

THE AKILI TRUST
ANNUAL REPORT
October 2014 – September 2015

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

Ruth Beedle

Pam Dix (Chair)

Lucy Evans

Laura Gavshon

Dan Gavshon Brady (Treasurer)

Carly Hardman (joined August 2015)

Mark Orchard

Jenny Pitkin

Margaret Sills (joined September 2015)

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 District (previously known as Coastal Province), where the Trust's libraries are based, is one of the least developed areas in the region. Electrification is slowly being made available but is not affordable in the majority of homes 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 for schooling (uniforms, materials, and so on, which aren't cheap). Secondary schools experience a drastic drop in enrolment as school fees are unaffordable for many and continually increasing (from 84% to 50% across the country). Attendance rates are particularly low in Kilifi District and the take up of further education in the region is one of the lowest in Kenya. Yet, there is a real thirst for education and information and libraries are well respected and are seen as key places of free access to learning.

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 based in Nairobi. Annual reports are lodged with the NGO Board and returns prepared for the KRA (Kenyan Revenue Authority). The ACL committee includes the two chairs of the Library Management Committees, Emmanuel Yongo and Francis Matayo, together with Lucy Evans as the representative of the Akili Trust and Benson Mutua (the in-country manager of a US funded school project, PEI –

Project Education). It is, however, agreed that a meeting 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. The Management Committee also includes representatives of the primary school where the library is based, normally the Headteacher and the Chair of the Primary School Management Committee. 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 2015, the Akili Trust has continued to support the libraries in Dabaso and Kakuyuni. A new development has been to increase the support offered to other local schools. The local library staff have made contact with a number of primary schools and provide loans to these schools as well as class visits to the libraries; they have supported library developments in two local secondary schools; and have set up two satellite libraries in the Dabaso area. One of these libraries is in a very needy local primary, Watamu School, where there is an inspirational and experienced headteacher trying to turn the school round; the other is in a very small school on a nearby island, Kirepwe School, which is linked to Dabaso School. We have provided a good range of suitable books for both in our most recent shipment. These developments are the direct result of a trustee visit in February 2015.

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 and is working with other local schools to support their development. We have, as explained above, started to support some of these local schools with books and advice.

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 two librarians and the chair of the library committee work very well together and the library is very busy with both readers and computer users. It is well used by the whole community as a study environment.

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. The 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. We offer 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, and we have a number of students in the programme who are funded through a grant from the Cassel Trust. The students are selected in January each year at the beginning of the Kenyan school year.

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 school work. We have now set up a system of reporting on this annually, in December each year, and these reports are available on our website.

Communications with Kenya

Communications with Kenya have really improved this year as we have been able to make use of both Skype and What's App with the librarians. This has made a great impact in terms of developments and speed of response.

Other Activities

Regular newsletters and website

A comprehensive mailing list is maintained through the website and regular newsletters are produced to keep funders and supporters informed about

developments in Kenya. The website is used for current information and updates. During the year we have worked with our web developers, BGZ, to migrate the website to a more current system, Wordpress, and to update the look and feel of the site.

Trustee visits

In February 2015, two trustees, Pam and Dan, visited Kenya, together with Carly Hardman, who has subsequently joined the trustee board, and Jess Dix from the UK charity Debate Mate. This visit picked up on many of the points scheduled for discussion in the May 2014 visit, which had to be cancelled for security reasons. A number of meetings, staff development discussions and information sharing were held with the library staff, as well as meetings with school staff and other local contacts. One outcome of this was the discovery that our payroll provider was not delivering the services requested so a new payroll company has now been appointed and took over in September 2015. The new company has worked hard to identify and rectify some of the problems, though the Trust is still owed money from the previous provider.

We were also able to visit some other local schools to discuss their needs and identify ways in which we can broaden our support to the communities on a wider basis. This was a very interesting experience and we met some very impressive staff working in some very needy and underfunded areas. We identified some particular needs for book support and this influenced the large shipment of books that we sent in April 2015.

Dan was able to train staff on the various financial and other reports that are required and also get to know them personally as this was his first visit.

Jess and Carly were able to run versions of the debating programme that Debate Mate teaches in the UK and elsewhere. This was very successful and the plan is for Kenya and our communities to become part of their annual summer programme.

NGO

The information for the annual returns was provided to our auditors in Nairobi within the reporting period. However, the key member of staff in the company has left and we have experienced considerable difficulties in the submission. We will now be looking for an alternative company for the 2016 returns.

FUNDING

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

- There are a number of key regular donors with standing orders, together with other occasional, but regular, 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 a wonderful Blues evening and what has now become an annual event, the quiz evening. Regular features of the calendar like the cricket tournament and the coffee mornings are also important fundraisers.
- 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 a regular programme of cake sales.
- The charity 'Footballs for Fun' continue to provide us with footballs to take to distribute on our trips.

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 also 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;
- Working with Debate Mate (www.debatemate.com) to develop a programme for summer 2016;
- 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;
- 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

The net income for the year was £23,839, down from the previous year by £4,582. This is mostly due to a drop in donations and money brought in from fundraising. However, we were able to bring in grants for bursary students and other library resources, and will continue to pursue similar as a source of fundraising.

Incoming

Total income - £23,839 (*note 1)

Standing orders - £2,900

Donations - £8,518.14

Bursaries - £1,270

UK Events - £5,850.55

Grants - £5,300

Note 1. Gift Aid was claimed in the following financial year, so does not show in this year's accounts

Total outgoing - £18,782

KCB - £15,000

Maintenance - £50

Transfer Charges - £40

Shipping - £744.02

Web, media and printing - £368.37

UK Events (costs) - £1,187.69

Travel and visits - £1,391.43



**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: