
APIF REPORT

2021/2022





CONTENTS

P. 03 : Foreword

P. 05 : The Africa Publishing Innovation Fund

P. 07 : APIF Committee

P. 09 : APIF Reach

P. 10 : 2021-2022 in Numbers

P. 11 : Publishing Innovations

P. 17 : Accessible Publishing Program

P. 21 : Financials

FOREWORD



BODOUR AL QASIMI

President of International
Publishers Association

As 2022 draws to a close, so does the sun start to set on the Africa Publishing Innovation Fund.

This program was conceived in 2019 to inject four rounds of funding into urgent improvement areas in Africa's publishing landscape. Dubai Cares' \$US 800,000 donation would be distributed over four calendar years, between 2019 and 2022, inclusive.

In that time, we have helped finance innovations in indigenous language publishing, literacy, distance learning in rural communities, and access to libraries in remote areas.

As we have previously reported, Covid-19 delayed us in various ways so, with Dubai Cares' blessing, the APIF Committee elected to deliver the project's two final iterations in 2022.

This report therefore covers the five 2021-2022 grants awarded to projects to develop reading culture, and a separate initiative to increase the availability and prominence of accessible books for people with visual impairments and print disabilities.

In the pages that follow, you will read about ambitious initiatives covering Botswana, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. And you'll learn how we are working with international accessible publishing experts, the DAISY Consortium, to train African publishing stakeholders in the arts of creating accessible books and reaching new audiences.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all our grantees and wish them well as they strive to bring important changes to people's lives in Africa. I also want to express my sincere thanks to Dubai Cares for their unstinting commitment to us, and the trust they have shown in the IPA as a partner, and the APIF as a project.



Dr. Tariq Al Gurg

CEO and Vice-Chairman
Dubai Cares

IPA Foreword - 2022: The year 2022 saw the world slowly recover from the aftershocks of COVID-19. However, thanks to the pandemic, the world now recognizes the silent crisis in education and the barriers that prevent many from reaping its benefits.

Literacy sits at the heart of education. The ability to read and write and the desire to continuously enhance these two skills is the foundation of life-long learning and quality education, which are central to our mandate at Dubai Cares. Our decision to partner with the International Publishers Association and support the Africa Publishing Innovation Fund (APIF) in 2019 stems from our own commitment to promoting reading as the gateway to a whole new world of opportunities that education promises for children and youth.

It has been incredible to see APIF's impact in advancing reading culture in Africa year after year. In 2021-2022, APIF has made remarkable strides in identifying and supporting grantees who have offered a series of unique solutions and ways not only to promote reading, but also to make it enjoyable for young learners as well as their families and communities. From highlighting the importance of parental involvement in promoting reading at home, to encouraging storytelling as a way to inspire reading while engaging with the community, the five grants APIF has supported in the 2021-2022 cycle will contribute further to supporting literacy, book access, indigenous publishing, and library restoration in Africa.

We are now looking forward to the final two iterations of the program, including facilitating and financing the production of 'born accessible' works. These are books that will be produced in underrepresented languages right from scratch for the blind, partially sighted and print-disabled people, as well as dedicated multi-lingual workshops equipping participants with the skills required to produce accessible books.

The APIF may be in its final leg but the impact of the program will last a lifetime and beyond as we see young readers whose lives it has touched grow into empowered individuals who can read their way to better opportunities.

THE AFRICA PUBLISHING INNOVATION FUND

Since May 2019 the International Publishers Association (IPA) and the UAE-based philanthropic organization Dubai Cares have been collaborating to improve literacy rates, book access, and inclusive publishing, and to increase the availability of library services in Africa. Under the agreement, the IPA created the Africa Publishing Innovation Fund, to administer Dubai Cares' \$800,000 donation at a rate of \$200,000 per year from 2019 to 2023, with a view to yielding the greatest possible impact on the ground.

Oversight of the important task falls to the Africa Publishing Innovation Fund Committee, which is chaired by IPA Vice-President, Bodour Al Qasimi, and comprises senior publishers from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, and Tunisia.

Since its inception, the APIF has focused on promotion of indigenous languages (2019); tackling Africa's digital and remote learning challenges, which were exacerbated by the pandemic (2020); developing reading culture beyond the classroom (2021); and raising the profile and availability of accessible materials for people with visual impairments and other print disabilities (2022).

At the end of 2022 the APIF project will reach its conclusion, but we hope the benefits of this unique partnership will be in place for at least a generation.



■ APIF COMMITTEE

Since 2019, the Africa Publishing Innovation Fund Committee has filtered hundreds of applications to find projects and initiatives to receive APIF grants. It is the Committee members who decide which areas to focus on each year, guided by prevailing book-related priorities at a given time.

The Committee members are publishing leaders from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, and Tunisia, and they are convened under the leadership of IPA President, Bodour Al Qasimi, the CEO and founder of the Kalimat Publishing Group.



Bodour Al Qasimi

Bodour Al Qasimi is the President of the International Publishers Association (IPA), the CEO and Founder of UAE-based Kalimat Publishing Group, and the Chair of the Africa Publishing Innovation Committee.



Akoss Ofori-Mensah

Managing Director, Sub-Saharan Publishers; Member of the Council of Management of African Books Collective, Oxford, UK



Brian Wafawarowa

Chief Content and Product Officer at Juta and Company (Pty) Ltd, Chair of the IPA Inclusive Publishing and Literacy Committee



Gbadega Adedapo

Chairman of Nigeria Book Fair Trust; CEO Rasmed Publications Limited.



Lawrence Njagi

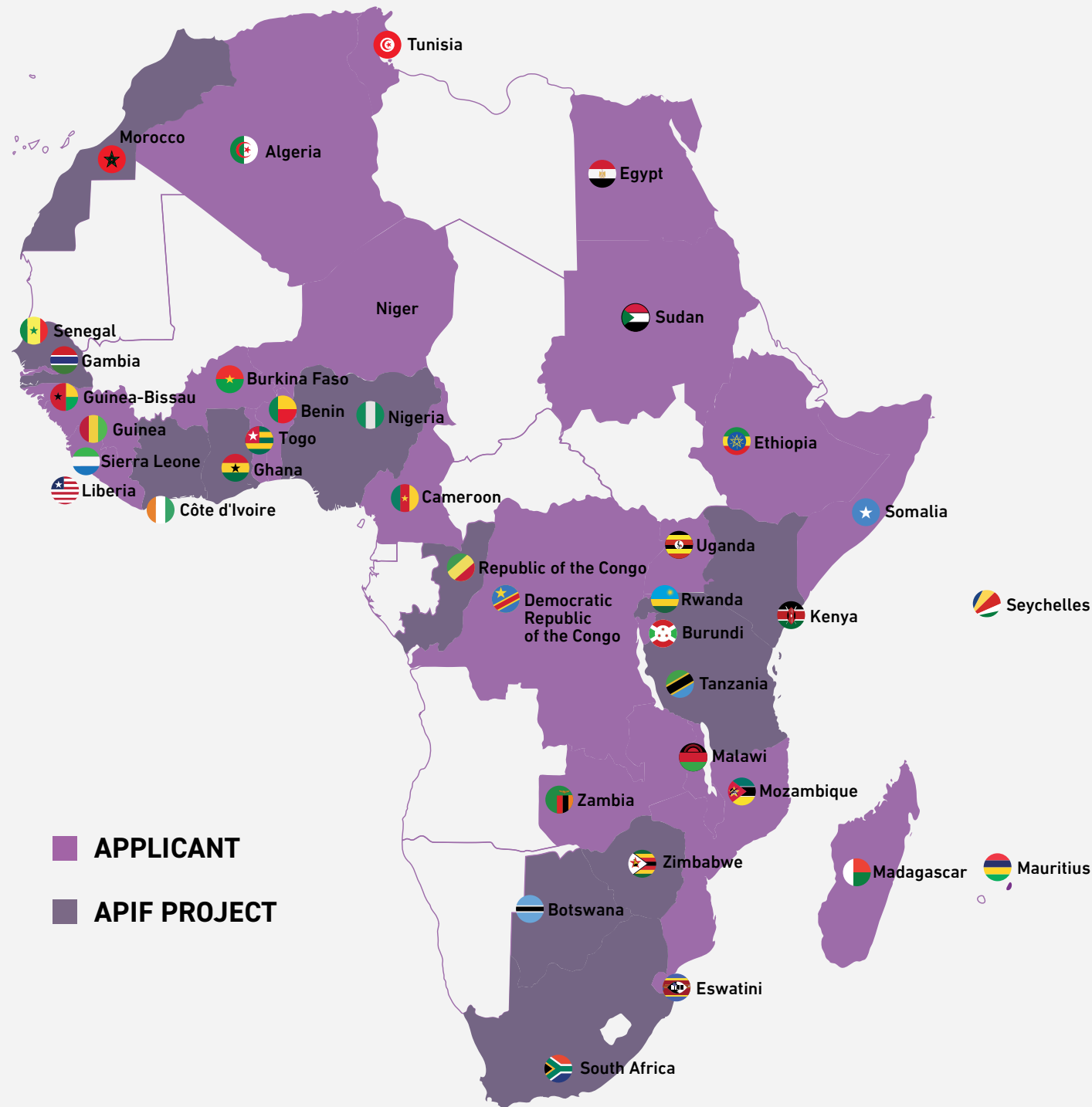
Chairman, Kenya Publishers Association; Founder and Managing Director, Mountain Top Publishers (Kenya); Treasurer and board member, African Publishers Network (APNET).



Mohamed Salah Maalej

General coordinator of Tunisia's International Book Fair ; President of the Arab and International Exhibitions Committee in the Arab Publishers Association; CEO of Kounouz Publishing.

APIF REACH



2021-2022 IN NUMBERS



\$379,350 to publishing, books and reading initiatives



\$131,250 to library projects



\$90,000 to accessible publishing program



12 publishing and reading projects



5 library developments



APIF-funded projects in **13** countries



600 applications evaluated



■ LIGHTING A FIRE UNDER CHILDREN'S LOVE OF READING

In its third iteration, the APIF received scores of applications from aspiring changemakers in 18 African nations, each answering the APIF's call for ideas to nurture the love of reading among young Africans.

Publishing in African markets tends to lean steeply towards textbooks, which represent up to 90% of sales in some countries. In most African markets, reading is more closely associated with education, religion, or self-improvement, than recreation.

As a result, publishers in these markets are heavily dependent on selling printed textbooks to governments, a business model whose precarity was laid bare when COVID-19 closed schools and pushed classroom learning online.

Here we detail the five winning projects, which together seek to reach children and young readers across the African continent.

■ BOTSWANA, IVORY COAST, KENYA, NIGERIA, RWANDA, SENEGAL

ASSOCIATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Grant amount: **US\$ 50,000**



The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) is a policy dialogue forum that catalyzes reforms and promising policies and practices by pooling knowledge, experiences, and ideas. Founded in 1988 by the World Bank, ADEA seeks to encourage exchanges among ministries of education and development agencies.

In its Read with a Star project, ADEA aims to address the question of parental involvement in promoting reading at home while inspiring teachers and children to sustain a reading culture in and out of school.

Working with the African Development Bank (AfDB), ADEA will approach respected sports, media, and

business influencers to promote a reading culture in schools and homes through read aloud and publicity campaigns in major African cities. Each celebrity will challenge others to shoot videos of themselves reading to their children and vice versa, with particular focus on girls.

ADEA wants to spark a continentwide conversation about reading culture and how to develop it further. It will promote reading activities in classrooms across the continent, involve parents in reading activities with their children, and commission clips of stars reading aloud to children.

Among other initiatives, ADEA will mount an out-of-home publicity campaign using billboards in six major cities: Abidjan, Dakar, Gaborone, Kigali, Lagos, and Nairobi, carrying messaging encouraging parents to read to children and vice versa. Additionally, authors will be invited to collaborate on a collection of stories for schoolchildren through online workshops.



“Adult, youth, and child literacy is a sine qua non for global competitiveness yet it remains a massive challenge in Africa despite considerable progress in educational access and participation. Through the Read with a Star project, ADEA works with African ministries of education, the APIF, and Dubai Cares to make a sustainable impact on the reading culture of children in five African countries. Where countries have literacy programs in place, ADEA will use its network of in-country coordinators to identify successful programs, partner, and coordinate with them. Parental involvement in children's learning positively affects the child's performance at school in both primary and secondary schools, leading to higher academic achievement, greater cognitive competence, problem-solving skills, school enjoyment, better school attendance and fewer behavioral problems. And the project is contributing to one of the strategic outcomes of the African Union's Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 2016-2025, which is the launch of comprehensive and effective literacy campaigns across the continent to eradicate illiteracy.”

Ngnaoussi Elongué Cédric Christian
Knowledge Management Officer, ADEA

GHANA, UGANDA, ZIMBABWE

BOOK AID INTERNATIONAL

Grant amount: **US\$ 40,750**



Book Aid International is the UK's leading book donation and library development charity, every year sending a million new books to disadvantaged children and adults worldwide. BAI's vision is a world where everyone has access to books that will enrich, improve, and change their lives.

This is Book Aid International's second APIF grant in as many years. BAI's latest project, the African Story Box, will give access to story books to children at 36 primary schools across Ghana, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Each school will receive a box of 200 story books (100 from the UK and 100 purchased locally).

Local reading promotion partners, the Ghana Book

Trust, International Board on Books for Young people (IBBY) Uganda, and IBBY Zimbabwe, will support schools to promote and engage children with reading

Since the project started in July 2022, Book Aid International has sent over 2,500 new books donated from the UK with 1,200 more to be shipped in October 2022. BAI is currently designing the promotional materials, banners and stickers that will be distributed with the boxes, and their reading promotion partners are talking to local publishers about titles to be included.



Photo credit: Cynthia R Matonhodge

"The grant from APIF and Dubai Cares for the African Story Box project will give thousands of primary school children access to a range of exciting international and local storybooks. Working with local publishers and reading promotion organisations in Ghana, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, the project will help children discover the joy of reading. We are delighted to be working with APIF to share the power of books with children who would not have access to storybooks otherwise."

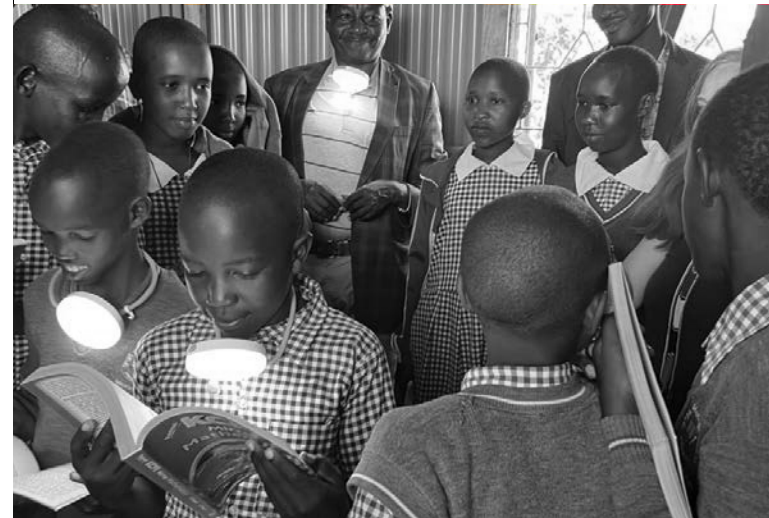
Alison Tweed

Chief Executive, Book Aid International

KENYA

OLIVESEED

Grant amount: **US\$ 25,000**



Oliveseed Kenya Trust is a community-based Kenyan organization working to nurture a culture of reading and learning in the rural communities living alongside the Maasai Mara National Reserve. Families there live in unpowered earthen homes, books are a rarity, and the public schools have no libraries or other resources to nurture a love of reading. Oliveseed Kenya is addressing this by developing high-quality, culturally relevant, and engaging libraries with related programs; putting solar lighting and small libraries in homes; and running creative-writing competitions for youth across the region.

Oliveseed Kenya is using the APIF grant to strengthen all these initiatives, by adding libraries and enrichment programs in two more key locations: one at a girls' high school with 900 students; and the other, the first public library in the region, impacting thousands more. This initiative includes training workshops for teachers and student librarians and after-school reading challenges — and culminates in an indigenous story writing project, with young people interviewing elders and writing their stories. Oliveseed Kenya will publish these indigenous stories in printed and digital books.

To launch the initiative, the team is now designing the content for both libraries and coordinating with teachers to plan the extra-curricular activities to inspire young Maasai learners to read for pleasure, learn, create, and grow.



"We are so grateful to APIF for this support. We have seen how the school libraries we've developed have already become 'learning centers,' with teachers and students both highly motivated by this new resource. With this grant, we're excited to be able to add the first public library in the Maasai Mara, which will expand these offerings to many more people and provide space to unify many literacy, reading, and writing programs. We've also found a scarcity of written local stories that students here could identify with, so to fill this gap, we will publish indigenous stories through the words of the students themselves. As well as inspiring young people to write and develop their own voice, this ensures that we preserve local stories, and that students' own world is represented in these libraries shared by all."

Barbara Mackraz

Co-founder & Director, Oliveseed Kenya Trust

SOUTH AFRICA

PRAESA

Grant amount: **US\$ 5,850**



Non-profit organization PRAESA focuses on multilingual language and literacy development. Founded in 1992, PRAESA has a long history of involvement in multilingual education and early literacy, winning both the IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Award (2014) and the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (2015). PRAESA aims to ensure that children from all languages, classes, and cultural backgrounds have opportunities to become imaginative and critical readers and writers.

PRAESA's APIF-funded project seeks to positively impact the way adults across Africa read aloud to children by sharing appropriate information and

techniques with adults who engage with children in home, school, and community settings.

This short, impactful intervention will provide demonstrations and guidance on how to select books suited to reading aloud, how to engage children when reading to them, and use stories to stimulate imaginative and critical thinking. This will be delivered through different free online materials that can be accessed as a series of live webinars, video recordings and printed handouts. Currently, the framework for the webinars and accompanying print materials has been finalised, children's books for use in the webinars are being selected and content is being packaged into easy-to-use and accessible formats.



"We are grateful to the APIF for its support of our work in expanding the reach of the craft involved in informal book-sharing with children. The grant makes it possible for us to engage with librarians, literacy trainers, community workers and others across the continent in a collective effort to maximise the language and literacy opportunities offered by reading aloud to young children as a form of reading for pleasure, which is an essential feature of a culture of reading."

Arabella Koopman
Programmes Director, PRAESA

MOROCCO

YANBOW AL KITAB

Grant amount: **US\$ 50,000**



Moroccan children's publisher Yanbow Al Kitab will give mini libraries to 300 low-income Moroccan families with young children, through the 'One Family One Library' project. They will contain 22 books, access to clips of readings by storytellers, and tips for parents on how to optimize read-aloud time with children.

Each story has an accompanying video where the book is read by an adult, with sound effects and music to lend compulsion and drama to the narrative. Practical advice will enable and encourage families to make reading together a routine activity in their lives.

Each box of books will serve as a convenient, mobile home library, which means children can share among their siblings, cousins, and friends. In addition, the complementary YouTube channel provides helpful guidance for the many parents who may have left school young and are less at ease with literature.

This project's goal is to create an out-of-school reading environment at the heart of families with human values, gender equality and respect for the environment at its core.



"Supported by APIF, the One Family One Library project introduces reading at the heart of families. By using animations on YouTube, we will foster the awakening of children through literature and culture and raise their motivation to stay in school. The program will also influence teachers to introduce fun reading into their curricula, while the interest it arouses will influence and launch similar actions. One Family One Library born from despair caused by COVID19 becomes an international model."

Amina Alaoui Hachimi
CEO, Yanbow Al Kitab

ACCESSIBLE PUBLISHING PROGRAM

In the second half of 2022 the APIF entered a partnership with the international DAISY Consortium, a world leader in accessible book publishing, in collaboration with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

The vision was to have DAISY's experts train as many African publishers as possible in accessible (inclusive) publishing. These newly upskilled publishers could then apply for grants to help them bring new accessible works to market.

The DAISY team, under CEO Richard Orme, has a distinguished track record of training publishers and officials in Botswana, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tunisia, and Uganda. And as a founder member of the Accessible Books Consortium (ABC), under the aegis of WIPO, DAISY has also developed online courses for publishers.

Kick-off, July 2022

On 5, 6, and 7 July the APIF and DAISY organized free webinars in English, French and Arabic, called Accessible Publishing Fundamentals.

Close to 200 publishers from 35 countries signed up for the sessions, where DAISY's trainers gave an intensive introduction to accessible publishing, who benefits from it, and why producing 'born accessible' works makes business sense for publishers.

The webinars were an opportunity to curate a community of African publishing stakeholders with a proven interest in accessibility. Afterwards, the attendees completed a survey about their level of knowledge about accessible books, and the skills gaps they aim to address.



Richard training in
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Online training

In its role in the WIPO-hosted Accessible Books Consortium (ABC), the DAISY Consortium developed an online course called Accessible Publishing Concepts. This course has been adapted to the APIF program and made available on DAISY's training platform.

Publishers who successfully complete the course are invited to attend advanced, workflow-specific training and to benefit from complementary technical support throughout the autumn of 2022.

Those who go on to produce accessible works can apply for APIF-funded bursaries to help get their project across the finish line and get new accessible books onto the market.

With the knowledge, technical support, and financial backing of the APIF-DAISY partnership, we hope to see an important increase in the number of accessible works available to African readers.



“With modern digital publishing technologies, publishers can make their books usable everyone, including people with blindness, low vision, cognitive and physical disabilities. Authors can reach more readers, and people with disabilities gain equal access to reading and education. DAISY is working with publishers around the world to equip them with the skills and tools they need to modernize their workflows. This meets our vision of more publications available to people with disabilities, and publishers can meet the legal and technical requirements of international markets.”

Richard Orme, CEO DAISY Consortium

KAKUMA

THE EXPOSING HOPE LIBRARY

Grant amount: **\$10,000**



The Exposing Hope Library, located at Vision Secondary School in Kakuma refugee camp, was officially launched on 10 June 2022. Exposing Hope received generous donations from private donors for the construction of the physical building; APIF provided a \$10,000 grant; Kalimat Foundation provided textbooks and mobile libraries; and Book Aid International supplied additional textbooks and reading books.

The library, which can accommodate 80 people, offers a reading area to over 2,000 secondary students of the Vision School. Such a space is extremely valuable in the crowd, noisy refugee settlement. The library

has also served as a second exam hall when students have exceeded classroom capacity.

The textbooks allow more students more time to study the necessary books for their curriculum. With limited funding, the school only has the capacity to provide one book per seven students on average requiring them to share. The additional books provide eager students an opportunity to expand their horizons beyond their curriculum, offering a chance to improve test scores and prospects for the students of Kakuma.



“Student and teacher enthusiasm for the opening of the Exposing Hope library in Kakuma far exceeded our expectations. Even before the official opening, students were making use of the space, holding study groups and private study hours to improve their education. We are excited to see how the library grows with input from the community; and are grateful to our donors for the means of construction and the essential reading materials which make the building a place of excitement, wonder and learning.”

Alissa Everett
Founder, Exposing Hope



FINANCIALS

Direct Costs	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	TOTALS
ADEA	25,000	25,000	50,000
Book Aid International	23,750	23,750	47,500
Oliveseed	12,500	12,500	25,000
PRAESA	5,850	-	5,850
Yanbow Al Kitab	25,000	25,000	50,000
DAISY Consortium	-	70,000*	70,000*
Accessible publishing grants	-	20,000*	20,000*
Frankfurt Book Fair program		60,000*	60,000*
Totals	92,100	236,250*	328,350*
Indirect Costs			
Website	-	-	4,425
Communications and marketing	-	-	2,195
Administration	-	-	475
Totals			7,095
Overall Costs	92,100	236,250*	335,445*

*Projected expenditure – reporting precedes final costings

www.apinnovation.fund


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