



**INTERNATIONAL  
SAMARITAN**

2025

# ANNUAL IMPACT

*Report*

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[intsam.org](http://intsam.org)



## *We envision*

a time when the garbage dumps of developing countries are no longer homes to human beings struggling to survive.

## *Our mission*

Since 1994, International Samaritan has been connecting Samaritans like you, who have a calling to help, to families in garbage dump communities around the world. Together, we're breaking the chains of poverty and improving all our lives.



## WHERE WE SERVE

Guatemala



Nicaragua



Honduras



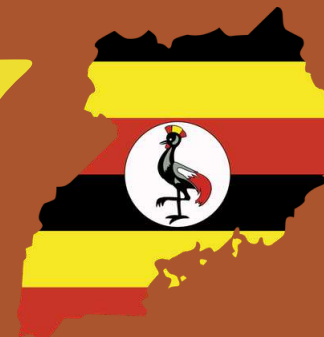
Jamaica



Ethiopia



Uganda



Kenya



# Note from the President

You may recall that in our annual report last year, I shared with you that we came up more than \$500,000 short in 2024. Nothing like that had ever happened before in our 31-year history, and we couldn't let it happen again. To avoid a repeat, we had to cut our expenses down to the very barest minimum, and then we asked friends like you for help. We had no control over what would happen next.

And here's the good news: **Something extraordinary** kept happening last year: people kept making unexpected gifts, and our scholars kept achieving unexpected results. There is no bad news. It was a profound and beautiful experience to see how the young people and families at the heart of our mission, as well as the people who support them, continued to give and to live in extraordinary ways.

I have the unique privilege to witness these events. People I consider good friends across the United States give to people I consider good friends in the communities we serve in Central America, Jamaica, and East Africa, knowing that they may never meet each other on this earth. What a joyful day it will be when you get to meet in heaven one day and see the stories you were a part of.

I thank God for the glimpse of heaven we experience through our work together, and the glimpse of heaven you make possible for families leaving the dumpsite for good because of your support.

**Michael F. Tenbusch, President**





**THE MAJORITY OF CHILDREN WHO LIVE IN DEVELOPING NATIONS NEXT TO CITY GARBAGE DUMPS WILL DROP OUT OF SCHOOL BEFORE THEY REACH 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE.**

This is not an acceptable reality. We believe children with the desire to learn should have the opportunity to do so.

Our scholars are students like  
*Mulualem . . .*

**Before:**

“I wasn’t born into opportunity. I was born into the refuse—the discarded things others forget. The dump is where I spend most of my waking hours. It’s the only place I’ve known. I didn’t choose this life; it chose me.”

**After taking cooking classes as a Samaritan scholar:**

“I no longer spend my days sifting through trash, hoping to find something of value. Today, I work in a kitchen at a respected International school. I wear a clean uniform, my head held high, knowing I’ve earned my place here.”



*See Mulu’s story: [intsam.org/born-into-refuse](https://intsam.org/born-into-refuse)*

→ **926** SAMARITAN  
SCHOLARS



## Exceptional Graduates

These graduates are young adults like

*José Gilson ...*

Not only does José have a steady job, he gives back to his community. In the fall of 2025, he volunteered his time and talents to install air conditioning in the San Pedro Sula daycare center.

He worked with students from Colorado's Regis High School who were in Honduras as part of their Learn, Serve, Grow service-learning experience.

Read the story: [intsam.org/grace-of-god](https://intsam.org/grace-of-god)

"By the grace of God, I am one of those young people who was able to leave the dump. You truly change lives, because mine and my family's have changed significantly."

- José Gilson, San Pedro Sula, Honduras graduate with technical degrees in electrical and refrigeration



**101**

**SCHOLARS  
GRADUATED  
IN 2025**

Scholars and graduates are making a difference in their communities, becoming *Samaritans for Life.*

In late 2025, a group of scholars in Ethiopia decided to be a blessing to the elderly and others forgotten by society. Their energy and generosity were contagious! More scholars and Samaritan alumni joined in to raise funds to help. They named this initiative the New Samaritan Movement.

“Life is not measured by where we stand, but by how we share what we have been given,” said Feven, an intern and Samaritan alumna who is part of the New Samaritan Movement. “In the presence of deep suffering and extraordinary kindness, we find the humility to both question God and give Him thanks.”

See the story: [intsam.org/giving-blessings](https://intsam.org/giving-blessings)



The lives of parents are  
*changing too.*

In the communities we serve, hardworking mothers are receiving business training and finding creative ways to support their families.



Yenny used to work at the landfill in Nicaragua, but now she sells handmade jewelry from recycled paper. She also makes personalized piñatas, repairs clothes, and sells nacatamales to support her family.  
[intsam.org/unstoppable-moms](https://intsam.org/unstoppable-moms)



Kendy used to dig through trash for recyclables and even food to eat. After completing a business training program in partnership with Mentors International, she cooks and has started a small business selling food in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.  
[intsam.org/finding-her-path](https://intsam.org/finding-her-path)



After a savings-and-loan program, Alice has gone from collecting garbage to purchasing what others have collected. Now she can be an even stronger advocate for children at the dumpsite in Kenya:  
[intsam.org/mother-at-the-dump](https://intsam.org/mother-at-the-dump)

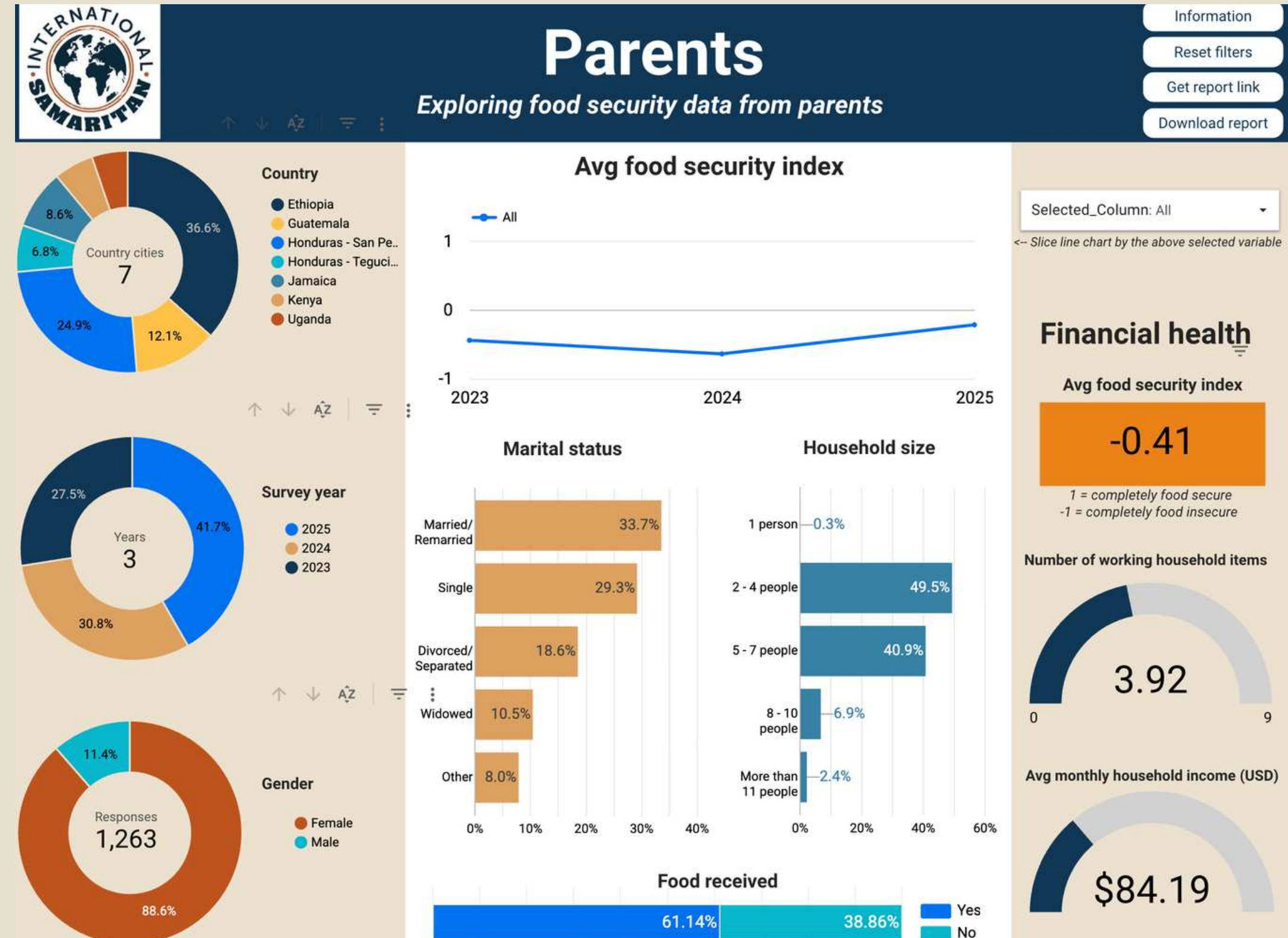
# Getting Wiser

One of our four goals for 2025 was to level up our use of data.

We now have dashboards to analyze results in retention rates, food security, and personal development while easily diving into differences by age, gender, community, or year to help us make wiser investment decisions. Here are just two of the highlights from that analysis:

- Graduates demonstrate improved food security, showing **43% less food insecurity** than parents of current scholars.
- Our “**success rate**” of scholars who are either still in the program, have graduated with a skill or degree, or have otherwise secured gainful employment **moved from 75% to 85% in 2025** (due primarily to the success of our expansion into Kenya and Uganda).

In the years ahead, we will grow from understanding why things happened to making more good things happen with your support.



# Learn, Serve, Grow

Our Learn, Serve, Grow partnership framework focuses on the unique strengths that people have to share with each other. For example, students from Regis High School in Denver practice Spanish during virtual classes with our Samaritan scholars in Honduras, who are learning English.

This model has worked so well that our Samaritan Scholars in Jamaica began doing the same with our Samaritan scholars in Guatemala.

Together, these partnerships exemplify the power of our mission.



→ **50** **SAMARITAN SCHOLARSHIPS**  
*made possible by our Learn, Serve, Grow partners*



# What it costs for a SAMARITAN SCHOLARSHIP



● **46%**

## Academic Costs

- school tuition
- tutoring
- uniforms and shoes
- school supplies
- transportation
- exam costs

● **7%**

## Food, Health & Wellness

- emergency rent and medical needs
- mental health and food support

● **11%**

## Student Enrichment

- spiritual formation
- leadership development
- family workshops

● **36%**

## Local Teams

- the amazing people leading the mission in each community

*An average of \$3,191 per scholarship in 2025.*

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

*Only international expenses are shown, thanks to the Samaritan Promise.*

## INCOME

Grants for 2025	\$1,665,5915
Individuals	\$1,932,642
Scholarship Endowment	\$86,694
Executive Committee Allocations	\$189,000
Learn, Serve, Grow Contributions	\$189,777
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,064,028</b>

## EXPENSES

Academic Costs	\$1,295,462
Student Enrichment	\$159,879
Food, Health, Wellness	\$204,259
Local Teams in 8 locations	\$1,067,446
Support Directly to Schools	\$122,810
Family Life Center Operations	\$133,758
Learn, Serve, Grow program	\$158,104
Capital Improvements	\$416,069
Enhancement & Evaluation	\$67,729
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,625,516</b>

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**Net** **\$438,512**

*The Samaritan Promise: 100% of all donations go directly to programs and people in the countries we serve. This is possible thanks to the generosity of our founding families and board members who have covered all costs incurred in the United States since 2019.*

# *Remembering People We Loved*

**We lost three good friends and beautiful people over the past year in tragic ways.**

In May 2025, **Yityal**, one of our Samaritan scholars and a leader with the Samaritan Manhood Club in Ethiopia, died from kidney disease, as his mother and brother had before him. He had just started his first year of college at Admas University and was a source of comfort and strength for his father. He leaves behind both his father and a brother.

In September 2025, **Ms. Yeshi**, the matriarch leading our work in Kore, the community surrounding the dumpsite in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, passed away during an asthma attack in the middle of the night. We had given her the Heart of Kore award earlier last year as the “unwavering guide toward a brighter future” for the people of Kore. She overcame profound difficulties as a girl and then a woman in Ethiopia, and became a mother to many to protect them from the same.

In February 2026, **Mike Bernard**, a long-time board member and good friend to International Samaritan, passed away in a cycling accident. He had been a member of our board of directors since 2012, and had a profound impact on our success. He consistently and purposefully applied his considerable talents for the benefit of many. He leaves behind his wife, Betsy, three sons, and their families.

**We miss them deeply.**

