

# THE AKILI TRUST

## TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT 2007-8

### Charity Name and Number

The Akili Trust: Registered charity number - 1114275

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

### Correspondence Address

119 Victoria Road, London N22 7XG

### Trustees

Cleopatra Mukula Ajode  
Andrew Ballantyne  
Ruth Beedle  
Nicci Crowther (Chair) (deceased  
November 2008)  
Pam Dix (Chair, March 2009)  
Lucy Evans (Treasurer)  
Mark Orchard  
Anne Sofer (from April 2009)



## 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, developing from its original base in Malindi District, Coastal Province, Kenya. Trustees were recruited with expert knowledge of Kenya, libraries, education and finance, and charitable status was granted in May 2006.

Away from the coastal strip favoured by tourists, Coastal Province is one of the least developed areas in the region. There is little electrification and few tarmac

roads. English is the language of instruction in all Kenyan schools, but there is limited access to books for people to read, and many adults cannot afford to buy a newspaper. In primary schools, classes of 80 to 90 children are not unusual. Only 23% of Kenyans attend secondary school 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 are staffed and that staff are recruited from the local community.
- Funding librarians' salaries and library running costs, including daily newspapers in English and Kiswahili.
- Providing support and training for library staff.
- 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.

## **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

The Akili Trust in the UK 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. 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 induction of any new trustee and for circulating information and advice from the Charities Commission and other related organisations.

The Trust Deed gives trustees the power to apply the funds in such a manner as they think fit to further the Trust's stated aims. As the Trust aims to spend as much as possible of its funds directly in East Africa, it does not make grants to individuals or organisations who 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 has provided funds for the registration of a sister organisation in Kenya, known as Akili Community Libraries (ACL). The intention is for ACL to provide support and guidance, and eventually to take over day-to-day supervision of Kenyan based activities. At least one Akili Trust trustee will serve as an officer of ACL. The formal recognition of the NGO status for this group was awarded in May 2008. This has already impacted on the Trust's work in Kenya as it is widely respected by our local partners.

In Kenya, each Akili Trust library has a Management Committee, of which a majority is elected by and from the Registered Readers. The Committee includes representatives from 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.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE OF THE TRUST**

During the year ending September 2008, the Akili Trust has continued to support Dabaso Library and completed and opened its second library at Kakuyuni. The Trust has also supported other local Kenyan organisations with the provision of books, including the orphanage and health education project.

### **Dabaso Library**

Dabaso Library is now very established in the local community and is integrated into the school. 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 and for reading the newspapers.

The two librarians, Stephen Yongo and Josephine Nzaro, have continued to work well and develop their skills. Communication happens regularly, mainly through email and text messages, and quarterly reports of both the financial situation and numbers of books catalogued and borrowed are sent to the Trustees. Stephen Yongo, the senior of the librarians, was seconded to do a course in Mombasa Polytechnic from July to December 2008, which leads to a Certificate of Library and Information Studies. The fees for this were paid by the Trust as well as the cost of a replacement member of staff during his absence. Fred Kittu, who is well known to the Trust, provided this cover. He has been involved with the Dabaso Library Management Committee and is working with several students on a project to record the history of the local area.

## **Kakuyuni Library**

Nicci Crowther spent one month in Kenya in September 2007 supervising the building of the library at Kakuyuni Primary School, which was opened in October 2007. She was also able to appoint the library staff, Janet Kaingu and Mohamed Athman, who have both completed secondary school and have experience working in education. Mohamed decided in August 2008 to leave the library however to join the Kenyan army but has been replaced by Salim Rajab, a young man with similar skills and an interest in IT.

The Headteacher of the primary school has embraced the Akili vision and has worked closely with the librarians to translate this into reality. A very successful management committee has been established in the school, which is meeting regularly to advise on developments. A rigorous programme of class visits to the library has been established and good links made with the local secondary schools.

An area outside the library has been fenced off to create an enclosed area and ensure that the library can be accessed both by the community and the school. Makuti shelters, to provide shade for reading, have been built in this area and furnished with chairs, greatly increasing the number of spaces there are to sit and read. Kakuyuni is further away from the local town and its facilities than Dabaso and is a much more rural community, so there is great community interest in this library provision.

## **Library Bursaries**

Each year, the Akili Trust plans to fund the secondary education of a boy and a girl from each 'host' primary school. These students will be selected by an independent panel and the choice will be based on performance in the national leaving exams and on the family's financial circumstances. The intention is that these bursaries are for able students who would not otherwise be able to afford secondary education. The support was increased from 90% to 100% of the school fees in September 2008, as many families had difficulty paying the additional 10%. The families have to fund the costs of equipment, uniform and holiday tuition. The progress of the bursary students is closely monitored by the library staff and reported on to the Akili Trustees regularly. The students are required to work in the library for about 4 hours per week, though most students have to do this in the school holidays as they are weekly boarders. In September 2008, there were six students, though, when the scheme is fully established, the Trust will be supporting eight students in each school, sixteen in total.

## **Staff training**

In May 2008, one of the trustees, Pam Dix, who is a qualified librarian, ran a training course for all of the Akili library staff in reader development. This involved practical activities, including storytelling, using puppets and other ideas for bringing reading to life, as well as planning reading groups, festivals and other activities. This approach contrasts with the more formal rote learning of Kenyan education and was challenging for staff but has added to their repertoire of suitable activities to use in the libraries. The reporting forms, used by the librarians to report to the Trustees, will be adapted to include more subjective information about the ways in which the libraries are being used.

During this course it was clear that the libraries need more local materials and the Trust has committed funds to assist this purchase, which will also include curriculum resources for the bursary and other secondary students.

## **RISKS AND CHALLENGES**

It is difficult to manage a project from three thousand miles distance which is one of the reasons for establishing Akili Community Libraries. The Kenya-based trustees can keep a closer watch on activities and be more aware of local issues. We plan to consider other ways of providing local management support, both to manage staff and assist with planning, in addition to the structures already in place.

The two communities we presently work in are in the process of being connected to electricity. Once this is achieved, the Trust will have the challenge of providing computers for the libraries and of training library users to make best use of them. At the same time, it is important to maintain the commitment to the development of reading communities.

During the trustee visit in May 2008, it became apparent that the situation in Kenya remained unstable following the difficulties after the election in January 2008. The economy was particularly affected and inflation was running at 40% at that point. The Trustees agreed that staff salaries needed to be reconsidered because of this and an inflation award was given to all staff from August 2008. 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.

## **FUTURE PLANS**

Our priorities from September 2008 onwards are:

- To continue to send books to each library from the UK and Kenyan booksellers.
- to work with Dabaso to bring electricity into the library and to secure the provision in Kakuyuni.
- to supply each library with up-to-date computers and printers, and to consider strategies for providing internet access and training programmes.
- to develop a variety of reporting mechanisms for sharing information from Kenya with the Trustees in the UK.
- to develop a fundraising strategy.
- to improve the Akili website so that it is a more useful vehicle for publicity, information and encouraging donations.
- to draft a detailed strategic plan for the next five years
- to further develop the NGO status in Kenya and to use it to make stronger local links.

## **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The net income for the year was £13,080.08, including one grant of £500. Our total expenditure was £11,165.80, which breaks down as follows:

Kakuyuni Final build costs:	£1,996.22	
Kakuyuni salaries and running costs:	£1,702.84	
Dabaso Salaries and running costs:	£ 2,224.79	
Librarian training – Mombasa Poly:	£ 684.40	Note 1
Kakuyuni – electricity installation:	£ 851.39	Note 2
Secondary school bursaries:	£1,132.74	
Purchase of African books in Nairobi:	£ 166.97	
Cataloguing materials & freight:	£ 921.54	
Bank, Regulatory and currency charges:	£ 229.73	Note 3
Trustee travel expenses (within Kenya):	£ 690.54	Note 4
UK admin charges:	£ 564.64	Note 5
	<b>£11,165.80</b>	

At the end of the year, the financial reserves were £9,873.82 and were considered adequate to cover the forthcoming year. Funds, bursary amounts, salaries and other monies are reviewed on a monthly basis by the Treasurer and other Trustees.

## Notes:

1. This covers the cost of the fees and expenses for the Librarian at Dabaso Library to attend the Diploma course at Mombasa Polytechnic and three months of the cover of a replacement and an acting allowance for the Assistant Librarian.
2. The library was connected to the electricity grid and lighting set up in the library and one adjacent classroom to allow reading and study after dark. Cabling points were installed ready for the computers.
3. The majority of this spend is for the NGO Registration in Kenya. Although the Trustees have maintained a local bank account through KCB in Malindi, there are monthly costs to this as well as times when it is necessary to use Western Union payments. In addition there are charges from the UK banks (Co-Op and CAF) to send money to KCB. There are also exchange differences throughout the year from the Kenyan bank account.
4. UK trustees made two trips to Kenya during this period, paying for their international flights and all accommodation. These expenses cover fuel and driver costs when visiting schools, officials and libraries, plus photocopying charges, internet access, internal phone costs and incidentals.
5. The majority of this sum was on printing costs for stationery and published reports and the rest on website renewal charges.

## STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES FOR Y/E SEPT 9/08

<b>D1a</b>	<b><u>Cash Funds</u></b>	
	Co-operative Bank – UK	7,213.23
	CAF Bank - UK	1,009.86
	Kenya Commercial Bank	1,650.73
<b>D1b</b>	<b><u>Other Monetary Assets</u></b>	0
<b>D3a</b>	<b><u>Investment Assets</u></b>	0
<b>D3b</b>	<b><u>Assets retained for charity's own use</u></b>	0
<b>D2</b>	<b><u>Liabilities</u></b>	0
<b>TOTAL AS PER ACCOUNTS:</b>		<b>9,873.82</b>

Signed on behalf of the trustees:

Name :

Date:

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS FOR Y/E 09/08**

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:

Date:

Name:

Relevant professional qualification or body (if any):

Address: