# THE AKILI TRUST

# ANNUAL REPORT
## October 2018 – September 2019

**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](http://www.akilitrust.org)

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## *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.

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 2018, 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.  The two main libraries have developed into real community hubs in their areas.

Our two main libraries are required to produce quarterly reports to update the trustees and supporters on life in the libraries.

### 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 Dabaso library staff are setting up the library at Watamu School where a new dedicated library building is promised. One member of staff visits once a week to run library activities for the students.

The new chair of the Dabaso library committee is helping to push forward developments with a particular focus on helping the staff to develop and deliver a range of reading promotion activities in both schools.

*Kakuyuni Library*

Kakuyuni School has made enormous progress under the leadership of the new headteacher and the school continues to see some very high grades for some of its students. The school acknowledges that the library plays a significant role in contributing to this and work with the library is very well integrated into the school programme.

The new assistant librarian at Kakuyuni is very effective, has developed good relationships with staff and students and is very skilled in both IT and communications. He is an asset to the team.

*Books*

The libraries are stocked with a mixture of books shipped from England and books bought locally. One large shipment was sent in October 2018, with a significant collection of books to kickstart the new library at Watamu School. There is an inexhaustible demand for more local books and for course books and revision guides.

*Library Bursaries*

The bursary programme is now well established and well known and respected in the local area. During this year we supported 28 bursary students. Each year we offer a minimum of two bursaries, one for a girl and one for a boy, in each of our two main schools. We have added another local school, Watamu Primary, to this as the school has very considerable needs and we have begun to work with them on library and reading support.

Bursaries are 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.

*Other Activities*

*Regular enewsletters and website*

Our website and regular newsletters are our main ways of communicating with supporters of the Trust.

*Trustee visits*

Trustee visits are self-funded, though we are able to support trustee members with some financial support towards costs when necessary. A trip was made in May 2018, just before this reporting period, and another one planned for October 2019 as part of the anniversary celebrations of the Hutton Dabaso Trust.

*NGO*

Our payroll provider in Kenya is responsible for all issues to do with staff pay and tax and also carries out the annual audit and NGO returns. During our visit in May, we recruited a new team to run the NGO locally and had intensive discussions with them about future plans. However, progress in setting this up has been slow.
This year we have streamlined the way in which we transfer money from our UK CAF account to our Kenyan KCB account, minimising transfer and other charges in the process.

*CHARITY COMMISSION REQUIREMENTS*
Our statutory policy requirements are reconsidered every year.

*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 several new events were added to the programme including a fitness event and a football tournament, both of which attracted numbers of younger people. The regular events like the quiz and cricket tournament are very successful.
- 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 we need to monitor the local situation when planning any travel to the region.

We recognise the challenge of managing staff and keeping in touch with developments from a distance.

*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;

- Developing a regular staff training programme including visits to other libraries

- Looking at strategies and ideas for promoting a reading culture to sit alongside the more academic focus of much of the library work

- 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 – 27,767**
Standing orders – 2,970
Donations – 9,937
Bursaries – 1,750
UK Events – 5,110
Grants – 8,000

Outgoing**
**Total outgoing – 32,629**
KCB – 29,000
Bank Charges – 230
Shipping – 88.77
Web, media and printing - 621
UK Events (costs) – 1245
Travel and visits – 1108
Books & Resources - 305

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- We did not submit for Gift Aid in this financial year
- The grants entry was a sole donor: The Cassel Trust. Details of the application (for bursary support and educational materials) available on request.

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- Some travel expenses from trustee visit during the previous year were processed in this financial year
- Following the trustee visit, games were purchased and sent to the libraries; this explains the labelling of Books & Resources (from just 'Books' in the previous year).

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