

Board Secretary - Role Description

Raising Futures Kenya is looking for an organised Board Secretary, with a passion for supporting our small, but mighty, international NGO through a journey of shifting power to our partner NGO.

Reporting to: Chair, Raising Futures Kenya

Purpose: The role of the secretary is to support the Chair by ensuring the board functions smoothly. This includes organising Trustee meetings, circulating papers in advance, taking notes and ensuring compliance for the regulatory responsibilities of a Charity Incorporated Organisation.

Hours: Approximately 6 hours a month.

Salary: This is a voluntary role.

We currently have eight Trustees across the UK, Switzerland, Ireland and Kenya and two part-time staff based in Brighton and Lewes. Board meetings are approximately every 2 months in the evening via Google Meets. Two meetings a year are in-person meetings, usually in London (overseas Trustees can still join remotely). Three of our Trustees are coming to the end of their term this year so it's a refreshing opportunity to bring on board new skills and talent needed for the next era of our journey.

About Raising Futures Kenya

For 22 years Raising Futures Kenya (UK charity no.1181670) has worked alongside local people, and our partner NGO, in Kenya to develop projects which are owned by the community and create long-term, sustainable change to reduce poverty and improve livelihoods.

Through our Seed of Hope training and support programme we enable 14-25 year olds (75% girls) to secure employment or start a small business, generating enough income to live above the poverty line. We provide free technical vocational and business skills training, alongside mental health and wellbeing support which has led to over 90% of graduates being in employment, self-employment or further education. Seed of Hope offers young people opportunity, dignity and hope.

All training is combined with 3 key elements of support which makes our project unique and more successful than vocational training alone.

1. Daily life skills and mental health wellbeing curriculum which includes topics on common mental health issues to challenge stigma and signpost students to the unlimited free counselling

sessions we offer, gender equality, knowing and asserting your rights, family planning, health, hygiene and nutrition.

2. Practical help is provided to ensure we remove any barriers young people may face in gaining an education and attending lessons, such as; free cooked lunches, support with travel costs, childcare vouchers for young mothers and free menstrual hygiene packs.

3. Graduate support helps young people set up their own business and generate a sustainable income. This includes tailored business and financial literacy training, access to the Seed of Hope Business Hub providing computers, tools, and materials for graduates to use to launch their business, plus an ongoing peer mentoring scheme from former successful Seed of Hope graduates.

If students are traumatised, hungry or can't afford sanitary products, they won't be in a position to learn. We treat every student as an individual and personalise our support to their specific needs and circumstances to set every student up for success. We know this holistic approach is more successful than vocational training alone, and has the most meaningful impact for young people.

You can watch a video which summarises our work: <https://vimeo.com/343226817>. You can also find more information about Raising Futures Kenya at the end of this document.

Achievements

Some of our achievements include:

- Over 4,000 young people in Kenya have received free skills training.
- Since 2021 we now support more young people in a year than our first 15 years combined.
- 91% of our graduates are in full time employment, self-employment or further education.
- Received multi-year funding from the Department for International Development (now FCDO) and other reputable grant givers, including a US funder who has granted us \$100,000USD a year to go directly to our Kenyan partner as part of our move to shift power to our partner.
- Awarded the 'Small Charity, Big Impact' award by the Foundation of Social Improvement 2019 for achieving disproportionate impact to our size.
- Awarded 'Charity Governance Award for Improving Impact' in May 2022.
- Shortlisted for 'Diversity and Inclusion Award for Best NGO on Promotion of Human Rights' in Kenya in March 2022.
- BBC Radio 4 Appeal aired 26th Feb 2023.

The future of Raising Futures Kenya

We are in Year 2 of our 5 year Strategic Plan. The focus is on shifting the decision making power to our partner NGO in Kenya. You can read our Strategic Plan here:

<https://www.raisingfutureskenya.org.uk/whatwedo/strategic-plan/>

Role Summary

Board Meeting Coordination

- Preparing agendas in consultation with the Chair and CEO, and circulating them and any supporting papers in good time.
- Making all the arrangements for meetings (sending calendar invites with online meeting details, for in-person meetings; booking the room, arranging for equipment and refreshments, organising facilities for those with special needs, etc).
- Receiving agenda items from other trustees/staff.
- Checking that a quorum is present.
- Taking minutes (or being responsible for them being taken) and circulating draft minutes to all trustees.
- Ensuring that the minutes are approved by trustees and it's noted in the minutes.
- Checking that trustees and staff have carried out actions agreed at a previous meeting.
- Circulating agendas and minutes of the annual general meeting and any special or extraordinary general meetings (where required).
- Ensuring the Risk Register is updated before each meeting.

Governance

- Supporting the creation of the Annual Report, alongside the CEO, Treasurer and Chair, as required.
- Overseeing the update dates for all policies and ensuring they are updated by yourself, or the relevant person, and the approval of updated policies by the Board is minuted.
- Managing updates and changes needed on the Charity Commission, for example; changes in trustee details, uploading Annual Report etc.
- Supporting recruitment process of new staff and trustees as required, such as reviewing role descriptions, posting role adverts, shortlisting, interviewing and inductions etc.
- Sitting on appraisal and disciplinary panels as required.
- Supporting the Chair with organising the annual appraisals of trustees.

Responsibilities of all Trustees

- Ensuring the organisation pursues its charitable objects (purposes), as defined in its governing document.
- Ensuring strategic objectives are developed and met in order to provide greater public benefit, namely to the young people and communities we work alongside in Kenya.
- Ensuring that the organisation complies with its governing document (i.e. constitution or memorandum and articles of association), charity law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Ensuring that the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuit of its charitable objects (i.e. the charity must not spend money on activities that are not included in its own objects, however worthwhile or charitable those activities are) for the benefit of the public.
- Ensuring that the organisation defines its goals and evaluates performance against agreed targets.
- Safeguarding the good name and values of the organisation.

- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of the organisation, including having appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- Ensuring the financial stability of the organisation.
- Protecting and managing the property of the charity and ensuring the proper investment of the charity's funds.
- Following proper and formal arrangements for the appointment, supervision, support, appraisal and remuneration of the CEO.
- In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

Networking, fundraising and partnership development

- All Trustees are expected to assist Raising Futures Kenya to secure a sustainable and diverse funding base for the organisation, from seeking funding opportunities to galvanising personal and professional networks to generate income.
- Act as a proud ambassador for Raising Futures Kenya, representing the charity at meetings and facilitating networking and funding opportunities as these arise.
- Join relevant networks and associations to further your understanding of the sector we are in, and to promote the work and best practices of the charity.

Person Specification

The ideal candidate will have the following skills and experience;

Essential:

- A commitment to the organisation, and willingness to devote approximately 6 hours a month and attend Board meetings.
- Understanding of the regulatory responsibilities of a Charity Incorporated Organisation.
- A willingness to speak your mind with respect, tact and diplomacy.
- Exceptional organisational skills, with attention to detail and accuracy.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Honesty and integrity. We're a values led organisation and want to ensure that everyone who joins us shares our values of honesty and integrity.
- Teamwork and commitment. We're a small organisation and rely on each other to lean in and play a part in achieving our objectives. We believe in getting the work done, but having fun along the way so our meetings are often light-hearted.
- Passionate about furthering the impact of our work, in whatever way you can. For example utilising your networks to share the work we do or to seek donations.

Desirable:

- Experience of minute taking.
- Competent in understanding finances.
- Understanding of the Shift the Power movement and its importance.

- Knowledge and experience of international development, particularly programmes in;
 - Education, Technical Vocational Training or Entrepreneurship
 - Mental Health and Wellbeing
 - Young people
 - Girls and women
 - Income generation
 - Farming/agriculture
 - Programmes in Kenya
- We are always looking for candidates who have lived experience of any of the following;
 - Kenya
 - East Africa
 - Technical Vocational Training

We are committed to a culture of inclusivity. We are able to grow and learn better if we have a diverse organisation formed of the collective sum of individual differences, lived experiences, knowledge and self-expression. We don't want to exist in an echo chamber. In recruiting for our team we welcome the unique perspectives you can bring in terms of culture, education, opinions, ethnicity, race, sex, gender identity, values, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, beliefs, nation of origin and languages spoken.

Normally Trustees are asked to commit to a 3-year term on the Board and serve for a maximum of 2 terms. All appointments are subject to completion of a successful 3 month probationary period. For more details about the legal obligations of Trustees visit the Charity Commission website at www.charitycommission.co.uk and read its publication *CC3, The Essential Trustee*.

Please note: the law places certain restrictions on becoming a charity Trustee (for example, you cannot be under the age of 18, or been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonestly). If you are in any doubt about your eligibility, visit the Charity Commission website.

Application Process

Passion for the cause is our number one recruitment factor, so if you're interested in coming on Board please get in touch.

Interested applicants should send a CV (or link to your LinkedIn profile) with a covering letter explaining your relevant skills and experience and motivation for the role.

Please send to our CEO, Kirsty Erridge, at kirsty@raisingfutureskenya.org.uk by 9am Wednesday 8th May. We look forward to hearing from you.

Further Information About Raising Futures Kenya

Our values

Inclusive - We listen to people and work together with them to develop solutions that really work and last. We do not discriminate on any basis.

Compassionate - We believe in the potential of all children and young people and recognise their challenges. We feel compelled to provide the support and opportunity that will help them change their lives.

Collaborative - We work together to make change happen, we're happy to share with and learn from individuals and organisations to create the biggest impact.

Finance

Raising Futures Kenya is in a strong financial position, with 3 months of unrestricted expenditure held in reserves at any given time, in addition to various restricted grants for our Seed of Hope programme, and a 3 year large grant secured directly to our partner NGO in Kenya.

We are currently largely reliant on income from trusts and foundations and individual donors but have a robust pipeline for both of these income streams overseen by Trustees in the relevant areas. A focus in 2024+ will be seeking new grant opportunities from the USA and Kenya and securing corporate partnerships.

Strategic Themes for Raising Futures Kenya in the UK

You can read our Strategic Plan here:

<https://www.raisingfutureskenya.org.uk/whatwedo/strategic-plan/>

Underpinning all of our work over the next 5 years will be the following themes:

Do good, be better - Learn from the Shift the Power movement and embed it throughout our organisation. Embed a culture of reflection and respond to changes in society. Actively reflecting on our own actions, admitting to failure, looking for opportunities to learn, to act, to be better, to share and to ensure no one is left behind and everyone has an opportunity to thrive.

Sustainability - This theme cuts across all of our work, from; increasing the sustainability of our programmes in Kenya, increasing the sustainability of our income through income generating activities, increasing the long-term sustainability for young people and communities who are benefiting from training and skills development at Seed of Hope and increasing self-reliance and using environmentally sustainable working practices wherever possible.

Wellbeing and thriving - Our Seed of Hope programme centres on the wellbeing of students, ensuring they are in the best position to be able to thrive. We will ensure this is extended to all staff, volunteers and anyone working with Raising Futures Kenya. We will advocate for wellbeing in the sector.

We consider the whole person in our work. Sustainable development isn't simple, solutions are often complex and unique to each individual. We work closely alongside children, young people

and families to ensure they have all the support they need to break the cycle of poverty and inequality.

Governance

Raising Futures Kenya has a strong Board, with a mixture of charity, corporate and educational experience. As some Trustees are coming to the end of their term this year we are reviewing our governance structure to ensure we have the right skills, knowledge and commitment from our Trustees to help us achieve our strategic targets and development objectives. In the last 2 years, we have invested significantly in our UK team. We have an incredibly competent staff team and a well operated Board, which has led to the receipt of awards and increased interest from funders.

Thank you for your interest in joining the team at Raising Futures Kenya. Please do not hesitate to contact our CEO, Kirsty Erridge, on kirsty@raisingfutureskenya.org.uk if you have any questions about the role.

www.raisingfutureskenya.org.uk

