

The Group Investing Starter Kit

Chama, stokvel, susu or esusu, the governance kit that keeps friendship and money alive together.



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Why groups beat individuals

Across Africa, group saving is a superpower: discipline through community, scale through pooling, and access to deals no individual could touch.

It's also where friendships go to die, when structure is missing.

This kit is the structure. Five pages, five fixes, zero drama.

The constitution

One page, written, signed by every member:

- Purpose: saving? investing? both?
- Leadership: roles, terms, how leaders change.
- Money rules: contribution amount, due date, penalties, applied to EVERYONE equally.
- Exit: how a member leaves, how their share is valued, how fast they're paid.

Do this while everyone is still friends. That's the whole trick.

The money rules

- Group bank account with 3+ signatories. The treasurer's personal wallet is not infrastructure.
- Monthly statement to every member: money in, money out, balance. Transparency kills suspicion before it grows.
- Penalties applied automatically, the moment 'special cases' appear, the group has started dying.
- Records in writing. The treasurer's memory is not a ledger.

Going legal

Register the group, self-help group, cooperative or company, whatever fits your market.

Why it matters: the group can own assets in its OWN name. Land bought in a 'trusted member's' name is a heartbreak with a title deed.

Registration also unlocks: group bank accounts, formal investments, loans against group assets, and continuity when members change.

From saving to investing

Once governance is solid, graduate the money:

1. Park contributions in a money market fund, not a dormant account.
2. Write a one-page investment policy: what you invest in, what you never touch, how you vote.
3. Research before the meeting, decide at the meeting, document after the meeting.

Score your group honestly at moneywise.co.ke/assessments/chama-health, then fix what the score flags.