



**50 giving stories shared as part of
The Marketors' Trust's 50th Anniversary celebrations in 2026**

No 15: The young mothers who thought they were on their own



A young mother in rural Uganda. Reaching adolescent mothers is at the heart of Act4Africa's work.

In a village in Uganda's Mayuge District, a fourteen-year-old girl is holding a baby of her own. She has left school, and many of the people around her have quietly decided that her story is already written. Act4Africa believes it is not, and that with the right support hers can still be a life she chooses.

Adolescent mothers are among the most isolated people the charity works with, and reaching them sits at the heart of what it does. Its Strong Mothers' Club offers health and wellbeing support to vulnerable young mothers aged fourteen to twenty-four: somewhere to learn, to be listened to, and to find others in the same position. At the time of the Trust's grant, Act4Africa was working with UKAID, through the Small Charities Challenge Fund, on a pilot providing sexual and reproductive health training and mental health support for 225 vulnerable adolescent mothers in the district.



A women's group with Act4Africa, which places the people it serves at the centre of its work.

Act4Africa was founded in 2000 by Martin and Kathy Smedley, a husband and wife who had seen Uganda's HIV and AIDS crisis at first hand and built lasting friendships there. They began with a simple, deeply human idea: to learn, and to help, directly. Twenty-five years on, the charity has grown but kept that close-knit spirit, a small UK fundraising team supporting a dedicated Ugandan staff team, with the people it serves placed at the centre of every decision.



Support that reaches the whole family, from young mothers to their children.

Its work now reaches across health, education, agriculture, livelihoods and women's empowerment. Kathy's Kindergarten gives the youngest children an early years start; Grow A Girl helps disadvantaged teenagers stay in secondary school; and Grains for Growth trains smallholder farmers to grow more food and build steadier livelihoods.



Young women supported by Act4Africa in rural Uganda.

None of it reaches anyone without the steady support of regular givers, and that is where the Marketors' Trust came in. The Trust's £10,000 grant funded Act4Africa's first dedicated donor acquisition campaign, using social media and new website content to find and win the regular donors whose monthly gifts sustain the Adolescent Mothers' Programme. It is marketing doing the quiet, essential work behind the scenes: not the care itself, but the means to keep the care going.

For a charity built on doing things directly and personally, that is exactly the point. A grant that helps Act4Africa reach more supporters is a grant that helps it reach more young mothers, and keep believing, on their behalf, that no story is finished yet.



How to give

Every gift, at whatever level, helps secure the Trust's grants, awards and care for the next fifty years.

To give, go to: <https://www.marketors.org/the-marketors-trust/support-ways-to-give>