

THE AKILI TRUST
ANNUAL REPORT
October 2016 – September 2017

Charity Name and Number

The Akili Trust: Registered charity number: 1114275

Akili Community Libraries (Kenyan NGO) registered number:
OP.218/051/2008/017/5057

Website: www.akilitrust.org

Correspondence Address

119 Victoria Road, London N22 7XG



Trustees

Pam Dix (*Chair*)

Dan Gavshon Brady (*Treasurer*)

Carly Hardman

Seonaid Macleod

Mark Orchard

Jenny Pitkin

Martin Ransley

Jess Rolfe Dix

Margaret Sills

Anne Sofer

HISTORY, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE TRUST

The Akili Trust was established in January 2006 with a remit to establish and support community libraries in Kenya and East Africa. Charitable status was granted in May 2006 and NGO status in Kenya, as Akili Community Libraries, in 2008.

Kilifi County, where the Trust's libraries are based, is one of the least developed areas in the region. Electrification is becoming available but is not in every home and transport is limited. English is the language of instruction in all Kenyan schools, but there are few books available for people to read, and many adults cannot afford to buy a newspaper.

In Kenya, primary schools are universally free. However, this is a deceptive statement: many schools are desperately under-funded and under-resourced, with parents expected to pick up the shortfall through the PTA (Parent Teacher Association) as well as ancillary costs like uniforms, materials, cooks, and so on. The Government has recently capped secondary school fees with a long term ambition to make this free too. Current costs are fairly high and take up is low in Kilifi County. Rates of progress to further education in the region are amongst the lowest in Kenya. Recent years have seen much disruption within the secondary sector though there is evidence that this is now stabilising. However, it means that students currently in the schools have had a very disrupted education during the last years and this has caused some anxiety to our bursary students.

The Akili Trust aims to work with local communities to improve literacy and expand access to information and education. In practical terms, this means:

- Supporting the existing libraries and establishing new libraries as appropriate and when funds are available;
- Ensuring that the libraries have suitable collections of books in English and Kiswahili;
- Ensuring that the libraries have adequate IT provision and run suitable training programmes for the school and the community
- Ensuring that the libraries are adequately staffed with locally appointed personnel;
- Funding librarian salaries and running costs, including daily newspapers in English and Kiswahili;
- Providing support and training for librarians;
- Establishing local management committees to run the libraries and liaising with them and with local schools and other relevant authorities;
- Maintaining a bursary programme for secondary education
- Looking at other opportunities for partnership working within the community.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Akili Trust was created by a Declaration of Trust dated 23 January 2006. The Trust Deed provides for a minimum of three trustees, who are appointed for two or three year terms, with the opportunity for standing again. When there is a requirement for new trustees, these are identified and appointed by the existing trustees. The Chair of Trustees and Treasurer are responsible for the registration and induction of any new trustees and for managing the UK bank accounts with CAF Bank.

The Trust Deed gives trustees the power to apply the funds in such a manner as they think fit to further its stated aims. As the Trust aims to spend as much as possible of its funds directly in East Africa, costs in the UK are kept to a minimum. The Trust does not make grants to individuals or organisations that apply for funding speculatively.

Trustees meet at least four times a year to plan developments and monitor progress and finances. The committee reviews quarterly reports and correspondence from the libraries, decides on financial priorities and plans fundraising. Minutes of these meetings are held at the Trust's address. Sub-committees are formed from time to time as required. Towards the end of the previous year the trustees had a forward planning and review led by one of the members of the committee who works for a business branding and re-design

organization. This has proved invaluable in helping to focus our thinking on priorities.

The Akili Trust operates in Kenya through a local NGO, Akili Community Libraries (ACL), wholly funded from Akili in the UK. ACL is effectively the business operation in Kenya. It has its own bank account held at KCB (Kenya Commercial Bank) in Kenya and accounts are audited by independent auditors in Kenya. Annual reports are lodged with the NGO Board and returns prepared for the KRA (Kenyan Revenue Authority). It is agreed that a meeting of the NGO Board will always be held with whichever of the UK trustees visits Kenya.

In Kenya, each Akili Trust library has a Management Committee, appointed from the local community. These Management Committees also include representatives of the primary school where the library is based, normally the Headteacher and the Chair of the Primary School Management Committee, and other community representatives. This Committee provides support, encouragement and advice to the Librarian and Assistant Librarian, as well as being a further point of contact and information for the Akili trustees. They are responsible for the selection of staff, monitoring of staff performance and for the management of the selection process for the bursary students and also a delegated budget for running costs and incidental local spending. The larger sums relating to salary costs, bursaries, and book purchase are managed by the UK trustees through the main KCB account. The libraries are required to prepare a mid year and end of year financial report.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE OF THE TRUST

During the year ending September 2017, the Akili Trust has continued to support the libraries in Dabaso and Kakuyuni, with an increasing level of support for various local primary schools. This is normally through the provision of loans to these schools as well as class visits. There are now two satellite libraries in two local secondary schools and two primary schools.

Dabaso Library

Dabaso Library is now firmly established both in the school and as a part of the local community. It is well used by students from the school during the school day and by students from the nearby local secondary schools. It has a good number of regular adult borrowers, who use the library for book borrowing, for reading the newspapers and for learning to use the computers.

The headteacher at the school has been successful in building the school's achievements, reputation and thereby attracting considerable support. As a result the school has become extremely popular in the area.

Kakuyuni Library

Kakuyuni School struggles with inadequate budgets and high student numbers. It

has not managed to attract much external support and is very short of funds for even basics including an adequate number of classrooms and the provision of water. In this context, the library provides a haven in the school for both staff and students and provides a very calm and studious environment. The new headteacher has however worked hard to improve standards in the school and is working well with the library team to ensure that it contributes to his plans for school improvement.

During the course of the year the condition of the ceiling in the library seriously deteriorated and the trustees launched a successful appeal to raise funds for its repair. This was completed satisfactorily without any injury or damage.

Books

The libraries are stocked with a mixture of books shipped from England, about every 15 months, and books bought locally. The shipment consists of books donated by publishers and individual donors, mainly children's picture books, fiction and non-fiction and some popular adult fiction. Money is provided for the local purchase of East African curriculum materials, Swahili books and fiction in both English and Swahili. A particular local focus has been the provision of revision guides at all levels.

Library Bursaries

The bursary programme is now well established and well known and respected in the local area. Annually, we offer a minimum of two bursaries, one for a girl and one for a boy, in each of our two main schools. This is funded from the general Akili budget together with individual donors. The Hutton Dabaso Trust also provides funds for bursaries, now set at four bursaries at any one time for Dabaso School students only. Additionally, we have a number of students in the programme who are funded through grants from the Cassel Trust. The students are selected in January each year, the beginning of the Kenyan school year, through a very carefully monitored process.

The progress of the students is closely monitored and supported by the library staff and reported on regularly to the Akili trustees. The librarians carry out this responsibility with considerable care, attending regular meetings with the secondary schools. They have applied sanctions or additional support to students when necessary. The students are required to work in the library at certain points during the academic year, carrying out general library duties and helping younger students with their schoolwork. We have now set up a system of reporting on this annually, in December each year, and these reports are available on our website.

In addition, we have set up a system for an annual meeting for all current and past bursary students. This gives an opportunity for students to share their experiences, concerns and needs and for the older students to mentor the younger ones.

Debate Mate programme

In the summer of 2016, the UK based charity Debate Mate (www.debatemate.com) ran one of its summer schools, basing the programme around the schools we work with. This was very well received and its success is recorded on both the Debate Mate and Akili websites. We asked the team to carry out some research for us on the issues surrounding the education of girls and we will use their findings and subsequent report to help us plan further provision.

Communications with Kenya

Communications with Kenya are now mainly through What's App for a speedy response, with email for more detailed communications.

Other Activities

Regular newsletters and website

Our new website was launched last year and we are slowly updating content and developing our newsletter for donors and friends. We are also developing our social media profile and implementing a communications plan.

Trustee visits

No trustee visit took place during this time, though one is planned.

NGO

Our new payroll provider has worked efficiently and promptly on staff payroll issues. The firm is also responsible for our annual audit and NGO returns. We plan to re-structure the NGO membership during our next visit and to ask the company to take on the administrative responsibility for this.

FUNDING

The Trust's funding comes from a variety of sources.

- There are a number of key donors with regular standing orders, together with a good network of occasional donors.
- Grants from charitable organisations are applied for whenever possible.
- Fundraising events are run throughout each year. These also help to maintain interest in our work amongst the Akili 'community' in the U.K. This year's highlights included our annual quiz evening, a challenging sponsored cycle ride, and our regular cricket tournament and coffee morning.

- There are a number of links with schools in London and donations came from several schools this year, including the Garden Suburb Infants School who raised money for books through cake sales.

RISKS AND CHALLENGES

It is clear that, with world economies in a state of flux and the impact that this has on exchange rates, budget monitoring is a priority to ensure that the Trust does not become over-committed.

It is also clear that the continuing state of tension in East Africa continues pose a threat to travel and to future visits.

We recognise the challenge of managing staff and keeping in touch with developments from a distance and the fact that this will become more difficult if regular visits are not possible.

FUTURE PLANS

Our priorities for the next year include:

- Ensuring that there is an annual visit by Trustees whenever possible;
- Looking for opportunities for partnership work with other organisations based or working in Kenya;
- Looking at other funding opportunities in Kenya;
- Continuing to provide funding for the purchase of relevant books, especially books in Kiswahili and featuring African writers and those important for the Kenyan school curriculum;
- Consideration of e-learning and e-reading platforms to check their suitability and look for appropriate funded projects to support any development;
- Looking at the future opportunities for our bursary students and seeking advice about work experience, university and HE opportunities in Kenya;
- Considering the issues around the performance of the girls, both at the end of primary school prior to the bursary selection process and during their sponsored years as it has become clear that girls are underperforming;
- Working on our fundraising strategies and a long-term strategy for the future of the Trust.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Incoming

Total income -

Standing orders -

Donations -

Bursaries

UK Events -

Grants –

Gift Aid

Total outgoing -

KCB -

Maintenance

Transfer Charges -

Shipping -

Web, media and printing -

UK Events (costs) -

Travel and visits -



INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS FOR Y/E 09/15

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) as amended by s.28 of the Charities Act 2006) and that an independent examination is needed.

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:
 - proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 41 of the Act); and
 - accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act, or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Relevant professional qualification or body (if any):

Address: