

Zoe Empowers Kenya Update: December 2025

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Zoe Youth Gain Critical Identity Documentation



In Kenya, an identity card (ID) is a vital document that every adult above 18 years must hold. It acts as proof of citizenship, confirming an individual's legal status within a country, and serves as a primary means of identification to facilitate activities such as participating in elections, conducting financial transactions, opening bank accounts, and accessing government services. It is often required when seeking formal employment. Therefore, the lack of an ID has far-reaching implications for an individual's livelihood, standard of living, and civic participation.

The Kenyan National Registration Bureau plays a crucial role in the issuance of IDs. The bureau operates through a network of smaller offices predominantly situated in towns. This decentralized structure aims to facilitate easier access to registration services for the population. However, for those living in rural villages, the cost of traveling to reach the offices and the processing fees can be prohibitive. The youth and children in the Zoe program often face additional challenges of lacking proper supporting documentation like birth certificates, parent's identity cards, and school leaving certificates to prove their identity.

To address these challenges, Zoe Empowers Kenya launched an initiative to facilitate the registration process for both the vulnerable youth in the program and those from the community. By collaborating with the Registrar of Persons Office, Zoe has been able to bring registration services directly to the community for easier and more affordable access.

This Zoe initiative began in October 2025 and involves a multi-stakeholder approach. Officers from the Registrar of Persons are present to oversee and facilitate the registration. The area chiefs play a vital role by issuing letters of proof which serve as provisional evidence for youths who do not possess birth certificates, deceased parents' IDs or death certificates. Local primary school headteachers are also present to provide school leaving certificates which can be used as supporting documentation. This collaboration of community leaders, educational institutions, and government agencies exemplifies a holistic approach to addressing the documentation gap faced by orphaned and vulnerable youth.

Overall, this initiative by Zoe Empowers Kenya is a significant step towards empowering vulnerable youths, ensuring they have access to vital identification documents. It highlights the importance of community-based solutions and multi-sectoral collaboration in tackling social challenges and fostering inclusive development.

Zoe Kenya has set a target goal to register 10,000 young people across the communities where they are implementing programs. This includes many young mothers who are taking advantage of this opportunity to register and obtain birth certificates for their children. As of the beginning of November, 2,750 youths had received their ID cards and 104 infants had gotten birth certificates.

(See end of document for more pictures)

Program Updates

Food Security



Group leaders of the Stars Maburua Group inspect their food bank stores

Due to insufficient rainfall during the last farming season, the overall harvest yield was only fair. Fortunately, for the majority of Zoe families who cultivated crops there was enough for their household consumption, with a small number of them generating surplus produce to sell. Guided by Zoe, youth are exploring strategic ways to handle the recent challenges of uncertain weather conditions which lead to low crop yields. In addition to planting all weather grains and drought resistance crops, eight groups established food clubs/banks. Members of these groups pool their surplus harvests and buy additional produce from community farmers when prices are low and store it for future consumption or to sell when prices increase. For example, the third-year group, Youngstars

Lukununu sold 20 bags of maize, each weighing 90 kilograms, from their food bank to a local secondary school. With the proceeds they were able to purchase dairy goats for all group members



The Youngstars Lukununu members with the goats they purchased using food bank sales

Trainings



Youth attending training on child rights

Child rights: During June, advanced training was provided on gender-based violence so the young people would be able to recognize and respond to issues related to gender equality and sexual violence. The training was conducted by the children's officers and court clerks.

Agriculture: Second-year Zoe participants were trained on large scale poultry farming and disease control, while those in their third year were trained on growing bananas as a crop. The trainings were led by the government's agriculture extension officers based in the community.

Health and hygiene: In July, youths in their second and third years received training and sensitization on the "triple threat" of teen pregnancy, gender-based violence, and new HIV infections and prevalence. This training was not exclusively limited to Zoe participants; it included other teens and youth in the community, thereby

broadening the impact and fostering community-wide understanding. In August, the Zoe youth were sensitized on the relationship between drug and substance use and mental health problems. They learned about the need for prevention and early intervention, and were connected with medical personnel who specialize in handling interconnected issues that affect mental health.

Income generation: In September, youth in their third year received comprehensive training on how to enhance their business skills through leveraging various media platforms. They also learned about the importance of establishing financial linkages and building networks. The program was facilitated by officers from local financial institutions. In the same month, second year participants had advanced financial literacy training and were helped to form linkages to institutional banks.

Graduation!



August 2025, the Zoe youth from groups formed in July 2022 celebrated their graduation with a ceremony marked by the presence of first-year Zoe participants and prominent government officials and religious leaders. These dignitaries acknowledged the achievements of the youth and encouraged the graduates to serve as role models and mentors for other young people within the community. They also praised the Zoe program for its impactful and positive contributions to the community, especially how the program has facilitated personal growth, skill development, and social cohesion among the youth.

International Day of the African Child celebrated by Zoe participants in June



Zoe Empowers Kenya's Identity Documentation Initiative



Above, large crowds, including community members, attending ID registration event



Left, women seeking birth certificates for their infants

Below, area chief providing letters of proof for identity documentation and a youth who has disabilities being fingerprinted for identity.



