



Mayda Mapondera
CEO & Co-Founder
Catalyst Foundation

2025



YEAR IN NUMBERS

80

Beneficiaries holistically supported

14

Schools Supported

238

Food Hampers Distributed

80

Healthchecks

14

Donors & Partners

8 000

Students directly impacted



90%

Goals Achieved

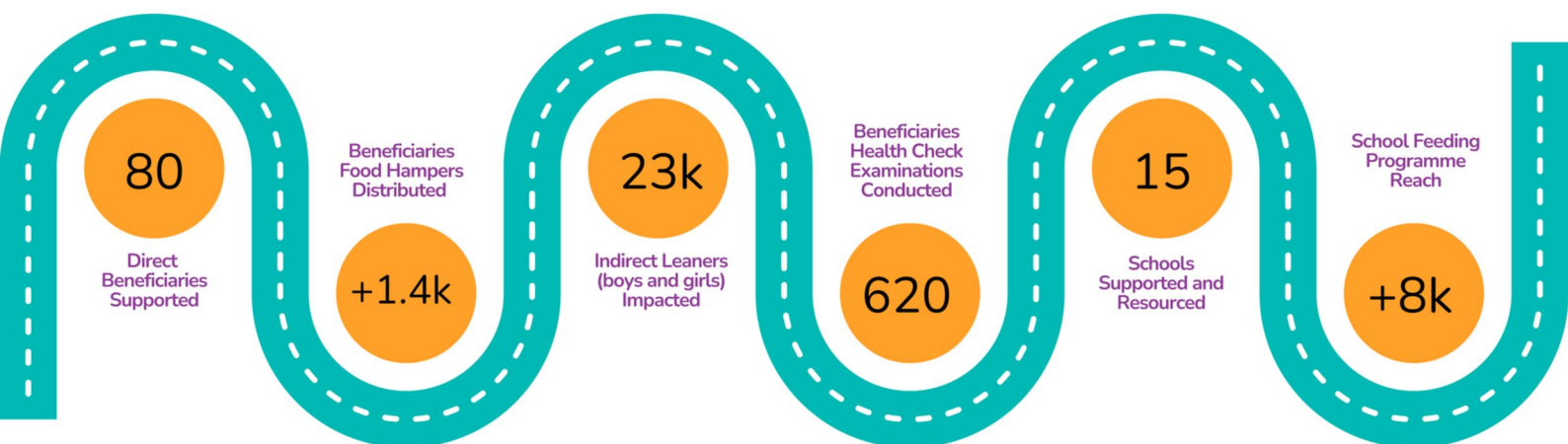
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Regions Covered



S.H.E Programme Impact

Jan 2021 - January 2026



S.H.E PROGRAMME

Operations Report



Shingirai B Chadehumbe

Since 2021, the SHE Catalyst Programme has grown into a holistic and adaptive model designed to address the structural barriers that limit girls' access to education in rural contexts. What began as a focused education support initiative has evolved into an integrated programme that combines academic support, psychosocial care, safeguarding, skills development, and community engagement.

At its core, the programme is built on a clear understanding: educational outcomes for vulnerable girls cannot be separated from the environments in which they live. As such, our approach prioritises both in-school support and deep community engagement, ensuring that progress is reinforced at the household and community levels.

Over the past year, the programme has demonstrated strong and consistent beneficiary engagement across all districts. This reflects not only the relevance of the interventions but also the trust built with girls, caregivers, and schools. Through continuous engagement, the programme has been able to address key barriers to attendance and participation, including food insecurity, lack of academic support, and limited parental involvement.

A defining feature of the SHE model is its high-touch, individualised approach. Through structured mentoring, regular progress tracking, and direct engagement with beneficiaries, the programme ensures that each girl is supported according to her specific needs. This approach has enabled early identification of academic challenges, safeguarding risks, and psychosocial concerns, allowing for timely and appropriate interventions.

At the same time, group-based platforms such as SHE Clubs and peer support structures have become increasingly important spaces for building confidence, leadership, and collective resilience. In several districts, girls are now taking on facilitation roles within these spaces, demonstrating growing ownership and leadership capacity. These peer-led dynamics are a critical foundation for long-term sustainability.

Skills development remains a central pillar of the programme, not only as a pathway to economic empowerment but also as a means of building confidence and practical life competencies. Ongoing learning from implementation has reinforced the importance of aligning skills training with both beneficiary interests and local economic opportunities, and this continues to inform programme refinement.

Safeguarding and psychosocial support are embedded across all interventions, ensuring that girls are not only accessing education but are also protected and emotionally supported. The programme has contributed to creating safer environments for girls both within schools and at the community level, supported by strengthened awareness and engagement among caregivers and local stakeholders.

Operational Reflections and Adaptive Learning

As with any programme operating in complex, resource-constrained environments, implementation has required continuous adaptation. One key area of focus has been strengthening the depth and consistency of safeguarding understanding. While awareness levels are high, ongoing efforts are being made to deepen comprehension and ensure that girls feel confident in applying safeguarding knowledge in real-life situations. This is being addressed through more interactive and context-based approaches.

In academic support, the programme has seen strong participation; however, there is an ongoing opportunity to further enhance structure, consistency, and outcome tracking. Efforts are currently underway to standardise approaches across districts and strengthen alignment with measurable learning outcomes.

From an operational perspective, data management and documentation systems are being actively strengthened. Working across multiple rural contexts presents inherent challenges, including infrastructure limitations and connectivity constraints. In response, the programme is transitioning towards more streamlined and resilient systems that will improve data consistency, accessibility, and real-time decision-making.

Resource constraints common across the development sector continue to shape programme delivery. These include logistical challenges such as transport, infrastructure, and staffing capacity. Despite this, programme teams have demonstrated strong commitment and adaptability, consistently finding ways to deliver support effectively within available resources. Importantly, these experiences have contributed to a culture of learning and continuous improvement, with programme teams actively using insights from implementation to refine approaches and strengthen impact.

Looking Ahead

The SHE Catalyst Programme has established itself as a responsive and community-embedded model for supporting vulnerable girls in education. The emphasis going forward is on strengthening systems and deepening impact, particularly in safeguarding practice, academic outcomes, and data-driven programming while maintaining the personalised and holistic approach that defines the programme.

As the programme continues to evolve, there is a clear opportunity to position SHE as a scalable and replicable model for girl-child education and empowerment across the region.



A Deeper Look into the S.H.E. Programme

Case Study: A Different School, A Different Future

Brenda had always done well in school. Even in a crowded classroom with limited textbooks, she found a way to stay at the top. At home, her mother worked irregular plumbing jobs to support six people. There was no stability, but there was an expectation that Brenda was going to succeed. Her transition to secondary school changed that trajectory.

The school she enrolled in was the best available locally, but it was overstretched. Classes were large, learning materials were limited, and students lived with minimal supervision. Over time, the gaps began to show. Brenda started struggling not because she lacked ability, but because the environment could not support it. What stood out early was not failure, but risk. Irregular routines. Limited academic guidance. Exposure to safeguarding concerns.

The decision to intervene was deliberate. Brenda was supported to transfer to a structured boarding school with stronger academic systems and supervision. The transition was not simple. It required coordination between schools, preparation at the household level, and close follow-up to ensure she settled.

At the same time, targeted academic support was introduced during the school holidays to help her bridge gaps from her previous learning environment. These sessions were focused, practical, and designed to rebuild her confidence in key subjects.

The first weeks were difficult. Brenda struggled to adjust to the expectations of the new school. Structure came with pressure. At one point, she faced disciplinary action, an early sign that transition support needed to go beyond academics. This is where consistent support made the difference. A school matron was intentionally introduced as a trusted adult within her environment. Not as authority, but as someone she could go to regularly, informally, without fear. Over time, that relationship became central to her adjustment.

Gradually, things shifted. She began asking questions in class. She started engaging with peers. She joined the debate club. Her performance stabilised not in a straight line, but in a way that showed recovery and growth. More importantly, her confidence returned.

When asked about the experience, Brenda does not talk first about grades. She talks about belonging.

“At first, I was scared. But now I know I can ask for help. I feel like I belong here.”

Her teachers describe the same change differently: more participation, more consistency, more presence in class. Brenda’s story reflects a key insight: access alone is not enough. Placement in a better school matters, but without structured transition support, it is not sufficient.



What worked was the combination:

- A safer and more structured learning environment
- Targeted academic catch-up support
- A trusted adult within the school system
- Ongoing follow-up beyond placement

Today, Brenda is not just coping; she is competing again. And importantly, she is still on track toward the future she had always imagined.

Case Study: Stability Changes Everything



Pamela's challenge was not ability, it was environment.

At home, there was little structure. Meals were inconsistent. School attendance was irregular. There was no one consistently checking homework, no space to study, and no expectation that school should come first. Over time, this began to reflect in her performance. Assignments were incomplete. Participation in class was low. Confidence was almost absent.

The turning point came when the programme shifted focus from school-based support to where Pamela spent most of her time, her home environment.

A decision was made to place her under the care of a school matron during the term. This was a practical intervention. It meant she had a stable place to sleep, regular meals, and daily academic support. It also meant someone was consistently present, monitoring, guiding, and encouraging.

Alongside this, structured academic support was introduced. Tutoring sessions were tailored to her specific gaps, with regular check-ins to adjust the approach. A peer support group was also established not as a formal structure, but as a small, consistent group of learners who studied together, shared challenges, and supported each other.

The changes were gradual, but visible.

Her homework improved first. Then her participation in class. Then her confidence. Teachers began to notice the difference. She was no longer withdrawn. She started raising her hand. She began completing her work consistently.

Pamela describes the shift in simple terms:

“Staying at school helped me focus. Now I believe I can pass.”

There were still challenges. When the matron was away, Pamela had to return home temporarily. Each time, there was a visible disruption in her routine and focus. It reinforced an important lesson for the programme: consistency of environment matters as much as the intervention itself. Her parents, initially less engaged, began to show up more, attending meetings, following her progress, and gradually becoming part of her support system.

Pamela's progress is not defined by a single outcome, but by a pattern:

- Improved consistency
- Increased engagement
- Strengthened confidence

Her story highlights something critical: for some girls, educational support begins with stability, not instruction.



Case Study: When the Barrier is Distance

Every morning, Regina woke up before sunrise. She walked long distances to school, often arriving tired before the day even began. The journey was not just physical; it affected her ability to concentrate, participate, and remain consistent. Over time, attendance became irregular. Fatigue became normal.

The intervention was simple. She received a bicycle. There were no complex systems behind it. No layered programming. Just a direct response to a clear barrier. The effect was immediate. Her travel time has been reduced. She arrived at school on time. Her energy levels improved. With that, other changes followed. She started participating more in class. Her attendance stabilised. She became more engaged in school activities.

Teachers began to notice her presence not just physically, but academically and socially. She was later selected for a leadership role at school.

At home, the shift was also visible. Her family began to take more interest in her education, encouraged by her consistency and progress.

Regina explains it simply:

“Now I have energy to learn.”

Her story is a reminder that sometimes the most effective interventions are the most practical ones. Not all barriers are complex. Some are structural and solvable.



Case Study: Strengthening the Household

Behind every girl in school is a household making daily decisions about survival. For one caregiver, those decisions were constant. As a grandmother caring for her granddaughter, she relied on low-paying piecework. Income was unpredictable. Food was not guaranteed. Education costs were difficult to meet. On some days, choices had to be made between meals and school needs. Despite her effort, progress was limited. The work was physically demanding and poorly paid, with no pathway to something more stable. The introduction of a village savings group changed that dynamic.

For the first time, she had access to a structured system that allowed her to save consistently and borrow in small, manageable amounts. Through training and group support, she began to understand how to plan, invest, and manage limited resources more effectively. Her first loan was small, but intentional. She invested it in a basic income-generating activity. From there, progress was incremental but steady. She purchased livestock. She then invested in farming inputs ahead of the planting season. She began to reduce her dependence on casual labour.

What changed was not just income but control. For the first time in years, she could plan beyond the immediate day. There was food in the household more consistently. School-related needs could be met without crisis decisions. Her granddaughter's situation improved alongside hers. She attended school more consistently. She had basic learning materials. Her daily life became more stable.

The savings group itself played an important role beyond finances. It created accountability, but also a sense of belonging among other caregivers facing similar challenges, sharing strategies, and encouraging consistency. The caregiver describes the shift in simple terms:

“Before, I worked every day, but nothing changed. Now, I can see where I am going.”

Her progress reflects a broader programme insight:

Supporting the girl alone is not always enough—household resilience matters.



This case demonstrates how economic strengthening at the caregiver level directly contributes to educational outcomes:

- Reduced financial pressure on the household
- Improved ability to meet school-related needs
- Increased stability for the child

It also highlights the potential of low-cost, community-based financial models to create sustainable change when combined with training and ongoing support.

Today, she is not fully secure, but she is no longer stuck. She is building. And that shift from survival to forward movement is what makes sustained educational support possible.

Skills Training and Livelihoods Development From Competency to Economic Imagination

In 2025, skills training across Beatrice, Tsholotsho, and Chibombo districts evolved beyond basic competency-building into a dynamic platform for fostering agency, innovation, and early economic imagination among girls. Anchored in practical, hands-on learning and delivered through structured modules, the program is increasingly shaping how beneficiaries perceive their futures—not only as students, but as capable economic actors.

In **Beatrice**, the program reached 88 girls across partner schools, delivering targeted training in beadwork, sewing, doormat weaving, and reusable pad production. Each module was carefully sequenced from foundational techniques such as measuring, cutting, and stitching, to more advanced elements like pattern design, finishing, and product assembly. Delivery by trained volunteers ensured both technical consistency and strong mentorship, while the deliberate inclusion of peer support group members amplified reach and reinforced a culture of shared learning. A particularly notable dimension in Beatrice was the integration of pad-making in partnership with Dzidzo Safe Pad. This intervention extended beyond skill acquisition, directly addressing menstrual health management and contributing to reduced absenteeism and enhanced dignity for over 40 learners. The production of finished items during sessions further reinforced immediate application of skills, building confidence and a tangible sense of achievement.



Chibombo continues to set a strong benchmark, with universal participation and mastery in skills training. Sessions in sewing, painting, and financial literacy have translated into both competence and aspiration. As reflected in program feedback, girls are increasingly conceptualising skills as complementary to formal education—pathways that can provide income security alongside professional ambitions.



Skills Training and Livelihoods Development

From Competency to Economic Imagination

In **Tsholotsho**, skills training demonstrated strong contextual adaptability. Beneficiaries engaged in beadwork, mat-making, and the creation of keyholders, bangles, and recycled bins—an innovative approach that integrates environmental stewardship with livelihood skills. The use of locally available materials not only ensured accessibility but also encouraged creativity, problem-solving, and sustainability-oriented thinking.



Across all districts, the impact is multidimensional: increased self-confidence, enhanced creativity, improved health outcomes, and the emergence of peer-led knowledge transfer. Importantly, a mindset shift is evident—skills are no longer viewed as peripheral, but as integral to resilience and future planning. Building on this momentum, the next phase will prioritise financial literacy, entrepreneurship development, and market linkages. By connecting skills to real economic opportunities, the program is well-positioned to transition from training to livelihood pathways—ensuring sustained impact beyond the classroom.

S.H.E. Clubs

Cultivating Voice, Leadership, and Informed Decision-Making

S.H.E. Clubs remain the heartbeat of the SHE Catalyst Program vibrant, structured spaces where girls gather weekly to learn, reflect, and grow. With full participation across Beatrice, Tsholotsho, and Chibombo, these clubs have matured into powerful platforms for leadership development, safeguarding awareness, and personal transformation.

In **Beatrice**, SHE Clubs function as integrated hubs that bring together life skills, academic reinforcement, and psychosocial support. Sessions are characterised by active dialogue, peer engagement, and practical learning, enabling girls to articulate their thoughts, build confidence, and navigate everyday challenges. Teachers and program staff have consistently observed improved classroom participation and communication skills among club members, clear indicators of the clubs' influence beyond their immediate setting.

Tsholotsho presents a particularly compelling story of leadership emergence. Over the course of the year, girls transitioned from passive participants to active facilitators—leading discussions, moderating debates, and confidently speaking in group settings. This shift reflects a deepening sense of ownership and agency, as well as the development of transferable skills such as critical thinking and public speaking. The clubs have effectively become incubators for young leaders within the school environment.

In **Chibombo**, SHE Clubs are distinguished by their structure and breadth of content, incorporating financial literacy, social etiquette, and leadership training. The Zambia program provides a powerful illustration of impact: a girl, equipped with knowledge from SHE Club sessions, confidently declined repeated advances from boys and reported the matter through appropriate safeguarding channels. This example underscores the program's success in translating knowledge into action—arguably one of the most meaningful indicators of impact.



Across all districts, SHE Clubs are also reinforcing safeguarding awareness, though continued efforts are enhancing comprehension through more interactive and scenario-based approaches. Beyond content delivery, the clubs foster a sense of belonging and mutual support, strengthening peer networks and contributing to overall well-being. Ultimately, SHE Clubs are not just program components—they are transformative spaces where girls find their voice, build confidence, and practice leadership. Their continued evolution, particularly through peer-led facilitation and enriched curricula, will remain central to sustaining empowerment outcomes across the program.

Psychosocial Support (PSS)

Enabling Healing, Stability and Educational Re-engagement

Psychosocial Support (PSS) within the SHE Catalyst Program addresses a critical yet often under-recognised dimension of educational access: the emotional and social well-being of learners. Across Beatrice, Tsholotsho, and Chibombo, PSS interventions have played a pivotal role in helping girls navigate complex personal challenges, enabling them to remain engaged in school and participate fully in program activities.

In **Beatrice**, PSS is deeply embedded within program delivery, with high levels of participation and integration across school-based activities. Beneficiaries benefit from a combination of structured group sessions and individualised support, creating safe spaces where they can express themselves, process experiences, and build coping strategies. Observable outcomes include improved self-esteem, greater emotional stability, and increased classroom engagement.

Tsholotsho has similarly demonstrated the value of PSS, particularly among older girls who often face heightened responsibilities and social pressures. Participants report that PSS sessions provide a rare opportunity for open dialogue and emotional support. Over time, this has contributed to increased confidence, improved peer relationships, and a stronger sense of belonging within the school environment.

In **Chibombo**, PSS is delivered in a responsive, needs-based manner and is complemented by strong peer support structures. A notable case highlights the program's impact: a beneficiary who had been caring for an elderly grandmother experienced emotional distress following her passing, leading to reduced concentration and engagement in school. Through consistent PSS support, she was able to process her grief, gradually regain focus, and re-engage in learning. Her progress—reflected in improved participation and well-being—demonstrates the transformative potential of sustained emotional support.



Across districts, PSS has contributed to improved concentration, participation, and resilience among beneficiaries. While understanding of PSS concepts continues to deepen, ongoing efforts are strengthening clarity and consistency in delivery, including capacity building for staff in trauma-informed care.

Looking ahead, the program will continue to prioritise PSS as a foundational element, integrating it more systematically into monitoring frameworks and strengthening referral pathways. By addressing emotional barriers to learning, PSS ensures that girls are not only present in school—but are able to thrive.

Peer Support Groups

Harnessing Collective Agency for Sustainable Impact

Peer support groups have become an increasingly influential component of the SHE Catalyst Program, offering a powerful model for fostering collective agency, reinforcing learning, and sustaining impact beyond direct program interventions. Across Beatrice, Tsholotsho, and Chibombo, these groups provide platforms for girls to support one another academically, socially, and emotionally.



Chibombo exemplifies a highly effective, structured approach to peer support. With full participation, beneficiary-led groups facilitate discussions, track activities using simple logbooks, and provide consistent academic and emotional support. This structure has fostered strong ownership and accountability, with girls actively taking on leadership roles and supporting each other's progress. The integration of peer groups with other program components, such as SHE Clubs and skills training, further enhances their effectiveness.

In **Beatrice**, peer support groups are equally widespread and play a central role in reinforcing both academic and psychosocial outcomes. These groups often operate alongside extra lessons and SHE Club sessions, creating a layered support system that strengthens learning and confidence. Teachers have reported noticeable improvements in participation, collaboration, and peer-to-peer learning, highlighting the value of these groups in enhancing the overall educational experience.

Tsholotsho presents a more organic, evolving model. While peer interactions are present and valued, they are less formally structured, particularly at the primary level. Nonetheless, these informal networks contribute meaningfully to knowledge sharing and social support, especially among older learners. The existing foundation provides a strong opportunity for gradual strengthening through the introduction of light-touch structures and facilitation support.

Insights from Zambia reinforce the importance of peer-led engagement in driving behaviour change and leadership development. Peer leaders create relatable, safe spaces for discussion, enabling more open communication and deeper engagement among members.

Overall, peer support groups represent a cost-effective and scalable approach to sustaining program impact. By strengthening their structure, documentation, and integration with broader program activities, they can continue to serve as engines of empowerment—amplifying outcomes and fostering a culture of collective growth and resilience.

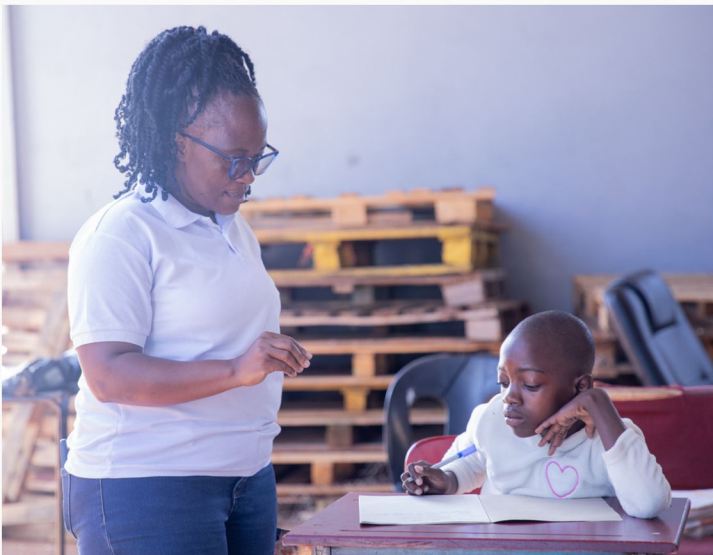
Community and Caregiver Engagement

Strengthening the Ecosystem Around the Girl

A defining strength of the SHE Catalyst Program in 2025 has been its deliberate shift from a beneficiary-centered approach to a more ecosystem-driven model, recognizing that sustained impact in girls' education is deeply influenced by the support structures surrounding them—caregivers, teachers, and the broader community. Across Beatrice, Tsholotsho, and Chibombo, a combination of home visits, caregiver engagement platforms, and school-based partnerships has contributed to more responsive, supportive environments for beneficiaries.

Home visits have remained a cornerstone of this approach, providing critical insights into the lived realities of beneficiaries while strengthening trust between the program and families. In Beatrice, where documentation and consistency are strongest, monthly home visits for all primary beneficiaries have enabled close monitoring of attendance, well-being, and household dynamics. These visits have not only facilitated early identification of risks—such as caregiving burdens or economic strain—but have also created opportunities for tailored guidance to caregivers on supporting girls' education. In Tsholotsho and Chibombo, similarly consistent engagement has reinforced accountability and strengthened relationships, even within resource-constrained settings.

Complementing home visits, parent-teacher engagement platforms have emerged as effective mechanisms for aligning school and household support systems. Parent-teacher meetings and caregiver workshops—particularly those focused on love, care, and support—have contributed to improved understanding of adolescent needs, safeguarding responsibilities, and the importance of consistent school attendance. These forums have also fostered a shared sense of responsibility between educators and caregivers, enhancing collaboration in supporting each girl's progress.



The introduction and gradual strengthening of Individualised Education Plans (IEPs) further reflect a move toward more tailored, data-informed support. While implementation is still evolving, IEPs have enabled more structured engagement between teachers, program staff, and caregivers—helping to identify learning gaps, set targets, and monitor progress. When effectively utilised, this model has improved accountability and created clearer pathways for academic support.

Across all districts, teachers and matrons continue to play a pivotal role as embedded agents of change—supporting academic progress, facilitating SHE Club sessions, and providing psychosocial guidance. Their consistent involvement ensures continuity and sustainability, particularly in contexts where program staff presence may be limited.

Collectively, these models demonstrate a clear strategic direction: impact is strongest when the girl is supported by an informed, engaged, and empowered network around her. Moving forward, strengthening these approaches—through enhanced caregiver training, improved IEP tracking, and expansion of economic resilience models—will be critical to sustaining gains and deepening long-term impact.



Village Banking Model



Strengthening Household Resilience to Sustain Girls' Education

The Village Banking Model introduced in Chibombo represents a strategic innovation within the SHE Catalyst Program, designed to address one of the most persistent underlying barriers to girls' education: household economic vulnerability. By organising caregivers into structured savings and lending groups, the model shifts the program's impact from individual beneficiaries to the broader household level—creating a more stable and enabling environment for sustained school participation.

At its core, the model brings together caregivers—primarily parents and guardians of beneficiaries—into small, self-managed groups that meet regularly to save, lend, and support one another financially. Members contribute agreed amounts into a shared fund, which is then accessed through small loans to meet immediate needs such as school fees, uniforms, stationery, or household essentials. This approach reduces reliance on external borrowing and provides a flexible, community-owned financial safety net.

Beyond its financial function, the model is intentionally designed as a platform for social cohesion and shared accountability. Regular meetings create structured spaces for dialogue, where caregivers not only manage savings but also exchange experiences, reinforce the value of education, and collectively problem-solve around challenges affecting their children. This peer-based model strengthens commitment to girls' education, as group members hold each other accountable for prioritising school-related needs.

A key strength of the village banking approach lies in its accessibility and adaptability. By utilising simple, transparent systems—often supported by basic record-keeping tools—the model remains inclusive, even for caregivers with limited formal financial literacy. Over time, participation itself becomes a pathway to building financial confidence, discipline, and planning skills. Caregivers begin to shift from reactive coping strategies to more proactive financial management, enabling them to better anticipate and meet educational costs.

Emerging outcomes from Chibombo indicate that the model is contributing to reduced financial stress within households, improved consistency in meeting school-related expenses, and increased caregiver engagement in educational decision-making. Importantly, the benefits extend beyond direct financial support: participation fosters a sense of ownership, dignity, and empowerment among caregivers, which in turn positively influences how they support their children—particularly girls.

The model also complements other program components, including home visits, SHE Clubs, and peer support groups. Insights from home visits can inform which households may benefit most from inclusion, while improved household stability enhances girls' participation in school and program activities. This interconnectedness reinforces the program's ecosystem approach, where economic strengthening directly supports educational outcomes.

Looking ahead, there is strong potential to deepen and scale the village banking model through the integration of financial literacy training, basic entrepreneurship support, and linkage to local markets or service providers. Strengthening monitoring mechanisms will also be key to tracking outcomes such as loan utilisation, savings growth, and education-related expenditures.

Overall, the Village Banking Model represents a sustainable, community-driven solution that addresses root causes rather than symptoms—positioning caregivers not just as supporters, but as active partners in advancing girls' education and long-term empowerment.



District Highlights and Program Distinction

Breaking Barriers, Empowering Futures

Across Tsholotsho, Beatrice, and Chibombo, the SHE Catalyst Program has consistently demonstrated a capacity to innovate, adapt, and deliver holistic support to vulnerable girls, their caregivers, and school communities. Each district offers distinctive examples of the program's effectiveness and the team's mastery in addressing educational, psychosocial, and economic barriers.



In **Tsholotsho**, the program has creatively harnessed local resources to enhance skills and livelihoods, with beneficiaries excelling in beadwork, handmade keyholders, bangles, woven mats, and eco-friendly bin production using recycled materials. These activities not only cultivate technical competence but also foster environmental awareness, resourcefulness, and entrepreneurial thinking, empowering girls to transform everyday materials into practical, income-generating products.



In **Beatrice**, the program has successfully combined skills acquisition with health and hygiene education, enabling girls to produce reusable pads, door mats, and tailored garments. The integration of peer teaching within skills sessions has created a ripple effect, as knowledge is shared beyond direct beneficiaries, strengthening community engagement and reinforcing self-reliance. The district's strong focus on mentorship, academic camps, and structured SHE Clubs has nurtured leadership, confidence, and a culture of active participation.

In **Chibombo**, program innovation extends to structured peer support and community-based financial empowerment through the Village Banking Model. Girls and caregivers alike benefit from clear systems, consistent mentoring, and opportunities to develop entrepreneurial and financial management skills. The district exemplifies a holistic approach, where academic support, psychosocial care, skills development, and community engagement converge to create a sustainable impact.



Across all districts, the dedicated team of program managers, field officers, matrons, and volunteers exemplifies excellence, commitment, and resilience. They navigate operational challenges, engage meaningfully with schools and caregivers, and ensure that program interventions are delivered with precision, empathy, and consistency. This operational mastery has allowed the SHE Catalyst Program not only to meet targets but also to set new benchmarks for integrated education, skills development, and child empowerment in rural Southern Africa.

Ultimately, the strength of the **S.H.E. Catalyst Programme** lies in its ability to combine technical expertise with human-centred implementation, creating environments where girls can thrive academically, socially, and economically. Through innovative strategies, community partnerships, and a relentless focus on breaking barriers, the program continues to reshape possibilities for vulnerable girls, their families, and the communities that support them—demonstrating that with skilled, informed, and dedicated teams, transformational change is achievable and sustainable.

With unwavering dedication and unmatched expertise, the SHE Catalyst team continues to break barriers and redefine what is possible for vulnerable girls in Tsholotsho, Beatrice, and Chibombo. Through innovative skills training, strong SHE Clubs, psychosocial support, and community-led initiatives, girls are not only learning but also leading, creating, and thriving. Our integrated approach empowers beneficiaries, caregivers, and communities alike, turning challenges into opportunities and potential into tangible impact. This is more than a program; it is a movement driven by a skilled, informed, and passionate team committed to shaping resilient futures.

Health & Wellbeing

Catalyst Foundation continued to prioritise the health and well-being of our beneficiaries through regular health monitoring and community health awareness initiatives.

This year, learners and selected community members participated in periodic health screenings that assessed key indicators including Body Mass Index (BMI), blood sugar levels, urinalysis to check for a wide variety of diseases, infections and metabolic disorders, eye tests, hearing tests and general wellbeing. Through consistent monitoring and follow-up support, we observed encouraging improvements in several areas.

Several learners recorded positive weight and BMI adjustments, reflecting improved nutrition and healthier lifestyle habits supported through our programmes. Improvements in skin condition, personal hygiene practices, and general physical well-being were also noted during routine assessments. Equally significant has been the improvement in confidence, self-esteem, classroom alertness and personal presentation among many of the learners participating in our programmes.

Health education sessions delivered through schools, PSS and community engagements have strengthened awareness around nutrition, hygiene, and preventative health practices. Importantly, no major illnesses or chronic conditions were identified during screenings, reflecting a generally stable health outlook among the learners, while allowing the programme to focus on preventative care and healthy lifestyle promotion.

By integrating health monitoring with our broader education and empowerment programmes, Catalyst Foundation continues to support the holistic development of vulnerable learners, ensuring they are not only able to attend school but are physically, emotionally, and socially well enough to thrive.

Health Impact Snapshot

100 learners and community members screened through routine health monitoring

2 health assessment sessions were conducted across participating schools and communities

Improved BMI balance and weight stability were recorded among participating learners following nutrition and wellbeing interventions

Noticeable improvements in skin health, hygiene practices, and personal care

Strengthened health awareness through community hygiene and nutrition education sessions

No major illnesses identified, indicating a stable general health outlook among beneficiaries



TEAM UPDATES

Welcoming new Impact Players and bidding farewell



Florence Mugonde - Integrator

The year 2025 marked a season of both transition and growth within the Catalyst Foundation team. We said farewell to valued team members, Anesu Madzamba, Nyasha Maparikwenda from the Partnerships Department, Naomi Ruzvidzo, our Media Specialist, and Shingirirayi Dionne Matema, our Digital Marketing Officer, whose contributions have played a meaningful role in strengthening our work and impact. We remain grateful for their dedication and the foundation they helped build, and we wish them continued success in their future endeavours.

At the same time, we were excited to welcome a new team member who brings fresh energy and expertise into the organisation, Tarisai Mazarire, as Media Specialist. His arrival marks an important step in strengthening our marketing and storytelling capacity as we continue to grow our visibility and engagement.

Throughout the year, our team has demonstrated remarkable commitment, adaptability, and ownership in their respective roles. This dedication has been key in sustaining programme delivery and organisational momentum, even within a dynamic and evolving environment. We also invested in strengthening internal collaboration through a team-building initiative that significantly enhanced cohesion, communication, and alignment across departments. This has laid a strong foundation for improved teamwork and effectiveness moving forward.



As we look ahead, Catalyst Foundation remains committed to fostering a supportive environment that prioritises staff development, wellbeing, and growth. We are encouraged by the progress made and look forward to creating more opportunities that empower our team to thrive and continue driving meaningful impact.



VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

Catalyst Foundation's Volunteer Program recorded a significant impact across Tsholotsho, Zambia (Chibombo), and Beatrice, supported by a total of 14 dedicated volunteers in 2025. These individuals contributed across multiple program areas, including SHE Program delivery, mentorship, sports development, media coverage, and monitoring and evaluation. In Tsholotsho, two volunteers supported learner engagement and program implementation. Zambia had five volunteers, four of whom served as mentors implementing SHE Clubs, peer-to-peer learning, and one-on-one support for girls, while one supported the EAGERS Sports Program in Chibombo. In Beatrice, three volunteers supported SHE Program delivery within schools. The media team, consisting of three volunteers, played a key role in documenting and supporting events such as the E.A.G.E.R.S. Ball Games in Beatrice and the International Day of the Girl Child. Additionally, one Monitoring and Evaluation volunteer worked across all three districts, ensuring consistent tracking of program impact and stakeholder engagement.

Volunteer performance was assessed using the Catalyst Foundation Volunteer Review Tool, which focused on core values of family, impact, and consistency, alongside execution ability and leadership potential. This framework ensured that volunteers were not only delivering program activities effectively but also demonstrating initiative, responsibility, and alignment with the organisation's mission within schools and communities.

Throughout the year, volunteers made meaningful contributions by providing academic support, Peer-to-Peer activities and psychosocial mentorship to learners while also building strong and trusting relationships with teachers, parents, and community members. They successfully implemented SHE Clubs, facilitated mentorship sessions, and supported sporting activities, all of which enhanced learner participation and program visibility. Their creativity and commitment were evident in their willingness to use personal resources to support activities and events, further strengthening the reach and effectiveness of the program.

Assessments highlighted several consistent strengths among volunteers, including strong emotional intelligence and mentorship capabilities that fostered safe and supportive environments for learners. Volunteers demonstrated high levels of reliability and presence within schools, reflecting commitment and consistency. Their proactive approach and alignment with community values reinforced the Foundation's mission at the grassroots level and strengthened community trust.

Several best practices emerged during the program. Reflection circles provided valuable spaces for peer support, experience sharing, and collaborative problem-solving. Monthly feedback meetings strengthened accountability and alignment, while the consistent integration of organisational values ensured ethical and impactful program delivery. These practices contributed to a stronger sense of ownership and cohesion among volunteers.

To further strengthen program quality and sustainability, several strategies are recommended. Safeguarding should be enhanced through mandatory termly training and the involvement of child protection and adolescent development specialists. Collaboration will be improved through structured quarterly cross-team feedback sessions facilitated by program leadership, alongside systems that encourage teamwork and shared accountability across districts.

TESTIMONIALS

Lwandile Mpofu a volunteer from Tsholotsho, described her experience as profoundly rewarding and transformative. Through her work, she provided holistic support to adolescent girls, addressing psychosocial challenges such as self-esteem, relationships, and body image through one-on-one sessions and SHE Club activities. Leveraging her skills in first aid, confectionery, feminist leadership, and safeguarding, she extended her impact beyond the classroom by conducting home visits, engaging families, and supporting community dialogues. She also contributed to distributing food hampers and school supplies, while equipping girls with practical skills such as bead making and baking. Her efforts created safe and empowering spaces for girls, resulting in increased confidence, self-awareness, and academic engagement.

Morgan Tatsvareyi, the Monitoring and Evaluation volunteer, highlighted the importance of data-driven programming in achieving meaningful impact. His work focused on strengthening M&E systems to ensure accurate and timely data collection, enabling informed decision-making across the program. He also led capacity-building initiatives, training field teams in monitoring tools, data analysis, and visualisation, which improved their ability to track and communicate impact. By integrating M&E insights into program planning and community engagement, he contributed to greater accountability, efficiency, and continuous improvement within the S.H.E. Programme.

Chiedza Manyati, as a social worker, being part of Catalyst Foundation, has been a truly rewarding privilege. Working alongside a dedicated team committed to empowering vulnerable girls with the tools, guidance, and support they need to succeed in school has been deeply inspiring. She is grateful for the invaluable experience she gained, the challenges that have strengthened her skills, and the opportunity to grow alongside such passionate changemakers. Catalyst Foundation is more than just an organisation; it is a family that transforms dreams into reality. She is forever proud to be part of this journey.

A young girl is captured in motion, running across a field of tall, dry grass. She is wearing a green and black sports uniform. Her shorts feature the letters 'SHE' and a logo. The background is a soft-focus landscape with trees and a bright sky. The image has a teal-to-orange gradient overlay.

E.A.G.E.R.S. Sports Programme

E.A.G.E.R.S. SPORTS PROGRAMME

The E.A.G.E.R.S. Sports Programme is celebrating three years of growth, having evolved from a ceremonial initiative into a structured, continuous improvement program focused on capacity building, participation, and measurable outcomes. This transformation is evident in its expansion, strengthened partnerships, and increasing community impact.

A major milestone was the launch of the program in Chibombo District, Zambia, where a ball games tournament introduced volleyball, netball, and soccer while also serving as a platform for training and equipment distribution. The event engaged over 250 learners, attracted approximately 1,500 community members, trained 10 teachers in volleyball coaching, and provided sports equipment and jerseys to participating schools.

250
Learners

1500+
Community
members

10
Trained
Teachers



Capacity building remained central to EAGERS, highlighted by a Level 1 Athletics Coaching Clinic held at Ringa Primary School in February 2025. The clinic trained 10 teachers (5 male and 5 female) in coaching philosophy, session planning, and practical athletics techniques, resulting in improved training quality and athlete performance in subsequent competition through the synergies gained with the collaboration of NAAZ (National Athletics Association of Zimbabwe)

EAGERS Athletics Competitions at Muvande Primary School in March 2025 brought together 245 learners from four schools to compete in track and field events, with Ringa Primary School retaining the overall trophy. The competition demonstrated improved technical performance and strong community engagement, supported by government ministries.



The Annual Ball Games Tournament in Beatrice District in July 2025 expanded participation across multiple sporting disciplines, involving over 240 athletes in netball and football, more than 30 infants in traditional games, and reaching over 1,100 learners directly and indirectly. The event also led to an 18.2% program expansion through the inclusion of an additional school and was supported by private sector partners who contributed food, beverages, uniforms, and field improvements. Efforts to address resource gaps through a Sports Equipment Drive achieved increased visibility but only partial success due to limited partner engagement, highlighting the need for more targeted fundraising strategies.

Continuous improvement assessments conducted in November 2025 across three schools showed increased learner participation, significant growth in girls' involvement especially in soccer and improved coaching standards. Community and parental engagement also strengthened. Impact ratings were high across all schools, with Muda rated high impact, Muvande at 4/5, and Ringa at 5/5. However, challenges persist, including equipment shortages, limited facilities, transport constraints, and the need for advanced coaching in ball games.

Community engagement has grown steadily, with increased parental involvement, introduction of parent-learner activities, and rising interest in volunteerism and local fundraising initiatives, reinforcing sustainability.

Strategic partnerships have enhanced the program's technical and institutional capacity. Collaboration with football and athletics governing bodies has created pathways for coaching certification, safeguarding training, grassroots competitions reaching 100–150 learners, and structured talent identification systems. Additionally, local partnerships in Beatrice, especially Bakers Inn, have resulted in tangible support, including a water tank and stand and sporting uniforms for Ringa Primary, and football jerseys for Muvande Primary and other partnerships that have supported throughout the annual tournaments with food stuffs for the learners include Dairibord, Schweppes and Catalyst Borans.



Overall, the program has reached over 1,100 learners, trained more than 20 teachers, and significantly improved gender inclusion, learner confidence, and performance. It has also built strong community and private sector partnerships while establishing clear pathways for talent development, positioning EAGERS as a scalable and impactful sports development model.



Fundraising & Partnerships

During the year, Catalyst Foundation continued to strengthen and expand its network of partners whose support remains central to the delivery of our programmes and the well-being of the communities we serve. Through strategic collaboration with corporate partners, organisations, and individual sponsors, we have been able to support vulnerable learners, strengthen household resilience, and create opportunities for young people to grow and thrive.

We are grateful for the continued partnership of organisations such as **Zimgold, Willowton Group, Zambeef Products PLC, Bakers Inn, Catalyst Boran, Mr Chingwa, Probands and Nemchem**, whose consistent support has enabled us to strengthen food security, supply education materials and provide essential household items to vulnerable families. Their continued contributions of food, school fees and essential household products help reduce pressure on households while enabling learners to remain focused on their education.

Additional partners, including **Rank Stationery** for much needed stationary, **Dzidzo Safepad Trust** through sanitary wear support, and **Mvura Chaiyo** through safe water initiatives, have contributed meaningfully to improving learning environments and supporting the health and dignity of our beneficiaries.

We also recognise the growing contribution of individual sponsors, whose support through our Sponsor a Learner initiative continues to play a vital role in ensuring vulnerable learners remain in school. These individual partnerships represent a deeply personal commitment to changing the life trajectory of a young person and remain one of the most impactful ways in which the community participates in our mission.





This year also saw continued strengthening of programme based partnerships through initiatives such as the S.H.E. (Secure Hope Empowered) Clubs, which provide mentorship, life skills development, PSS and empowerment support for learners, as well as the EAGERS sporting programme, which promotes youth development, health, discipline, teamwork, confidence and community engagement while also creating livelihood opportunities for scouts involved in the programme.

Beyond programme delivery, our partnerships have also supported school rehabilitation initiatives and broader community empowerment activities that contribute to building resilient communities and sustainable development pathways for young people and their families.

Looking ahead, Catalyst Foundation remains committed to deepening these relationships and expanding opportunities for meaningful collaboration. We aim to continue building partnerships that create shared value for both our partners and the communities we serve by aligning initiatives with broader goals such as education access, youth empowerment, sports development, health and wellbeing, and household resilience and sustainability.

Through these partnerships, Catalyst Foundation continues to see the power of collective action in empowering learners and transforming communities. Together with our partners, we are strengthening support systems around vulnerable learners, building resilience within households, and opening pathways of opportunity for young people to thrive. At the centre of this work is our commitment to ensuring that every girl (learner) and every community we serve becomes Secure, filled with Hope, and Empowered, equipped not only to overcome present challenges, but to lead and shape a stronger future.

THANK YOU

2025 Donors and Partners



ROEDEAN



Bata



PRObrands

ZIMGOLD





Future Outlook

Looking toward the future, the foundation has set a 10-year target to support 1,000 girls across Africa by 2036, maintain a 0% programme dropout rate, and establish a Catalyst Leadership School for Girls. By March 2027, the foundation aims to scale its reach to 150 girls while building a diversified, sustainable funding model supported by individual sponsors, corporate partners, and a long-term endowment fund.





Breaking barriers, transforming
lives, inspiring dreams: Girls'
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www.catalystfn.org
Facebook: Catalyst Foundation
Instagram: @catalystfdn
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+263 773 230 303
info@catalystfn.org
partnerships@catalystfn.org

