



AFRICA NEW LIFE

# SPONSORSHIP GUIDE



# WELCOME & THANK YOU

## DEAR FRIENDS,

From all of us at Africa New Life, thank you for your role as a sponsor in a student's educational and spiritual journey! Let's watch as God moves through our partnership to produce a beautiful work in Rwanda. We hope the impact of our journey together stretches far beyond the borders of Rwanda, to your heart, your family, and your community.



**Dr. Charles Mugisha**  
Co-Founder & President  
Africa New Life Ministries

**Florence Mugisha**  
Co-Founder & Director of Women's Ministry  
Africa New Life Ministries



**Alan Hotchkiss**  
U.S. Executive Director  
Africa New Life Ministries



## YOUR AFRICA NEW LIFE ACCOUNT

To access your Africa New Life account, visit [www.africanewlife.org/myaccount](http://www.africanewlife.org/myaccount).

Your Africa New Life account allows you to:

- Manage your contact and financial information
- Set up automatic donations
- Write to your sponsored student using our Online Letter Writing feature
- Order a gift for your sponsored student
- Make a one-time donation or sponsor another student

If you have any questions, you're welcome to contact us at [students@africanewlife.org](mailto:students@africanewlife.org), 503.906.1590. Our U.S. office is located in Portland, Oregon and our hours are Monday-Thursday, 8:30am-5pm; Friday, 8:30am-12pm (Pacific Time).

# ABOUT RWANDA

The Republic of Rwanda is fondly referred to as “The Land of a Thousand Hills” by its citizens. With a variety of landscapes, Rwanda is lush from the western mountains to the eastern savannah. Situated just south of the equator in East Africa, Rwanda has a temperate climate with two rainy seasons.

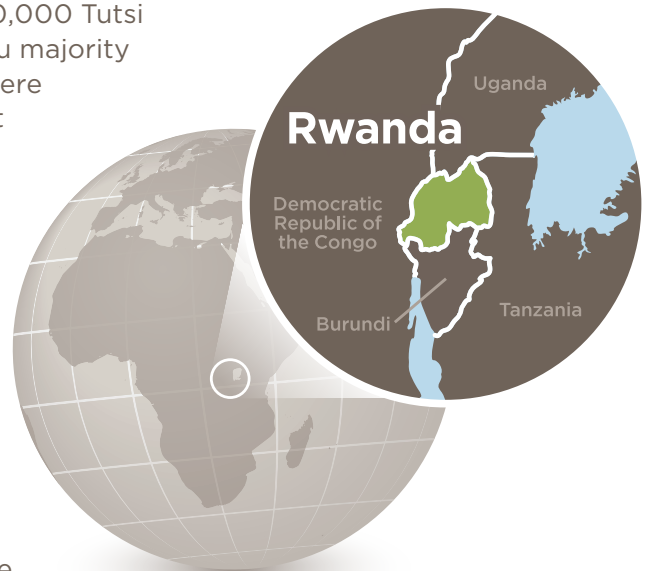
In the heart of Africa, Rwanda is landlocked by its four neighboring countries: Uganda, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Burundi. The capital city, Kigali, is centrally located. While Rwanda’s land mass is roughly the size of Massachusetts, Rwanda’s population is among the densest in Africa at more than 14 million. Rwanda has four official languages: Kinyarwanda, English, French, and Swahili.

Rwanda has faced complex challenges in its history. Prior to the 20th century, Rwanda was a unified nation under their king before European colonization. The colonizers established an ethnically-based hierarchy—between the Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa peoples who had originally populated Rwanda—that impacted Rwandan history in significant ways. Before Rwanda regained its independence from colonial powers in 1962, tension among Rwandans led to a series of violent events beginning in 1959, when Hutus killed more than 20,000 Tutsi people. Violence and oppression continued after the Hutu majority took control over the government. Thousands of Tutsis were displaced until the 1990s when the Rwandan government facilitated a genocide against Tutsis and Hutu moderates in 1994. Approximately one million people were killed in just three months before the Rwandan Patriotic Front captured Kigali and began restoring order.

The military commander of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, Paul Kagame, continues to lead in rebuilding the nation as president of Rwanda. When the new constitution was passed in 2003, it required that 30% of parliamentary seats be filled by women. Rwanda currently models the greatest representation of women in parliament at 61%. Rwanda’s future is promising and bright due to its unified leadership. Rwanda has one of the fastest growing economies in Africa with a real growth rate of 8.9% in 2024. Approximately 43% of the labor force works in the agricultural sector, and agriculture comprises nearly 27% of the GDP in Rwanda.

Even though the people of Rwanda experienced horrific atrocities in the 20th century, they have provided the world with an example of resilience, grace, and continued healing. Today, Rwanda is among the safest countries in Africa due to restored peace and security. Genocide memorials in Rwanda exist to remember the tragedy, honor the dead, and educate Rwandans and the world to help prevent future violence.

**While we believe it’s important to know and understand the history of Rwanda, we ask that you exercise sensitivity by not discussing the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi with the student you sponsor.**



# WHERE IN RWANDA



Your sponsored student and their family live in **Nyamagabe**.

Nyamagabe is surrounded by hills and is the most populated district in southern Rwanda. Women make up most of its population and nearly 40% of its residents live below the poverty line. The high rate of food insecurity amongst families in Nyamagabe causes stunted growth in about 40% of children. Material poverty further impacts children in this region by preventing them from attending school.

Africa New Life began serving alongside the Nyamagabe community in 2019. Sponsored students in this

community attend local schools. Africa New Life Ministries is committed to supporting the community spiritually by building and leading a local church.

By coming alongside your sponsored student and their family, you are helping to transform an entire community through sponsorship and prayer.

## ABOUT AFRICA NEW LIFE

Africa New Life was founded by Rwandans in 2001 and is still run by Rwandans today. More than 700 Rwandan and East African staff serve to help educate students, pastor families spiritually, enable access to medical care for sponsored students, and promote growth of the ministry in Rwanda.

Africa New Life in the U.S. exists to support the work in Rwanda in the areas of sponsorship, development, team trips, financial accountability, and church and strategic partnerships.

Learn more about Africa New Life and our programs by visiting [www.africanewlife.org](http://www.africanewlife.org).



**93% of Africa New Life's staff are Rwandan or East African locals.**

# SPONSORSHIP PROMISES

AFRICA NEW LIFE HAS TWO TOP PRIORITIES FOR EACH STUDENT WE WORK WITH:



to complete secondary school or a vocational equivalent



to bring them into a loving relationship with and knowledge of Christ

## HOW SPONSORSHIP HELPS

Sponsorship commitments help families by assisting them with school fees, which allows them to pay for other expenses. Sponsored students receive school uniforms and scholastic materials. They are encouraged to attend monthly Center Days, where they enjoy meals, play games, and hear about Christ, as well as attend annual Christian camps. Sponsorship additionally covers basic medical needs that fall outside of government-sponsored insurance, so sponsored students have a greater access to health care.

## SPONSORSHIP COVERS



School Fees



Scholastic Materials



Uniforms



Center Days



Camps



Medical Assistance

*\*Higher sponsorship rates include more than the above items.*

## SPONSORSHIP MODEL

Our core sponsorship model is one sponsor per child for students in preschool through through Primary 6 (6th grade). We have a co-sponsorship model for students in Senior 1 (7th grade) through our Dream Leadership Academy due to higher secondary education costs. This additional support enables students to finish their education well.

For more information, visit [www.africanewlife.org/promises](http://www.africanewlife.org/promises).

# ENCIRCLING SUPPORT

Through sponsorship, an entire network of adults encircles a student and their family with support for transformation.

## PASTOR

Local pastors provide spiritual nurturing and discipleship to students, their families, and their communities.

## TEACHER

Teachers educate students and support their overall academic success as they work towards graduating from secondary school.

## CDO

Child Development Officers support students and their families through relationships, guidance, and prayer.

## NURSE

Community nurses provide initial care to students and help parents and guardians navigate the healthcare system to ensure access to proper medical care.

## SPONSOR

Sponsorship support helps students' families with the costs of school fees, scholastic materials, school uniforms, and ministry activities. Sponsors may also provide encouragement through prayer, letters, and gifts.



“Sponsorship provided us with financial stability. It improved our access to basic needs and has given hope for the future. Because of sponsorship my family was able to plan ahead and focus on growth rather than daily survival.”

### HAKIZIMANA

SPONSORED STUDENT SINCE 2021

“It’s been so beautiful to see the connection and friendship between my daughter and Nabila [sponsored student] grow over the years. We’re grateful for the ways Africa New Life has invested in her life and in so many other students in Rwanda so they can flourish and achieve their dreams. Thank you for the opportunity to be part of Nabila and her family’s lives.”

### NICOL

SPONSOR SINCE 2019

# RWANDAN CULTURE



## **NAMES**

Names in Rwanda are more fluid than in the U.S. While we share a last name with our family, Rwandans traditionally do not. The first name listed is typically a Kinyarwanda name, and the second name listed is typically an Anglo or Francophone name. Your sponsored student may answer to either name. You'll often hear the U.S. staff refer to students using the second name listed since it is usually easier for us to pronounce. Next time you write a letter to your sponsored student, you're welcome to ask them by which name they prefer you to address them.

## **LANGUAGE**

English is one of Rwanda's official languages, but it may be the second or third language your sponsored student learns. Students are first instructed in Kinyarwanda at school and then switch to English instruction in Primary 4. Depending on the grade level and ability of your sponsored student, a translator may assist them in letter writing.

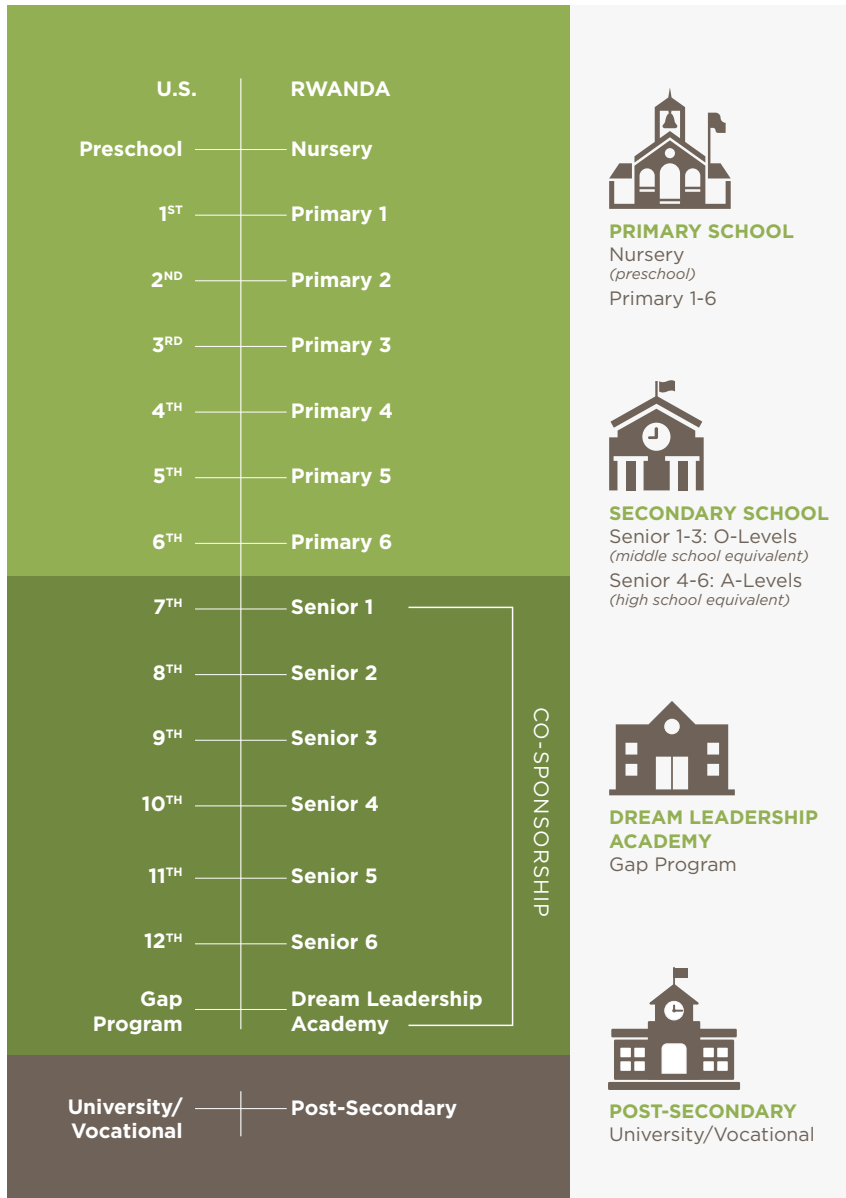
## **LETTERS**

Letters are the way you will build a relationship with your sponsored student. While nearly every town in the U.S. has a post office, that is not the case in Rwanda. Since Rwanda isn't a letter writing culture, this is a new skill your sponsored student will be learning. Our team in Rwanda assists students in our program in developing this skill.

# EDUCATION IN RWANDA

## SCHOOL YEAR

The academic year in Rwanda begins in the fall and ends mid-summer. Rwandan schools follow the trimester system, with a 2-3 week break in between each term and a longer break between the end of one academic year and the beginning of the next.



## LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

Students are first instructed in Kinyarwanda at school and then switch to English in Primary 4. For most sponsored students, English is not spoken in their homes and is often the second or third language they've learned.

## SECONDARY SCHOOL

Secondary school in Rwanda is broken into two levels. Ordinary Level (O-Level) includes classes Senior 1-Senior 3, and Advanced Level (A-Level) includes classes Senior 4-Senior 6. O-Level is roughly equivalent to middle school, and A-Level is similar to high school. Students take national exams at the end of Senior 3 and Senior 6.

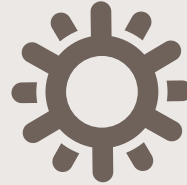
## NATIONAL EXAMS

Students must pass a series of major national exams in order to progress from primary school to secondary school at the end of Primary 6, from secondary O-Level to A-Level at the end of Senior 3, and then pass an additional set of exams to graduate from Senior 6. Students don't learn their final A-Level exam scores for several months after graduation.

## SCHOOLS IN RWANDA



Depending on the school, students in preschool to Primary 3 may attend school half days. All students in Primary 4 and up attend school all day.



The majority of secondary students attend boarding schools and live on campus.

A student's educational journey is based on national exam testing during their final months of Primary 6, Senior 3, and Senior 6.

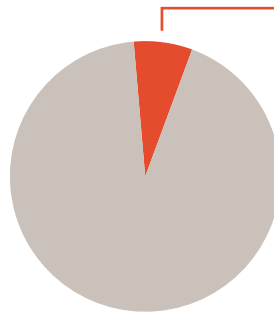
### ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The grading system in Rwanda is different than in the U.S. Students are assessed in each class and then given one grade percentage that averages their performance across all subjects. Average performance is indicated by a score of 50%, while good performance is indicated by scores above 60%. Students are also ranked in comparison to others within their class. They may elect to share their percent average or class rank in letters to their sponsors.

Students must perform well academically to advance to the next grade level at the end of each year. It is common for students to repeat a grade level, especially during their primary school years or when they move to a different school.

### DREAM LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

After completing Senior 6, sponsored students have a "gap" as they wait to learn their national exam results. From August through January, these students attend our Dream Leadership Academy (DLEAD), where they receive weekly training in leadership, entrepreneurship, discipleship, biblical literacy, resume writing, and communication skills. This program is designed to help prepare students for life after secondary school.



**ONLY 7%**  
of youth ages 15-24  
in Rwanda have completed  
or surpassed a secondary  
school education.

### POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Based on their Senior 6 national exam results, students may qualify for either a university or post-secondary vocational program. For more information about post-secondary sponsorship, visit [www.africanewlife.org/postsecondary](http://www.africanewlife.org/postsecondary).

For more information about education in Rwanda, visit [www.africanewlife.org/education](http://www.africanewlife.org/education).

# WRITING TO YOUR SPONSORED STUDENT

Once you receive a first letter from your sponsored student, you are welcome to write up to four times a year, and you'll receive reply letters within 8-12 weeks electronically. Your sponsored student will initiate communication with you once a year in the form of an annual letter. Students are so encouraged when they receive letters from their sponsors!

There are two simple ways to send a letter to your sponsored student:

## 1. WRITE ONLINE

Write a letter to your sponsored student using our Online Letter Writing feature. To use this tool, you will need to log into your Africa New Life account.

Please note: If you sponsor a student, you already have an Africa New Life account. Contact us if you need login assistance.

## 2. MAIL A LETTER

Write a letter to your sponsored student and mail it through the postal system. You will send your letters directly to Rwanda. Please use this exact format when addressing your envelope:

**STUDENT NAME, REFERENCE CODE  
(E.G., IMENA AIME, RBU00661)  
AFRICA NEW LIFE MINISTRIES  
PO BOX 3351  
KIGALI  
RWANDA**

Please use our Africa New Life office address (7405 SW Tech Center Drive, #144, Portland, OR 97223), NOT your home address.

Whichever method above you choose, your letters will be enthusiastically received in Rwanda by your sponsored student! Take a look at the infographic on the next page to better understand the process.

## COMMUNICATION POLICIES

Sponsors and students are not allowed to communicate outside of letter writing through Africa New Life. Social media,

phone, and email communication are strictly prohibited to protect both students and sponsors from inappropriate or confusing situations. Thank you for abiding by our policy. For more information, visit [www.africanewlife.org/communicationpolicy](http://www.africanewlife.org/communicationpolicy).

## Do not send money to your sponsored student.

Africa New Life does not give money directly to your sponsored student's family, nor can we exchange money sent in letters to your sponsored student in Rwanda. This is due to a Rwandan government request and logistical challenges. Donations sent to the U.S. office for a gift for a sponsored student will be designated to items available online that best correspond with the amount given (unless an order form is included). Checks or cash sent in letters to Rwanda will be returned to the sponsor.

## WHAT SHOULD I WRITE?

### DO:

- Talk about your family and daily life. Be sure to include a photo of your family.
- Keep it brief, especially if the student you sponsor is young.
- Ask questions about their life. Encourage them in their studies, character, and faith.

### DON'T:

- Ask about their ethnicity, the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi, or politics.
- Communicate anything which may be construed as a promise (e.g., hope to meet one day, wish they could see the U.S., etc.).
- Share personal contact information or communicate outside of letter writing through Africa New Life.

For more ideas, visit:

[www.africanewlife.org/writingtips](http://www.africanewlife.org/writingtips).

## HOW MUCH IS POSTAGE?

Please visit your local post office for the current international postage rate. Postage will vary due to the weight and size of your envelope.

# HOW DOES A LETTER GET TO AND FROM RWANDA?

**1** Write your sponsored student online, or write a physical letter.



**2** Your letter goes to our staff in Rwanda, either through our database system or by the postal service.



**4** Your letter is hand-delivered to your sponsored student during their monthly Center Day. *(If your letter arrives after the month's Center Day, the letter will be held and delivered the next month.)*



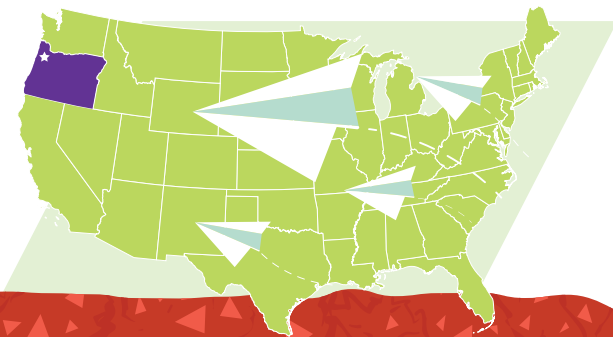
**3** Your letter arrives at our headquarters, and is printed if written online. Then, it travels out weekly to your student's community.



**5** During Center Day, our staff helps your student read your letter and write a response.



**6** Your student's reply is electronically sent to our U.S. office for tracking and review.



**7** Within 10 days, your student's reply is electronically sent to you!



# GIFTS

Sponsorship and prayer already bring hope and joy to students. When students receive gifts through our Online Store, it adds to their understanding that they are thought of and cared for, and provides a good reminder of God's provision in their families' lives! We will remind you about your sponsored student's birthday in case you would like to order a gift.

Our Online Store ([www.africanewlife.org/gifts](http://www.africanewlife.org/gifts)) is the best way to give a gift to the student you sponsor. It is cost effective, the orders are tracked, and delivery is guaranteed. Our Online Store also bolsters the Rwandan economy since all gifts are purchased locally. These items are carefully selected by Rwandan leadership to help meet the needs of students and their families in our program.

Food is always a significant need for families in our program and is our top gift recommendation. If you choose to order a Food & Soap Pack, please do not order any additional food items. Food can spoil before the family has time to eat it all! You can, however, order any combination of the other food items listed. You are welcome to give a Food & Soap Pack twice a year. For more recommendations, visit [www.africanewlife.org/giftideas](http://www.africanewlife.org/giftideas).

Gift distribution typically happens within four weeks from the time the order is placed. We will electronically send a photo of your sponsored student with the gift within 12 weeks. For students who attend boarding schools, gifts may be delivered to their families while they're at school. In this case, the photo would be of the student's relative with their gift. Boarding students may enjoy nonperishable gift items once they return home during their next school break. If you prefer to process a gift order over the phone, please call 503.906.1590 for assistance.

## ONLINE STORE

To order a gift for your sponsored student, follow these easy steps:



Select GIFT FOR STUDENT on the top of the [africanewlife.org](http://africanewlife.org) home page.



Log into your AFRICA NEW LIFE account.



Select the gift(s) you want to order.



Check out.

Some items are not available depending on where a student lives or may have annual quantity restrictions in order to protect sponsored students and their families from becoming dependent on their sponsors.

## HOW DO I KNOW MY GIFT HAS BEEN RECEIVED?

You will receive a photo of your sponsored student within 8-12 weeks electronically after ordering a gift. For gifts ordered during the Christmas season (October 15-December 31), you will receive a photo via email the following spring.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **DO MY SPONSORSHIP DONATIONS GO DIRECTLY TO MY SPONSORED STUDENT AND THEIR FAMILY?**

Your sponsored student directly benefits from your sponsorship. However, we do not directly distribute money to students or their families because there is no guarantee that the money would be spent on the students' education. Instead, your sponsorship donations are placed into a community pool. School fees are paid directly to the school for all sponsored students in our program. From this pool, your sponsored student also receives school uniforms, school supplies, medical assistance, and attends special programs. Sponsored students know their sponsors by name and annually write at least one letter to them.

## **HOW DOES THE STAFF OF AFRICA NEW LIFE IN RWANDA WORK WITH THE U.S. STAFF?**

Africa New Life staff in Rwanda and in the United States have a close working relationship. We communicate regularly and staff from each country visit the other annually. The U.S. office exists to raise funds and generate engagement and enthusiasm by supporting donors and sponsors well, in order to fund and promote the ministries of the staff in Rwanda.

Visit [www.africanewlife.org/staff](http://www.africanewlife.org/staff) to learn more about our team.

## **CAN I VISIT MY SPONSORED STUDENT AND THEIR FAMILY IN RWANDA?**

Yes! Depending on availability, you can join a team trip to Rwanda. Trips cost

approximately \$2,200 plus airfare per person for an eight day, eight night stay in Kigali. Email [trips@africanewlife.org](mailto:trips@africanewlife.org) to express your interest in visiting Rwanda.

## **HOW LONG IS A SPONSORSHIP COMMITMENT?**

We desire for every student in our program to complete secondary school or the vocational equivalent, regardless of age. Students finish the program upon successful completion of Senior 6 (or the vocational equivalent) and our Dream Leadership Academy. We hope you will continue your support for as long as your sponsored student is in the program; however, there is no required time commitment. If your student graduates or leaves the program, we will notify you and connect you with another student in need of support. Sponsorship is an ongoing commitment, but you may cancel at any time by contacting Africa New Life.

## **WHAT IS AFRICA NEW LIFE'S PREFERRED GIVING METHOD FOR SPONSORSHIP DONATIONS?**

Our preferred giving method is through automatic donations from your checking account (EFT/ACH) since it requires the lowest processing costs. Log into your Africa New Life account or contact us if you would like to update your pledge.

For more Frequently Asked Questions, visit [www.africanewlife.org/FAQ](http://www.africanewlife.org/FAQ).

## CONTACT US

[www.africanewlife.org](http://www.africanewlife.org)

7405 SW Tech Center Drive, #144  
Portland, OR 97223

[students@africanewlife.org](mailto:students@africanewlife.org)

503.906.1590 (Pacific Time)

Mon–Thurs: 8:30am to 5:00pm  
Fri: 8:30am to 12:00pm

## FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY



### **ECFA Member**

Africa New Life is accredited by the ECFA, and is committed to financial transparency, integrity in fundraising, and the proper use of charity resources.



### **Candid Participant**

Africa New Life is a platinum-level Candid participant, demonstrating our commitment to transparency.