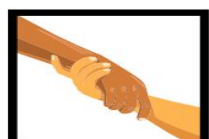


Through My Eyes



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MY EYES**
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The Care Economy
Knowledge Hub

the-care-economy-knowledge-hub.org

Profiling Businesses in the Care Economy

The care economy consists of paid and unpaid labor and services that support caregiving in all its forms. In Africa, Asia and Latin America, women spend between three to five times as many hours on unpaid care and domestic work as men. This represents 80 percent of a household's total hours devoted to unpaid care work.

Care economy businesses can help recognize, redistribute, reduce and reward – also known as the 4 Rs – unpaid and paid care and domestic work in the following ways:



Recognize: Initiatives that increase visibility and recognition of paid and unpaid care and domestic activity as "productive" work that creates real value and contributes to economies and societies.



Redistribute: Services and initiatives that redistribute care work from individuals to public and private sector entities, and redistribute care and domestic work within the household.



Reduce: Products and initiatives that reduce the time spent on and burden of unpaid care and domestic work.



Reward: Products, services and initiatives that ensure that care and domestic workers are paid fairly and have professional growth potential. This provides them with financial reward and security.

The Care Economy Knowledge Hub aims to address the knowledge gap around care businesses by showcasing various business models and creating a resource base for relevant stakeholders. It also aims to raise awareness and increase knowledge of the state of impact-driven care economy business models and attract a broad range of funders to invest in care economy solutions by showcasing opportunities. These business profiles are intended to showcase said potential investment opportunities. They have been created from information and data provided by the business itself.

This project is supported by Canada's International Development Research Center, in partnership with the Soros Economic Development Fund at the Open Society Foundations. Building on their track record and commitment to transforming the care economy and mobilizing finance for gender equality, they have jointly launched this action research program to help transform the care economy through impact business and investment.

Executive Summary

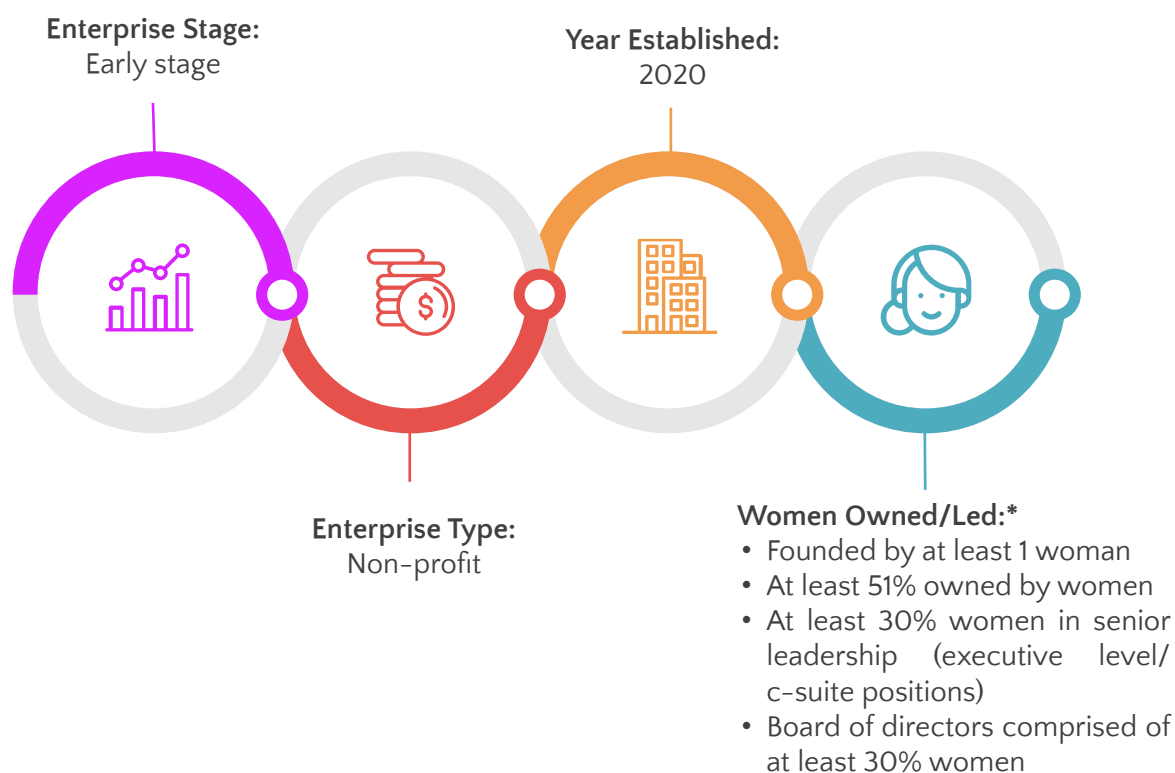


Reduce



Redistribute

Through My Eyes (TME) is a Kenyan social enterprise that provides care services to children and young adults with autism, cerebral palsy, and down syndrome. TME trains caregivers and parents on proper caregiving of children with disabilities. TME also offers homecare services, including therapy. Caregiver and parent trainings are conducted according to the diagnosis and the resulting specific needs of the recipient. Since its inception in 2020, TME has served 38 households of children with disabilities. In 2021, TME's revenue was US\$ 8,200. Currently, TME has 3 full-time employees.



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*According to 2X "women entrepreneurship" and "women leadership" criteria; [2X Challenge Criteria](#)

1. About The Enterprise

1.1 Problem

In 2021, there were 28.9 million children (aged 0-17) with disabilities¹ in Eastern and Southern Africa.² In Kenya, approximately 2.5 million children have disabilities,³ which is equivalent to 11.4% of the total child population.⁴ An estimated 4.8% of all children in Kenya (aged 21 and below) have cerebral palsy, down syndrome, or autism.⁵

Compared to children without disabilities, children with disabilities are 25% less likely to receive early stimulation and responsive care. Further, they are 49% more likely to have never attended school, 32% more likely to experience severe physical punishment at home, and 51% more likely to consider themselves unhappy.⁶

Lack of infrastructure, knowledge, support services, and stigmatization are key drivers depriving children with disabilities of their rights to live and thrive. Laws in Kenya mandate that persons with disabilities are entitled to access education and that facilities must be barrier-free and disability friendly. However, this hasn't been achieved.

It is estimated that only 1 in 6 children with disabilities in Kenya attend school.⁷ In 2016, about 45,000 students from pre-kindergarten to high school were in special schools, and over 100,000 were out of school entirely.⁸ Children with disabilities are more likely to drop out of school due to lack of attention, inappropriate curricula, insufficiently trained teachers, and poorly equipped schools.⁹

¹ Disability is defined here as per the framework of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). According to the ICF, disability can occur as: (a) An impairment in body function or structure (for example, a cataract or opacity of the natural lens of the eye, which prevents the passage of rays of light and impairs or destroys sight); (b) A limitation in activity (for example, low vision or inability to see, read or engage in other activities); or, (c) A restriction in participation (for example, exclusion from school or participation in other social, recreational or other events or roles)

² United Nations Children's Fund. (2022). *Seen, counted, included: Using data to shed light on the well-being of children with disabilities*. <https://data.unicef.org/resources/children-with-disabilities-report-2021/>

³ In Kenya, the National Special Needs Education Policy Framework (2009) outlines twenty two categories of disabilities and special needs. These include children who have hearing impairments, visual impairments, physical impairments, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, mental handicaps, down syndrome, autism, emotional and behavioural disorders, learning disability, speech and language disorders, multiple handicaps, albinism, other health impairments, gifted and talented, deaf-blind, orphaned, abused, living in the streets, heading households, nomadic/ pastoral communities, and internally displaced.

⁴ Ministry of Education. (2018). *National survey on children with disabilities and special needs in education*. <https://www.kise.ac.ke/system/files/2020-07/Official%20Research%20Report%20on%20Disability%20Published%20by%20KISE%20%282018%29.pdf>

⁵ VSO Jitolee. (2016). *Kenya National Special Needs Education Survey Report*. Prepared for the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology. https://www.vsointernational.org/sites/default/files/SNE%20Report_Full%20-2.pdf

⁶ United Nations Children's Fund. (2022). *Seen, counted, included: Using data to shed light on the well-being of children with disabilities*. <https://data.unicef.org/resources/children-with-disabilities-report-2021/>

⁷ Ressa, T. (2021). (Mis) schooling of Children with Disabilities in Post-Independent Kenya. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 17(2), 124-138. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EI1293338.pdf>

⁸ Ressa, T. (2021). (Mis) schooling of Children with Disabilities in Post-Independent Kenya. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 17(2), 124-138. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EI1293338.pdf>

⁹ Ressa, T. (2021). (Mis) schooling of Children with Disabilities in Post-Independent Kenya. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 17(2), 124-138. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EI1293338.pdf>

In mainstream schools, only 1% of special education teachers are certified to teach different disability categories.¹⁰ For example, out of the 1,135 special needs teachers in Kenya, only 0.9% are specialized in working with children with down syndrome and 1.3% in children with cerebral palsy.¹¹

Parents are deterred from sending children to school due to the lack of assistive technologies, facilities, equipment, and transportation options.¹² Further, many families do not send children to school due to a fear of bullying, abuse, and ridicule. Disabilities are highly stigmatised in Kenya and there are incidents of men abandoning their family following the birth of a child with a disability due to this stigma.¹³ In some instances, children with disabilities are hidden away.¹⁴

Often, parents do not have enough information about caring for children with disabilities.¹⁵ Looking after children with disabilities is demanding on caregivers, and the role is disproportionately undertaken by women. A study in Kenya indicates that 91% of unpaid caregivers for people with disabilities are mothers and that most must quit their jobs in order to provide that care.¹⁶

1.2 Solution

Through My Eyes trains and certifies caregivers and provides home services to children with disabilities.

- **Caregiver training and certification:** TME has partnered with special education and mental health professionals in order to train individuals to become professional caregivers. TME's curricula on cerebral palsy, down syndrome, and autism is fully developed and in the process of accreditation by the government. TME has already held external training on cerebral palsy and will initiate new training on autism and down syndrome in April 2023.

¹⁰ Ressa, T. (2021). (Mis) schooling of Children with Disabilities in Post-Independent Kenya. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 17(2), 124-138. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EI1293338.pdf>

¹¹ VSO Jitolee. (2016). Kenya National Special Needs Education Survey Report. Prepared for the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology. https://www.vsointernational.org/sites/default/files/SNE%20Report_Full%20-2.pdf

¹² Ressa, T. (2021). (Mis) schooling of Children with Disabilities in Post-Independent Kenya. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 17(2), 124-138. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EI1293338.pdf>

¹³ The Aga Khan University. (2020). Kenya must prioritize persons with disabilities. https://www.aku.edu/news/Pages/News_Details.aspx?nid=NEWS-002339

¹⁴ The Aga Khan University. (2020). Kenya must prioritize persons with disabilities. https://www.aku.edu/news/Pages/News_Details.aspx?nid=NEWS-002339

¹⁵ Burning, K. Karisa, J. G. Newton, C. R. Hartley, S. (2022, March). Empowering caregivers of children with learning and development disabilities: from situation analysis to community-based inclusive development in Kilifi Kenya. *Tizard Learning Disability Review*, Vol. 27 No. 1, pp. 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TLDR-08-2021-0023>

¹⁶ Kirui, D. (2018, Feb 21). In Kenya having a Child with Cerebral Palsy can mean losing your Job. *The New Humanitarian*. <https://deeply.thenewhumanitarian.org/womensadvancement/articles/2018/02/21/in-kenya-having-a-child-with-cerebral-palsy-can-mean-losing-your-job>

TME caregivers are trained for 2 weeks and go through a 2-month probationary period, during which they are supported by TME's staff. After their probation is complete, TME issues internal certificates to the caregivers. In addition, TME facilitates linkages to households that require a caregiver for children with disabilities.

TME also trains parents on how to provide care to children with disabilities. This is a shorter course and customized to parents' needs. The training is designed according to diagnosis and the needs of the children, as shared by parents.

- **Homecare services:** TME provides homecare services for children with disabilities. TME caregivers undertake home visits and provide therapy to enhance children's communication, social, and fine-motor skills. Services are curated to suit the needs of the children.

1.3 Customer Segment

Customer Segment	Product / Service Provided	Paid / Unpaid
Middle-income households that require care for children with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homecare services Households receive weekly services from trained caregivers. The therapy sessions are held for 2-4 hours per day. • Parental training Parents are trained on occupational, physical, and play therapy. TME caregivers go to homes and give these practical trainings to parents. 	Paid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households pay US\$ 8-US\$ 25 per session to TME. On average, a household has 2 sessions per week. • Parents pay US\$ 50 to be trained in their homes.
Caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and certification TME offers 2-week training sessions to caregivers on occupational, physical, and play therapy. The entity then links the certified caregivers with households, schools, or therapy centres. 	Unpaid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers are trained by Through My Eyes at a cost of US\$ 100 per person. TME has received sponsorship to conduct this training and is currently able to provide it free of charge to caregivers.

1.4 Team And Governance Structure

Through My Eyes has 3 full-time employees (including the founder), 2 of whom are women. All the employees are caregivers. The TME management board consists of 4 people, 3 women and 1 man.

1.5 Enterprise Policies

Policy	Yes / No
Overall HR Policy	Yes
Equal pay for equivalent work policy	Yes
Non-discrimination / Equal employment opportunity / Diversity and inclusion policy (gender, LGBTQ, PWD, etc.)	Yes
Anti bullying and sexual harassment policy / Respectful workplaces	Yes
Whistleblower policy / Employee grievance mechanism	No
Maternity / Paternity leave policy	Yes
Safeguarding policies for vulnerable groups (children, elderly, PWDs)	Yes
Safeguarding policies for the environment or to reduce detrimental impact on the environment (covers reducing carbon footprint, reduced water consumption etc.)	No

2. Impact

2.1 Mission Statement

Through My Eyes' mission is to provide caregivers with the right skills, tools, and mindset, so that they can support children with disabilities.

2.2 Intended Impact

Through My Eyes' model impacts 2 of the 4 R's:

- TME **reduces** the time women and girls spend caring for children with disabilities, by providing affordable home-based caregivers, who spend 2–4 hours per day, for 2–3 days a week with the children in their care.
- TME work has led to the **redistribution** of care work from parents to caregivers who conduct therapy sessions with children.

2.3 Monitoring And Measurement

Through My Eyes keeps track of the following indicators:

- The number of people (caregivers, parents) trained in caregiving
- The number of children and young adults cared for
- Key developments and observations about the child. For example, a child's ability to overcome their anxiety about a particular activity; or, improvement in a child's motor skills, enabling them to eat on their own
- The number of beneficiaries, including caregivers, parents, children, and young adults with disabilities

TME conducts monthly and quarterly evaluations with both parents and caregivers. Parents are encouraged to keep a journal to record key developments, incidents, or feelings expressed by the children. Caregivers also maintain a record for each child. These records are used to monitor the child's progress and prepare an action plan for continued engagement.

2.4 Results To Date

- Number of people (caregivers, parents) trained in cerebral palsy: 25 trained (15 caregivers and 10 parents)
- Number of caregivers linked to employment opportunities: 10 placed in homes
- The current number of homecare services: 15
- Number of households served: 38
- Number of beneficiaries: 98 (caregivers and volunteers trained and households served)

Through My Eyes' work is aligned with the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



3. Financials

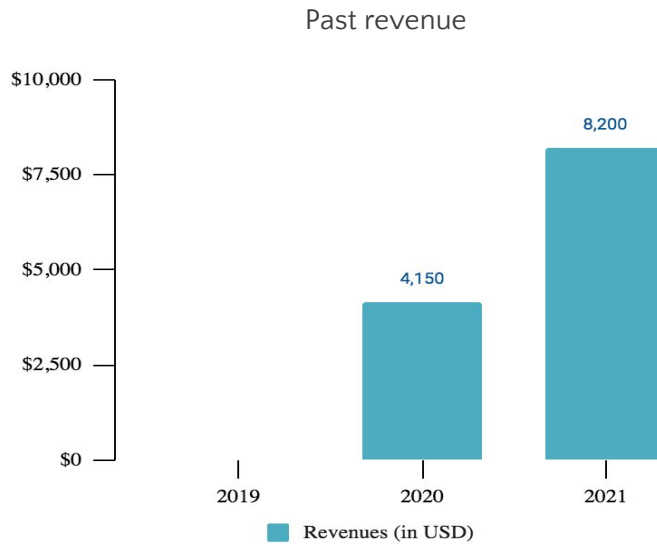
3.1 Financial Status

Through My Eyes is a non-profit and is currently sustainable through grants and donations. It introduced revenue models in November 2022 and intends to increase revenue through sales in the coming years.

(Amounts in US\$)	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021
Total Revenue	N/A	4,150	8,200
Total Expenses	N/A	1,000	6,775

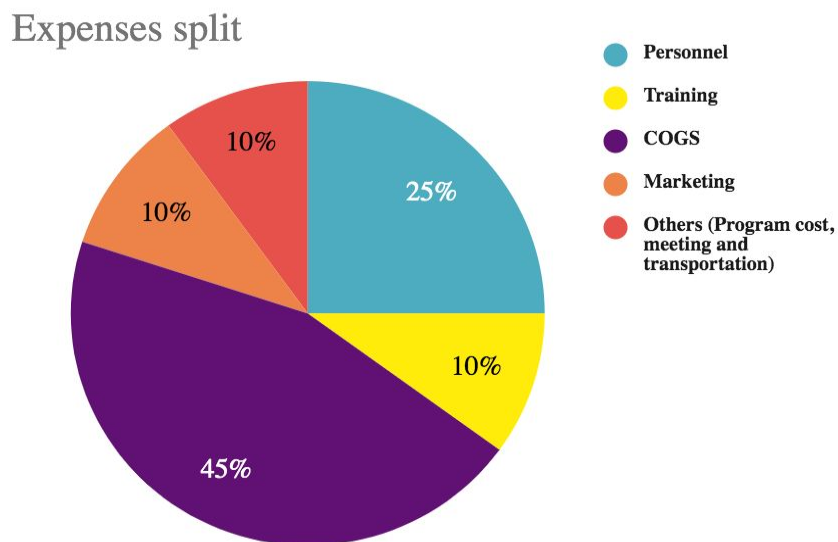
3.1.1 Revenue Streams

95% of Through My Eyes' revenue is from grants. The remaining 5% is from care services, including caregiving training and homecare services. It has received sponsorship to train caregivers.



3.1.2 Expenses

The following pie chart provides details of the key areas of past expenditure for Through My Eyes in the year 2022.



3.2 External Funding Sources (Past and Current)

- In 2020, Through My Eyes received a grant of US\$ 1,000 from the Africa YES Program. This was used to train 25 individuals.
- In 2021 the founder was named one of the Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurs. TME received US\$ 5,000. This was used to launch a physical care center in the urban slums of Kariobangi.
- In 2021 the founder won Kenya Woman Entrepreneur of the Year. A grant of US\$ 3,000 was used to upgrade the care center.
- In 2022, Through My Eyes was announced as the winner of the Global Philanthropy Alliance (GPA). A US\$ 5,000 grant is expected to be disbursed in 2023.

3.3 Challenges Faced In Accessing Capital

Accessibility: TME faces challenges in accessing finance, as it is difficult to show the impact of the work. Often, funders want to see photographs and videos of TME's work. However, TME's internal safeguarding guidelines do not allow photographs of children to be taken.

4. Path To Scalability

4.1 Potential Avenues For Growth

TME has identified the following avenues for growth:

- **Caregiver training and livelihood opportunities:** In the next 4 years, TME aims to train 400 caregivers and increase the number of trainees within existing courses. Currently, TME is training caregivers on cerebral palsy, down syndrome, and autism. In the long run, it will train caregivers on other needs of children with disabilities. TME expects that gaining government accreditation for its training course will help increase the number of trainees enrolled. TME has begun networking with government officials, who have already visited and observed the training processes. It will take 12 months to receive the accreditation.
- **Linking caregivers to service seekers (parents, schools, and therapy centers):** TME intends to set up a website where parents, schools, and therapy centers can connect to find caregivers. Clients will check the profiles of caregivers and select their preferred provider. TME will also continually verify the skills of caregivers. TME will then facilitate the discussion between caregivers and potential clients. Payment will be managed through the portal.

- **Service expansion:** In a year, TME plans to set up an inclusive, disability friendly meet-and-play center where children with disabilities, parents, and other children can meet and play (for a fee).

4.2 Risks And Challenges

- **Financing challenges:** TME used to run a daycare center for children with disabilities in Kariobangi, an urban community in Nairobi. However, the center had to be closed, as it was difficult for TME to generate revenue from their target population (low-income communities). Customers reported that TME should provide the services free of cost, as it was a 'noble service' and therefore shouldn't be monetized.
- **Operational challenges:** TME faced difficulties in identifying disability-friendly buildings in which to open care centers. As a result, TME had to use funds to create appropriate infrastructure, including ramps.
- **Operational challenges (health):** TME has to restrict homecare services to 2-3 sessions a week, as children with disabilities often suffer from low immunity and cannot attend sessions due to ill health.
- **Social norms:** There is stigmatization and lack of acceptance among customers that their children have disabilities. Further, some parents do not want their children with disabilities to be seen outside. This affects TME's therapy planning.

4.3 COVID-19 Impact On The Enterprise

During the lockdown, children could not come to the center, reducing the revenue. Therefore, Through My Eyes was forced to shut down its center in Kariobangi, Nairobi. As the community was low-income, TME mobilized a grant of US\$ 1,000 from the Africa Yoga Project. The funds were used to provide 400 packages consisting of essential items (such as food, diapers, and medications) to families of children with disabilities.

4.4 Support Received To Date

- TME has received support from a hospital in developing a curriculum, particularly on first aid and counseling. The trainers advised TME on guidelines to work with children with cerebral palsy, as well as first aid measures for choking while eating.
- Through My Eyes at times receives volunteers, who accompany and support professional caregivers while conducting therapy sessions.



4.5 Inputs Required For Growth

Financial

- Through My Eyes is looking to raise US\$ 150,000 in grants. Grant funds will be used to build a play center for children with disabilities, train 300 parents and caregivers, as well as to hire new team members for TME.

Non-Financial

- Through My Eyes requires mentorship for enterprise development, especially on varying business models and raising revenue.
- Through My Eyes seeks support to develop a website where it can connect caregivers to households, schools, and therapy centers.