



AFRICA NEW LIFE SPONSORSHIP FAQ'S

Are you financially accountable?

Yes, Africa New Life Ministries International is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Across all of our ministries, an average of 85.4% of our expenditures fund the ongoing programs that benefit children, families, and communities in Rwanda. In 2010, Africa New Life became a proud member of [ECFA](#), the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, which accredits organizations based on financial factors including financial oversight, compliance with laws, transparency, gift communication, and more.

What does my sponsored student receive through my sponsorship?

Your sponsorship is changing the life of a student in Rwanda. Because of your support, the student you sponsor will receive an education, school uniform and materials, and medical assistance. In addition, students in our program attend monthly Center Days where they enjoy a meal, play games, hear the Gospel, and write letters to their sponsors. Sponsored students also attend a Christian camp in their region each year. To learn more about our sponsorship program, please visit www.africanewlife.org/promises.

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. From this pool, your sponsored student also receives a school uniform, school supplies, and medical assistance, and attends special programs. Sponsored students know their sponsors by name and annually write at least one letter to them.

Is my sponsored student real, or just representative of a student in need?

You are sponsoring a real student, and they appreciate your sponsorship of their education. Sponsors are invited and encouraged to visit their sponsored students and their families in Rwanda through a team trip with Africa New Life (see "Can I visit my sponsored student in Rwanda?" below).

What is Africa New Life's sponsorship model?

Our core sponsorship model is one sponsor per child for students in pre-school through Senior 3 (9th grade). We have a co-sponsorship model for students in Senior 4 through our Dream Leadership Academy due to higher secondary education costs. This additional support enables students to finish their education well. Learn more about co-sponsorship at www.africanewlife.org/secondary-faq.

Can I correspond with my sponsored student?

We absolutely encourage you to write to your sponsored student! Sponsored students write letters at Center Days, which take place once a month in each community. You can expect to receive an annual letter from your sponsored student at the end of every summer. You are welcome to write up to four times a year, and you will receive reply letters within 8-12 weeks by postal mail. For guidance in communicating with your sponsored student, please review our writing tips at www.africanewlife.org/writingtips.

When will my sponsored student write letters?

Sponsored students write letters at Center Days, which take place once a month in each community. You can expect to receive an annual letter from your sponsored student at the end of every summer. If you write to your sponsored student more, you will hear from them more often. You are welcome to write up to four times a year, and you will receive reply letters within 8-12 weeks by email. For guidance in communicating with your sponsored student, please review our writing tips at www.africanewlife.org/writingtips.

Which name is my sponsored student's first name?

Names in Rwanda are a bit different than in the U.S. While we typically share a last name with our family, Rwandans traditionally do not. The first name listed is typically a Kinyarwanda name and the second or third name listed is typically an Anglo or Francophone name.

Names are also more fluid in Rwanda, so students may answer to either name depending on the situation. You'll often hear us refer to students using the second or third name listed since it is typically easier for English-speakers to pronounce. Next time you write a letter to your sponsored student, you're welcome to ask by which name they prefer for you to address them.

How do I find out the answer to a specific question about my sponsored student?

We encourage you to write letters to your sponsored student and ask direct questions. For guidance in communicating with your sponsored student, please review our writing tips at www.africanewlife.org/writingtips.

We are not able to provide information on your sponsored student's clothing size, specific needs, or information about their family. Additional information regarding your student's family will be found in the first letter they send you, and we encourage you to ask follow-up questions about their family in your reply letter(s).

Can I connect with my sponsored student via email or social media?

Students are not allowed to communicate with their sponsors outside of letter writing through Africa New Life. Social media, phone, and email communication are strictly prohibited to protect both students and sponsors. Do not connect with your sponsored student or their relatives through phone, email, or social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc. This helps us protect both sponsors and students from inappropriate or confusing situations.

Students sign an agreement upon registration and can be removed from our program for violating this policy. Please read our communication policy for more guidance at www.africanewlife.org/communicationpolicy.

How much does it cost to mail a letter to Rwanda?

That depends on its size and weight. You can check online using the [USPS Postal Price Calculator](#) or by visiting your local post office. You can also use a [Global Forever® stamp](#) to mail postcards or 1 oz letters, but you'll need to ensure that your letter doesn't exceed the maximum length, height, or thickness.

How long does it take for my letter to reach Rwanda?

Once your letter is received in Rwanda, you can expect a response letter in 8-12 weeks. Letters written online are printed once a week. Letters mailed through the postal system may take up to eight weeks to reach Rwanda.

From the time I place a gift order, how long is it until my sponsored student receives it?

It takes approximately a month to deliver Online Store gifts to sponsored students. Gifts for boarding students may take longer to deliver since these students receive gifts when they are home on school breaks.

How do I know which gifts to order for my sponsored student? The items available through the Online Store are carefully selected by our colleagues in Rwanda to help meet the needs of students in our program. Refer to our gift ideas page at www.africanewlife.org/gift-ideas for our top recommendations. For more specific information, we encourage you to ask your sponsored student about their needs in a letter. Visit our online store at www.africanewlife.org/gifts and log in to place a gift order.

Is there a limit to the amount of food I can order for my sponsored student's family?

Yes. During non-pandemic times, sponsors may give the “food for a month” gift only twice per year per sponsored student. Our goal is to help Rwandan families without hurting. In other words, Africa New Life wants to protect parental dignity and avoid creating dependency. We are grateful when sponsors come alongside families in Rwanda with a gift of food, but we do not want families to become dependent on those gifts.

Can I visit my sponsored student in Rwanda?

Yes. Depending on availability you can join one of the many team trips to Rwanda throughout the year. Trips to Rwanda cost approximately \$1,750 plus airfare per person for an 8-day, 8-night stay with Africa New Life. Email missions@africanewlife.org to express your interest in going to Rwanda. Visit our Team Trip page at www.africanewlife.org/visit-rwanda.

When is the school year in Rwanda?

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 between terms. Visit www.africanewlife.org/education to learn more about education in Rwanda.

When does my sponsored student age out of the program?

We desire for every student in our program to complete secondary school regardless of their age. Students finish the program upon successful completion of Senior 6, or the vocational equivalent, and our Dream Leadership Academy.

When will my sponsored student complete school?

Students in Rwanda must pass each grade level before being promoted. In Rwanda, there are six levels in primary school: Primary 1–Primary 6. At the end of Primary 6, students take national exams to test out of primary school. Students who pass the Primary 6 national exams are promoted to secondary school.

There are six levels in secondary school: Senior 1–Senior 6. Students will take national exams again at the end of Senior 3 to test into Senior 4. At the end of Senior 6, students will take their final national exams and will graduate from secondary school if they pass. If they do not pass their exams, they are encouraged to repeat Senior 6. The Senior 6 national exam results also determine students’ eligibility for post-secondary education.

Upon secondary school completion, students attend our Dream Leadership Academy during the gap time between secondary school and students’ next steps. This program provides students with valuable discipleship and entrepreneurship training after the completion of their secondary schooling. Learn more about the education system in Rwanda at www.africanewlife.org/education.

Can I sponsor the siblings of my sponsored student?

Our policy is to sponsor one student per family in order to spread the gift of education further throughout the communities in which we operate, to protect parental dignity, and to avoid creating dependency. Exceptions to our policy are rare and our Rwandan colleagues are the ones who initiate, advocate for, and approve these exceptions.

We do encourage you to ask your sponsored student about their family and pray for them. In Rwandan culture, especially for families experiencing material poverty, people are much more open to sharing their possessions than we tend to be in the U.S. Keep in mind that gifts sent to your sponsored student will inevitably be shared with their siblings, cousins, or neighbors.

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 routinely. The U.S. office exists to raise funds and generate engagement and enthusiasm by supporting donors and sponsors well in the United States, in order to fund and promote the ministries of the staff in Rwanda.