

# EMPOWERMENT

## Global Health Connections Quarterly Newsletter



### THIS FALL'S HIGHLIGHTS

Across western Kenya, 2025 ended not with fanfare, but with focus. CHEC members who began the year in classrooms are now translating lessons into livelihood.

#### **Four new ventures are in motion.**

Rice cultivation in Maugo, beekeeping preparations in Nyamokenye, poultry infrastructure in Kimuka, and diversified crops in Soklo—all building the path from training to trade.

#### **Table banking is driving growth.**

From Maugo's Ksh 40,000 savings milestone to Kanyamfwa's Ksh 63,000 in loan interest earned, financial literacy is turning into financial independence.

#### **Villages Rising is here.**

A new book capturing the stories, photos, and spirit behind the CHEC movement—proof that community-led change works.

#### **Our third Global Grant is in the works.**

Forming new partnerships and expanding to 4-6 new CHECs in 2026.

#### **Colorado Gives Day returns.**

Our largest fundraiser of the year, powering the next chapter of health, education, and entrepreneurship.

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## Where Learning Becomes Livelihood

Readiness has a rhythm across western Kenya: ledgers open, plots marked, a new coop frame catching morning light. This is the threshold where learning becomes livelihood. After months of health education and financial literacy, members are lining up what's next—rice in Maugo, an apiary in Nyamokenye, diversified crops in Soklo, and in Kimuka the chicken coop is going up now so the economic project—chicken farming—can launch. Table banking savings are growing; leadership committees are mapping who plants, who builds, who trains. It's not showy. It's steady—and it sticks. Right now, we're advancing this work under Global Grant #2 and actively fundraising for Global Grant #3 to deepen and expand it in 2026. And with *Villages Rising* now in print, the stories behind this movement are here—proof that when communities lead, momentum spreads, household by household.





## DENVER'S MESSAGE

Dear friends,

This year didn't just teach new skills—it built confidence. Across our CHEC villages, families finished health education and financial literacy and are now preparing to turn those lessons into steady income. You can feel the readiness in the details: ledgers kept with care, table banking groups growing their savings, and local leaders coordinating what comes next.

Your partnership made this possible. In June, we celebrated graduations, new governance committees, and water filters in every graduate's home. By September, members translated plans into timelines and budgets. Now, in December, that groundwork is set, and our team is moving it forward through Global Grant #2 while we fundraise for Global Grant #3 to deepen and expand the work in 2026. With Villages Rising now in print, you can hold the stories of this movement—local leadership, quiet grit, and progress that lasts.

Thank you for standing with these communities as knowledge moves into action—and action readies households for lasting opportunity.

With gratitude,

Mimi Gordon

Director of Marketing

PICTURED ABOVE: KIMUKA MEMBERS PLANT TREES AROUND THE PERIMETER OF THE NEW CHICKEN FARM.



## Village Highlights

### **Maugo: From Training to Tilling — Rice Farming Begins**

Maugo has laid the groundwork for community rice cultivation, with GHC supplying the start-up materials needed for planting. Members are strengthening their cushion through table banking—Ksh 40,000 saved to date, tracking deposits in group books and a master ledger, with a Ksh 60,000 near-term target to support small input loans once planting is underway. Rice farming is to begin soon, creating both a local food source and a new stream of income for more than 120 families. The Sustainable Governance Committee will guide the first planting cycle and plan for expansion afterward.

“This isn’t just rice—it’s our first step to steady income,” said Maurice Onyango, a Maugo CHEC member.

### **Nyamokenye: Beekeeping Will Bring Sweet Rewards**

Nyamokenye is preparing to construct an apiary and launch a beekeeping/honey venture—not a co-op. Fifteen members have been selected for beekeeping training, and two potential apiary sites are identified pending confirmation by the National Beekeeping team.

PICTURED ABOVE: MAUGO MEMBERS WORK THROUGH THE NUMBERS OF VARIOUS INCOME-GENERATING PROJECTS.





## Village Highlights

Table banking capital stands at Ksh 82,550, with a formal group start planned for January 2026 to help with early operating needs. Subgroups are also progressing: a 3-year napier grass lease is underway, a rotating plan is purchasing 3 chickens per member, and vegetable plots are in development. Beekeeping activities are to begin soon, with pollination benefits supporting nearby crops.

“The bees are just the beginning—between beekeeping and table banking, families here are building income that will last,” said Christine Nyaboke, GHC’s Director of Operations in Kenya.

### **Kimuka: Infrastructure in Place for Poultry Launch**

Kimuka is moving from plans to infrastructure. Watersheds are complete and water is pumped to storage tanks; toilets are finished. Construction of a new chicken coop began today, oriented east–west per KALRO guidance and sized to house 500 chicks provided by GHC (the earlier donated structure was too small and misoriented). Renovation of the old house into a storage unit is also underway to support feed, tools, and record-keeping.

“With the new chicken coop almost complete and the water systems in place, members are really starting to feel the excitement,” said Lynn Sinet, GHC’s Project Officer in Kimuka.





## Village Highlights

### **Soklo: Diversified Crops Set to Start**

On Mfangano Island, Soklo CHEC members are organizing plots and inputs for groundnuts, kale, and maize—crops chosen for their fit with island conditions. Members have outlined roles for bed prep, planting, and shared maintenance to keep costs low and participation high. Diversified cropping is to begin soon, with staggered planting so households can rotate labor and manage water use. These fields are being planned primarily as an income project, with crop sales expected to support families' food, school, and household needs over time.

"Our members already grow food in their kitchen gardens—these fields are for business, so the harvest can help families earn," said Quinter Obunga, GHC's Project Officer in Soklo.





## Table Banking in Action: Savings That Spark Growth

As our four newest CHECs prepare to launch their first ventures, table banking is fueling momentum across the wider network—turning weekly savings into real capital for businesses.

In **Maugo**, six subgroups share one bank account. Each group collects weekly contributions and deposits them together; so far they've saved Ksh 50,000 toward a Ksh 100,000 goal. Once they reach it, the groups plan to divide the total so each has roughly Ksh 16,000 to start lending through table banking.

In **Nyamokenye**, six groups are also contributing weekly. They've saved Ksh 82,550 and plan to begin loaning out funds in January 2026. Alongside this, a separate merry-go-round continues—each week, two members go home with the shared contribution.

**Nyamecheo**: A new vegetable enterprise (black nightshade, cowpeas, spider plant) began harvesting in October and has already sold Ksh 4,000 in produce and seedlings. Seedling overflow led to leasing an additional plot; the 2-year lease (Ksh 8,000) is on pace to pay for itself.

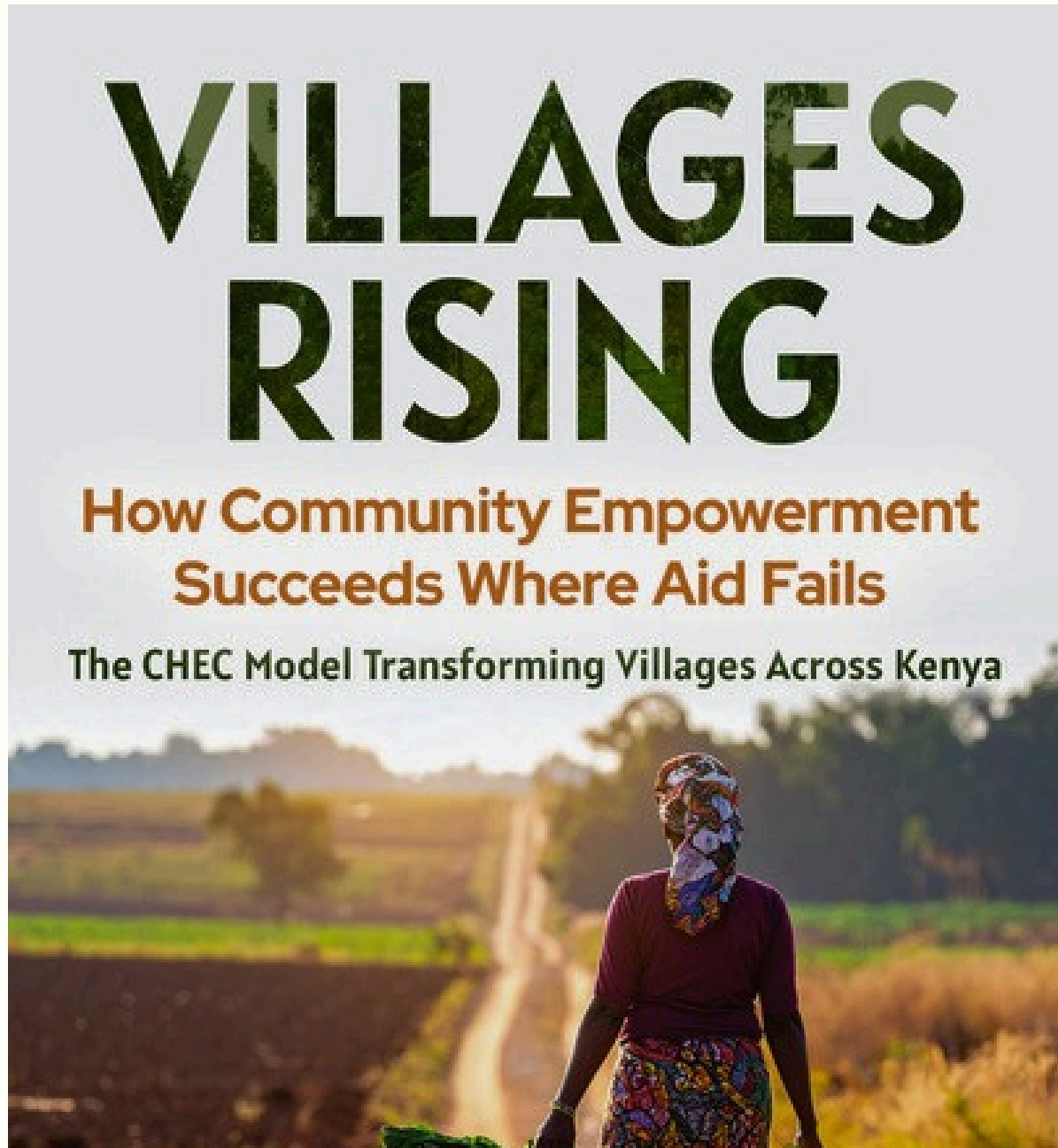
**Nyamagesa**: Intercropping beans + maize produced 79 tins; each tin sells for Ksh 250–300 against a Ksh 12,000 planting cost—a solid return that members plan to reinvest.

**Kanyamfwa (Cereal A)**: Completed a second share-out: Ksh 178,970 in savings and Ksh 63,225 in interest distributed proportionally. Cereal sales profited Ksh 55,200, which the group will reinvest in stock. Kanyamfwa Tailoring shares out in December; Kanyipir in December/January.

Why it matters:

Table banking builds local capital, trust, and strong record-keeping—so members can borrow, invest, and grow on their own terms. It's the bridge between learning and livelihood.

## Announcing Villages Rising



We're thrilled to announce Villages Rising — a new book from Global Health Connections that tells the story behind the CHEC model: how health, education, and economic empowerment can transform entire communities.

Through powerful stories and stunning photography, Villages Rising captures the spirit of resilience that fuels every village we serve. It's more than a book — it's a call to believe in community-led change.

Learn more about the book and how to get a copy here:

<https://globalhealthconnections.org/villages-rising-book>



## Global Grant #3 - Building What's Next

GHC is currently designing and fundraising for our third Rotary Global Grant, focused on launching new Community Health and Empowerment Clubs (CHECs) in western Kenya. The working budget for this project is up to \$129,000, with the final amount shaped by how much support we're able to secure from Rotary Clubs.

If approved, the grant would run from summer 2026 through the end of 2027 and is designed to:

1. Launch between 4-6 new CHECs, including sites developed in partnership with long-standing Colorado nonprofits that have been working in Kenya for many years
2. Create a weekly public health and entrepreneurship radio show on Mfangano Island, reaching an estimated 100,000 listeners
3. Seed new income-generating projects, including fish farming, poultry, and an emerging "economic zone" concept in Kajiado County

In parallel with this grant, GHC will continue advancing two key scale pathways:

- VillageRise, our CHEC training package that allows other organizations to adapt the model, and
- Adopt-a-Village, where Rotary Clubs and community partners sponsor a full CHEC journey in a specific village.

This next Global Grant is our biggest step yet toward scaling a model that local communities can own—and carry forward—long after the grant ends.



PICTURED ABOVE: NYAMECHEO MEMBERS HARVEST NAPIER GRASS.



## Colorado Gives Day — Our Biggest Fundraiser of the Year

Colorado Gives Day on December 9 (with early giving open now) is GHC's most important fundraising event of the year—and this December, every gift stretches even further.

This year, GHC founder and Board Chair Blair Gifford is generously matching all Colorado Gives Day donations up to \$25,000. That means your gift can go twice as far to:

- Bring health education and financial literacy to new CHEC members
- Support table banking groups as they grow their savings and small businesses
- Help launch new CHECs in villages still waiting for their turn

Each contribution directly fuels the hands and hearts of those creating lasting change in their communities. Together, we've seen how empowerment grows—from one family to another, one village to the next. Let's keep it rising.

♥ [Click to Give Today via Colorado Gives Day](https://bit.ly/GHCColoradoGivesDay)

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P.S. All gifts made by December 9 count toward our Colorado Gives Day total and Blair's match. Let's make this our strongest Colorado Gives yet.



## COLORADO GIVES DAY 2025

### Empowering Kenyan Communities





## In Closing

**As 2025 comes to a close, we're celebrating the journey from learning to livelihood—a journey powered by your partnership. Next quarter, we'll bring you updates from the ground: new income-generating projects taking root, table banking groups investing in napier grass and vegetables, and the partnerships that are shaping our 2026 expansion. Until then, thank you for standing with us, believing in local leadership, and helping build a world empowered with health, equity, and prosperity.**

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**SCAN TO DONATE TO COLORADO  
GIVES DAY EVENT**

