



APIF REPORT 2019-2020

\ A year of progress amid uncertainty



African ideas from African minds

BODOUR AL QASIMI

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

In 2019 when the IPA and Dubai Cares became partners, it was in the conviction that enduring solutions to Africa's literacy, reading and book accessibility challenges would require African ownership.

We set out to encourage and enable homegrown talent, and to reward the problem-solving spirit that is the hallmark of African innovation and business.

A year on, and our 2019 winners are making good progress towards their goals, despite the enormous challenges presented in 2020 by Covid-19. This is a major feat, given the pandemic's

proven power to derail projects, lay waste to plans and turn personal and working lives upside down.

To their enduring credit, the people behind the seven initiatives have all successfully reshaped their programs of work to stay on track, which attests to the resilience, dedication and creative thinking that won them our support in the first place.

As we look ahead to 2021 and the second round of APIF grants, I want to thank Dubai Cares for their faith in the IPA and for being such an adaptable and supportive partner.



Publishing stimulates academic success

DR TARIQ AL GURG

CEO OF DUBAI CARES

The African publishing industry serves a population of 1.2 bn people and generates approximately \$1 bn in revenue, according to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics. The continent also exports \$173m in print books, according to the UN Comtrade database. The African publishing industry has enormous potential for the future as it preserves, enhances and develops the African culture and its interaction with the world.

As a global philanthropic organization, Dubai Cares believes that publishing stimulates academic success because of its transformative impact on education, reading and socio-cultural development. Moreover, it serves as a tool to address challenges such as illiteracy, poverty, conflict, inequality and unemployment.

Based on this belief, Dubai Cares entered into

a partnership with the International Publishers Association in 2019 to support a range of initiatives and activities to address pressing African publishing ecosystem challenges and promote literacy, book access, indigenous languages, and library restoration in Africa. As part of this partnership, Dubai Cares also supported IPA to establish the African Publishing Innovation Fund to promote approaches to longstanding publishing industry challenges and catalyze stakeholder co-investment. The synergy between both organizations will no doubt help to implement innovative and replicable solutions that transform the future of African publishing.

We commend IPA for its continuous efforts in boosting the book industry in Africa and exploring new approaches and solutions to the issues facing the publishing industry in the continent.



Contents

P 03	OUR GOAL
P 05	2019-2020 IN NUMBERS
P 07	APIF FOOTPRINT 2019-2020
P 09	LEARNING BY DOING
P 11	CREATING IMPACT
P 19	MEDIA COVERAGE
P 21	THE ROAD AHEAD
P 23	FINANCIALS

\\ Our goal

The mission of the International Publishers Association (IPA), the world's largest trade association for publishers, is to promote and protect publishing as a force for economic, cultural and social development in the world.

That is why in May 2019 the IPA entered into a partnership with UAE-based philanthropic organization **Dubai Cares** to support literacy, book access, indigenous publishing, and library restoration in Africa. Under the agreement, the IPA created the Africa Publishing Innovation Fund

to administer Dubai Cares' \$800,000 donation over a four-year cycle from 2020-2024 and ensure the funds created maximum impact.

To carry out this task, the IPA formed the Africa Publishing Innovation Fund Committee, which is chaired by IPA Vice-President, Bodour Al Qasimi, and comprises five senior African publishers.

Today, the APIF's focus is on two key areas, Publishing Innovations and Library Support, and disburses funds according to the most urgent needs within those areas.



\\ APIF Committee

The IPA Africa Publishing Innovation Committee is responsible for selecting the applicants that receive grants under the Africa Publishing Innovation Fund. It is made up of senior publishing leaders from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria,

South Africa and Tunisia, and is led by IPA Vice-President, Bodour Al Qasimi, who is also the CEO and founder of UAE-based Kalimat publishing group.



Bodour Al Qasimi

Vice-President of the International Publishers Association, CEO and Founder of UAE-based Kalimat Publishing Group, and Chair of the Africa Publishing Innovation Fund 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

President, Nigerian Publishers Association; 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 Tunis International Book Fair; President of the Arab and International Exhibitions Committee of the Arab Publishers Association; CEO of Kounouz Publishing.

\\ 2019-2020 in numbers

African context



40% of school-age children in Africa don't attend school**



89% of learners in sub-Saharan Africa have no access to a computer*



60% of Africans are under 24



82% of learners have no internet access*



Up to **30** children per textbook in some countries



56 million African learners live beyond mobile networks*



190 countries closed schools and universities due to Covid-19*



203 million over-15s are illiterate in sub-Saharan Africa*



1.5 billion school-age children affected by pandemic measures*



Sub-Sahara is home to **27%** of the world's illiterate people*

*UNESCO

**United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

APIF impact



\$800,000 pledged by Dubai Cares



7 grants awarded in 2019



\$200,00 distributed by the APIF in its first year



1000% more applications in 2020 than in 2019



\$100,000 provided to publishing innovations



21 new authors commissioned



\$60,000 provided to library projects



100 original book manuscripts submitted

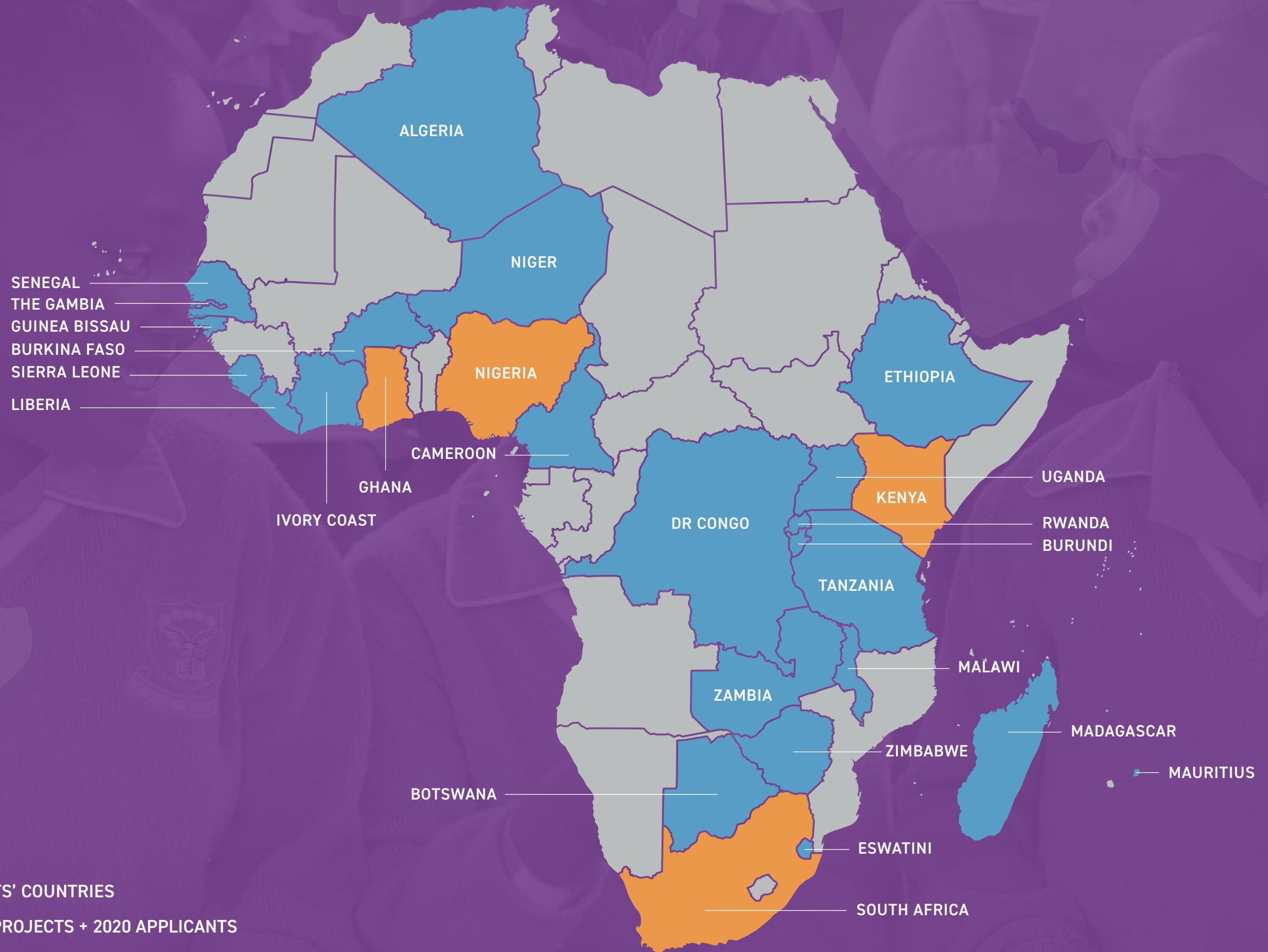


311 applications from **27** countries received in 2020



22 audiobooks in production

\\ APIF footprint 2019-2020





\\ Learning by doing

New horizons

The agreement signed in May 2019 by the International Publishers Association (IPA) and Dubai Cares placed the IPA squarely in the grant-making arena for the first time in its 123-year history.

But the Geneva-based association is nothing if not adaptable. Moreover, it enjoys the committed support of a community-spirited membership, which could see that the partnership with Dubai Cares was an opportunity to make a difference where needed.

A nation's publishing sector is entwined with its educational ecosystem, reading culture, and socio-cultural development. Publishing can therefore have a transformative impact on countries, cultures

and people, and is instrumental in addressing the challenges of illiteracy, poverty, inequality, and unemployment.

The driving force behind the initiative was IPA Vice-President Bodour Al Qasimi, who recruited volunteers from the IPA's expanding African membership to take on the task of vetting and selecting applicants and managing the fund for four years.

Their job would be straightforward, their goals clear, but understanding how to achieve them would require creative thinking and business acumen. Fortunately, the APIF Committee members (details on page 4), all successful publishers in their own right, are abundantly blessed with both qualities.

Lessons learned

In its inaugural year, the APIF Committee applied best judgement to establish practices and processes to deliver the desired outcomes in the right way. Its duty was to identify the most deserving applicants, to ensure those applicants could deliver, and to make decisions transparently, fairly, and accountably.

When the second call for submissions was announced in spring 2020, the committee members had the benefit of experience and therefore clear expectations of what their task entailed. They streamlined the work by developing a web-based application process, and significantly boosted the programme's visibility with the help of a South African communications agency.

Triumph through adversity

On June 1 2020 the APIF Committee issued a new call for proposals inspired by the unfolding Covid-19 pandemic, which had stalled the education of 1.5 billion school-aged children in 190 countries. The call was for digital solutions to Africa's worsening remote learning challenges and, despite the constraints of the pandemic, it received an overwhelming 311 pitches from 26

African countries, 1000% more than in the APIF's first year.

Applicants ranged from publishing professionals to development and education NGOs, universities and technology start-ups, from Algeria in the north, to South Africa in the south, Senegal in the west and Mauritius in the east.



\\ Creating impact where it matters

In October 2019 the APIF Committee agreed to support five publishing innovation projects, one library restoration and an established program to build a library at the Kakuma refugee settlement, in Kenya.

In January 2020 the APIF released the first half of these grants to every project except the Kakuma library construction, which received the funds in August. On 8 April 2020, the Committee agreed to allow the grantees any additional time they might require as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic to complete the work detailed in their work plans.

Publishing innovations



In all cases, the project leaders remained certain of delivering according to their original timelines, albeit by making sequencing and prioritization adjustments. This is because in most cases the first half of 2020 had been earmarked for tasks not requiring physical contact, such as planning, website development, legal and admin set-up, branding and marketing development and desktop research.

What follows is an overview of those projects and their status halfway through their grant period.

PUKU FOUNDATION | GRANT AMOUNT \$20,000



South African nonprofit **Puku Foundation**, which promotes children's literature, education and literacy in Southern Africa, is building a digital portal called 'Pukupedia'. The portal will serve as a hub for multilingual expertise in children's literature; for nurturing new local talent through writing workshops, online courses and mentoring; and developing reading culture among teachers, librarians, writers, literacy

activists and young people. The work is part of Puku's ongoing development of a comprehensive network of children's literature reviewers through multilingual writing and review workshops.

Puku Executive Director Elinor Sisulu said her team had used the months in confinement to develop the workshop curriculum for training writers and reviewers, strategies for communications and engagement, and sustainability.



"The APIF award was the highlight of the year for Puku, not only for the much-needed financial boost but also for the doors that it opened. It earned us invitations to the Frankfurt and Bologna Book Fairs and helped our advocacy and lobbying efforts at home, especially with the National Library of South Africa. We have been affirmed and inspired by becoming part of a continental network striving to make better quality books available to children throughout Africa."

Elinor Sisulu, Executive Director, Puku Foundation



Accord Literary, from Ghana, is mentoring and developing original African children’s authors in several countries, aiming to having them published across Africa, in the UK and in the USA. This partnership formed by Sarah Odedina and Deborah Ahenkorah Osei-Agyekum, has signed six authors, is mentoring five more, and has commissioned

specialist agents to represent them in the USA, UK and non-English language territories. In addition, the team has received more than 100 submissions of manuscripts.

With international book fairs cancelled, the Accord Literary team has prioritized online author workshops and training.



“Receiving the support of the Dubai Cares award has made our work possible in a fast, dynamic and effective way. Accord Literary has been able to reach writers all over the continent and engage in meaningful and constructive working relationships. Very significantly, it has given us the opportunity to find a US publishing partner for our projects. This guarantees a major outlet for our authors over a period of three years. The grant has been immeasurably important for our work as we seek to ensure that children all over the world, from Lagos to Tokyo, can fall in love with memorable African characters and stories.”

Deborah Ahenkorah Osei-Agyekum and Sarah Odedina, Cofounders, Accord Literary



Independent Nigerian publishing house **Cassava Republic** is working to create and translate 10 children’s books into the underserved Nigerian languages of Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba, giving kids access to beautiful, illustrated stories in their native tongues. On the coattails of this project, Cassava co-founder Bibi Bakare-Yusuf plans to launch a special imprint for local language

publishing which will last long after the project is completed.

Bibi said Covid-19 had delayed the receipt of commissioned works, disrupted marketing and publicity plans, and hampered most aspects of the project, yet she remains confident that the 10 planned books will still hit the shelves as planned in summer 2021.



“The APIF has enabled us to work with our existing authors to explore what it means to write for children in their mother tongue, and the output has been nothing short of amazing. It has allowed us to work with emerging illustrators and pay market rates. This is important for developing a pool of illustrators from within the continent. With this project, we’ll finally be able to test the commercial viability of indigenous language books.”

Bibi Bakare-Yusuf, Publishing Director, Cassava Republic



Positively African is a Kenyan content-creation and literary events company that wants to make African literature accessible, encourage lifelong learning and help connect communities by developing audio content. The goal is to distribute audio stories Africa-wide via digital platforms and on the streets through partnerships with universities and centres for the visually impaired.

During the first half of 2020, the founder of Positively African, Maimouna Jallow, has concentrated on business development and building the Positively African online platforms, work that could continue during by confinement. In the second half of the year, the team produced a 90-minute audio drama which will be launched in October 2020 and distributed both online and offline through local radio stations.



"With the support of APIF, *Tales of the Accidental City* has gone from words on a script to a lively audio drama brought to life by a cast of nine Kenyan actors. The story of four Nairobi residents stuck together in an anger management class is not only funny and poignant, but raises critical issues on the inequalities that the citizens of big African metropolitan cities face, and will be used as a catalyst for conversations around social justice. Thanks to this partnership, Positively African has been able to merge literature, theatre and audio to produce high quality content that will be distributed worldwide both on and off-line."

Maimouna Jallow, Co-founder and Director, Positively African



Through its Write the Future project, Nigerian e-publishing start-up **OkadaBooks** is driving literacy by giving teachers, students and parents free mobile phone access to books that children in Nigeria's low-income communities can relate to. By identifying new talent through writing competitions, OkadaBooks is going to create and distribute 10 new titles that address issues of gender equality, ethnic unity and environmental awareness. The project, in partnership with

Teach for Nigeria, has already engaged seven children's authors and an editor, and has now turned its attention to marketing, publicity and graphic design.

OkadaBooks CEO Okechekwu Ofili said that while the pandemic had forced him to delay the roll-out of the books to schools to Q2 2021 instead of Q4 2020, he had already engaged the authors and illustrators needed to produce them.



"The support of APIF and Dubai Cares has been timely and instrumental for Okada Books Limited. The funds - but more importantly the project advice and networking opportunities - have helped us identify stakeholders that have allowed us to scale our efforts faster to battle illiteracy in Nigeria using mobile devices. So far we have developed eight children's stories and are currently illustrating the books. The stories will be made available to over 20,000 students in low-income communities, all thanks to the APIF and Dubai Cares."

Okechukwu Ofili, CEO OkadaBooks

Library support

BOOK BUNK | GRANT AMOUNT \$50,000



Book Bunk, a project to restore the McMillan Memorial Library in Nairobi, was awarded \$50,000 towards work on the library's Kaloleni branch. The architectural restoration of the library is complete, with only the library's furniture, decor, security, book collection, and digital life ongoing.

Weeding the library's collection has yielded a log of all books to be kept, replaced and discarded. Book Bunk is working with the Nairobi authorities to encourage community engagement in libraries, through events, walking tours and film screenings.



"Through the support of the APIF, Book Bunk has been able to complete the work that we committed to doing in Kaloleni. The restoration of the McMillan Memorial Library in Kaloleni is now officially complete! To deliver this work in 2020, when the pandemic compromised so many livelihoods, has been incredibly rewarding. The restoration work employed a total of 28 men and women from Kaloleni who have continued to care for the library as we await its reopening."

Wanjiru Koinange, Founding Partner, Book Bunk

EXPOSING HOPE | GRANT AMOUNT \$10,000



The **Exposing Hope** project has built a library for one of many schools in the world's largest refugee settlement, the Kakuma camp, in Kenya. Kakuma is home to refugees from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Somalia, South

Sudan, Sudan and Uganda among others, and the APIF has provided funds to buy hundreds of textbooks listed in the Kenyan national curriculum to underpin the pupils' studies.



"APIF's support for Exposing Hope's Library in the Kakuma Refugee settlement was a circuit breaker. We decided to start the project early, so it could be ready to be a venue for the national exams, and the additional funds came just at the right time. The shell of the structure was used for 24 students sitting their final exams, without which they may not have been able to achieve their leaving certificates. And then work continued. Good donors not only support a project but also encourage others to support the project. Again, APIF's involvement has helped to bring other supporters."

Alissa Everett, Founder, Exposing Hope

Media coverage

By engaging Africa Communications Media Group (ACG), the APIF raised its visibility across the continent and attracted 1000% more applications in 2019. Below is some of the resulting media coverage.

BUSINESS POLICY INNOVATION LIFE + HOW AFRICA IS MAKING THE MOST OF WASTE

AFRICAN MEDIA AGENCY

IPA CALLS FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS TO TACKLE AFRICA'S REMOTE LEARNING CHALLENGES IN 2021-2022

US\$200,000 to be split between best applicants NAIROBI, Kenya, June 17, 2020,- /African Media Agency (AMA)/- The International Publishers Association (IPA) will from today accept project proposals to address the damaging impacts of Covid-19 on education in Africa, with grants from the \$200,000 Africa Publishing Innovation Fund (APIF) available to the best ideas. Africa-based entrepreneurs and [...]

AUTHOR
African Media Agency

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IPA calls for project proposals to tackle Africa's remote learning challenges in 2021-2022

AFRICA June 17, 2020 admin

US\$200,000 to be split between best applicants

NAIROBI, Kenya, June 17, 2020,-/African Media Agency (AMA)/- The International Publishers Association (IPA) will from today accept project proposals to address the

mu media update

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IPA calls for proposals to tackle Africa's remote learning challenges

18 Jun 2020 09:00 Media 152

The International Publishers Association (IPA) has announced that it will be accepting project proposals to address the damaging impacts of COVID-19 on education in Africa, with grants from the \$200 000 Africa Publishing Innovation Fund (APIF) available to the best ideas.

Africa-based entrepreneurs and innovators are encouraged to pitch their ideas via the [APIF website](#), after which the APIF will

MG MODERN GHANA

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School Choice Across

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11.08.2020 : AFRICA

Hundreds Pitch Ideas To The International Publishers Association To Confront Africa's Remote Education Challenges

...Shortlisting Underway To Decide Winners Of The US\$200,000 Fund In 2021-2022

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IPA Calls For Project Proposals To Tackle Africa's Remote Learning Challenges In 2021-2022

Public Relations > IPA calls for project proposals to tackle Africa's remote learning challenges in 2021-2022

Education And Training Public Relations

IPA calls for project proposals to tackle Africa's remote learning challenges in 2021-2022

by Vivie Tyohirena June 19, 2020 274



\\ The road ahead

2021-2022 funding round

Winning a grant from the Africa Publishing Innovation Fund is not easy. Like applying for a job, the process is long and demanding, it requires time, tenacity and focus.

The first step is the submission of an idea through the APIF website within a brief time window, which in 2020 was 1 July-31 August. Submissions are reviewed to see if they meet the stated criteria and the broader values of the APIF. In 2020, 311 submissions yielded 176 that were deemed viable.

After the submission deadline, anyone who

has submitted a viable idea is asked to fill out a comprehensive application form, with a detailed breakdown of their profile, their project's goals and potential impact, a budget forecast and a range of other information.

Of the 176 viable submissions, the APIF received 93 completed application forms for the APIF Committee members to sift through and evaluate.

In 2020 the APIF Committee was specifically looking for digital solutions to Africa's remote learning challenges, which were

serious enough before Covid-19, but gravely exacerbated by the pandemic. Distance learning in Africa is held back by poor internet coverage in rural areas, cost, and students' lack of technical means and funds to follow courses.

According to UNESCO, 89 percent of learners in sub-Saharan Africa have no access to a computer, 82 percent have no internet access, and around 56 million learners live outside mobile networks, which creates a huge learning gap.

At the time of writing, the vetting process

was ongoing. The committee members are considering factors such as likely impact; how innovative an idea is; the applicant's credentials and capacity to deliver, report and communicate; gender equality as a project goal; and whether the project will be sustainable and scalable.

Numerous lengthy committee discussions are needed to reach consensus on the most deserving candidates. The winners will be revealed in the autumn of 2020, and their funding released in the New Year.



\\ Financials

			Previous Period Expenditures	Current Period Expenditures	Cumulative Expenditures	USD
Entry	Activity	Actual Unit Cost	Jan 20 - Jun 20	Jul 20 - Dec 20	Jan 20 - Dec 20	Total Cost (Approved Budget)
PROGRAM DIRECT COSTS						
Disbursal of funds						
1.1	Book Bunk		50,000			\$50,000
1.2	Accord Literary		20,000			\$20,000
1.3	Cassava Republic		20,000			\$20,000
1.4	Okada Books		20,000			\$20,000
1.5	Positively African		20,000			\$20,000
1.6	Puku Foundation		20,000			\$20,000
1.7	Exposing Hope			10,000	10,000	\$10,000
Total			150,000	10,000	160,000	\$160,000
PROGRAM INDIRECT COSTS						
Indirect Costs						
8.1	Website build, hosting and maintenance		25,000			\$25,000
8.2	Six-month engagement PR / comms agency ACG		15,000			\$15,000
TOTAL COSTS			40,000	0	0	\$40,000
Total Operational Costs			190,000	10,000	200,000	\$200,000



www.apinnovation.fund

