

# Strategic Plan

## Our Story

At the base of an African basket, you find a simple cross-stitch pattern. A work of art and story evolves from the strategic placement of the first cross-stitch. **Global Give Back Circle started out like an African basket.**

Our cross-stitch was engineered to connect women & girls, mentors, local communities, and private / public sectors. After 20 years of weaving, and allowing innovation to disrupt in a good way, our basket continues to evolve, telling a story of **profound impact and transformation.**

## Our Mindset

We are bold, innovative, intentional and sometimes scrappy in our approach to supporting women and girls to continue their education, find pathways to employment and know their value. We think **process vs. program**, and we focus on holistic outcomes.

We value the importance of **local partners and community ownership**, and the role of private / public sector engagement. We believe giving back is the one privilege we all share – positioning **giving back** at the foundation of our strategy for the past 20 years and placing HER in its center.

## Our Approach



Our strategic approach strikes a balance between maximum impact with sustainability, recognizing there will be rainy days. Our strategic compass is programmed to measure everything and make informed decisions based on data while staying open to the improbable, and to follow our North Star, keeping purpose in its light. In 2025 we shifted into scale up operations through our partnership with Mastercard Foundation. Twenty years of content creation, program refinement and process standardization provides us with a best practice blueprint for successful expansion.

Our solid sustainability track record is achieved through partnership imbalance, whereby our partners believe they are getting much more than they are giving. We manage this through engagement models, like our Mentorship and Giving Circle models, which connect individuals to the needs of the women and girls we support, and engage them in the solution. Sustainability is also achieved through research and the provision of data that influences strategic thinking in health, energy, food, consumer product and financial sectors. We accomplish this through our innovative approach to research – our journalizing model.

## Our five-year strategy is three pronged:

### Mentoring & Scholarships

Supporting high school girls' education through tuition sponsorship and one-to-one mentorship.

### Workforce-Readiness

Providing skills training, work opportunities, and community support for rural young women through HER Lab.

### Financial Inclusion

Connecting unbanked rural women of all ages to savings accounts and loans through the HER Financial Freedom Program.

# Our Programs



## High School Model

Our high school model provides girls at our partner high schools with life skills workshops, a structured one-to-one mentoring program and college/university scholarships. In Kenya we partner with four high schools, and in Rwanda we partner with one. Over the years, we piloted the high school model in India, China and South Africa. For economies of scale, we made the strategic decision to stay focused on Africa moving forward.

In Kenya, our strategic plan is to go narrow and deep, expanding the number of participants at each partner school, and working closely with the schools to seamlessly support girls to graduate college/university. In Rwanda, we will increase the number of partner schools to three over the next five years.



## HER Lab

Our holistic approach for the workforce-readiness needs of young rural women is HER Lab, our economic empowerment incubator. HER Lab has been in operation in West Pokot, Kenya since 2013. Through our partnership with Mastercard Foundation, HER Lab is scaling up to two additional ASAL communities in Kenya over the next two years. HER Lab is a safe learning space for young rural women, embraced by the local communities it supports. In addition to classrooms, dormitories and dining facilities, HER Lab also hosts a community center with convening capabilities.



## Financial Inclusion for Rural Women

Our third program area, Financial Inclusion for Rural Women, evolved as we listened to the voices of all rural women in and around the HER Lab campus, especially those unable to attend HER Lab due to the constraints of household/family duties. We learned that most were unbanked, and in need of financial literacy education. Through a partnership with Suze Orman, the HER Financial Freedom Program was launched in 2024, and over 700 unbanked rural women registered and became members of the HER Financial Freedom Sacco, where they now have savings accounts and access to loans. This successful model will be replicated at a second HER Lab in 2026.



## Women's Cooperatives

Once rural women have the courage to be rich, their next dream is dignified and fulfilling work. Because there are very few jobs in hard-to-reach rural areas, in 2025, we made the strategic decision to support the development of a women's cooperative at HER Lab. The HER Lab Women Farmer's Cooperative will produce chamomile tea for one of Kenya's largest tea companies, while employing hundreds of local women. Through additional value chain studies, the product line will expand. The HER Lab Women's Cooperative model will expand to a second HER Lab in 2026.

