



# Rare Vrienden- Friends of River Rare Foundation

Jan–April 2026  
Newsletter



*Based in Kilifi, Kenya*



- ✓ 9 girls sponsored
- ✓ Poultry systems tightened
- ✓ Certification delivered
- ✓ 10 computers and solar provided
- ✓ And the 2024-2025 Annual Report is here

# A Word from our Founders



**Eric Smaling**  
Chairman and Co-Founder



**Jonathan Mativo**  
Project Lead and Co-Founder

Dear readers

We have pleasure in sharing our first Friends of River Rare / Rare Vrienden Newsletter of 2026. You are either already an ardent sponsor of our program, or we assume you will be just interested and pleased to see what we are doing in Kilifi County, Coastal Kenya.

We met some years ago in Kilifi and quickly discovered we shared 'a vibe' in trying to improve people's livelihoods where possible. Jonathan already running a NGO on ICT for Development and Eric with a student history in Kilifi way back in 1979 joined hands initially in getting bright girls from poor families to highschool. Jonathan identified the girls through his contacts within the local communities, whereas Eric approached his network to find people in The Netherlands willing to sponsor a girl. Eric's long-time friend Tineke then stepped in and also managed to bring in sponsors.

The next step was to mount a formal foundation early 2024, mirrored by a Community-based Organisation in Kilifi, spearheaded by Jonathan.

Now we are in 2026, 2,5 years later with a much larger program, made up of 3 Education and 3 Agri-business components. We hope you enjoy the Newsletter where we spell out in more detail what is currently going on. And we hope you will join us. This is not about 'doing good', this is a dedicated and targeted effort to get young people and rural women to the next level of empowerment, self-development and prosperity. We want to fuel an engine that does not get fuelled by itself. We do not want to please people to make them grateful, we want to tap all these human and agricultural potentials in Africa that remain untapped.

We hope you share our excitement!

Jonathan Mativo  
Eric Smaling

# January – April 2026 | From Setup to Systems

In four months, we moved from setup to systems—where impact is tracked, measured, and improved. What’s emerging is simple: when structure, training, and community ownership align, results follow.

## 1. Education Sponsorship: Preventing Drop-Off

**9 additional** girls are now fully sponsored for the next phase of their education.

Behind that number are real stakes. Girls like Emmaculate and Amina were on the edge—either delaying school or pushing their families toward selling land just to cover fees.

That pressure is now removed. This is not just access to education; it is protection against long-term economic setbacks for entire families.

Help Keep Girls in School

Support students like Emmaculate and Amina and prevent families from making irreversible sacrifices.

[Donate Now](#)

## 2. Poultry Program: Discipline Is Driving Results

This program is no longer about distribution—it's about doing it right.

- **Dedicated Oversight:** A Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) officer now tracks progress.
- **Expert Training:** A county veterinary officer trained participants on disease control and hygiene.
- **The Result:** Healthier flocks and fewer losses.

**Real example:** Anette, a program participant, invested in professional feeders and a footbath for her coop immediately after training. That shift—from participation to ownership—is where sustainability begins.

## 3. Nyari Digitization: Fully Operational

Nyari Secondary is now a functioning, reliable learning hub:

- 10 fully operational computers installed.
- Solar Power: 2 additional panels added for consistent power.
- Structured Learning: A qualified IT teacher is actively training students daily.

## 4. Coconut Value Chain: Building It the Right Way

We are stabilizing yogurt production while ensuring the community is embedded in the business model. It is fondly agreed upon that Local women will not only supply coconuts but also act as early-stage distributors/ sellers/hawkers. This ensures income is created across the entire value chain and the model stays true to our mission.

## 5. Youth Skills Development: Certification to Opportunity

This quarter, we celebrated a milestone that truly captures the heart of our mission: Certificate Day.

It was a proud moment as our trainees in tiling, aluminum fabrication, painting, and culinary arts received their credentials. These aren't just symbols of achievement—they are hard-earned keys to employment. Hearing their stories and celebrating with the community reminded us all why this work matters.

**Looking ahead:** We are excited to keep this momentum going as the 2026 cycle begins with a focus on carpentry training, helping more youth build a future they can be proud of.

## 6. Sosoni Farm: A Reality Check

A mini-drought affected operations at Sosoni Farm, resulting in no yield this period. This serves as a vital reminder that our future planning must prioritize climate resilience strategies alongside production goals.

### What We're Learning

- Technical support (M&E, veterinary, teaching) accelerates impact.
- Community ownership strengthens outcomes.
- Environmental risk is real and must be planned for.

### What's Next (May–August 2026)

- Expand and tighten poultry systems.
- Move coconut production toward market readiness.
- Launch carpentry training for youth.
- Grow the education sponsorship program.

# Support What Works

We are entering a phase where the model is clear—and ready to scale. Your support enables income-generating systems, employment skills, and education that prevents poverty.



**Education (9 Girls  
empowered)**



**Innovation (10  
Computers)**



**Sustainability  
(Poultry & Coconuts)**

**Be Part of the Growth**  
**Donate to Rare Vrienden**

## Final Note

This is no longer experimentation. It is a working model—refined, tested, and ready to grow.

*For a full breakdown of our progress, please see the Annual Report 2025 attached to this email.*

