Kiwimbi International 2025 Annual Report



EXPANSION

"...it is your trust and generosity that keeps that ripple spreading to help thousands build a better future for themselves and their families."

Dear Friends,

This year's report features our newest satellite library, which demonstrates how transformative our efforts can be for children in rural Africa. Kiwimbi opened the only free public library in the county of a million people in 2013. This was a critical step because children needed to learn to read in a new language (English, the language of education in Kenya) but literally had no access to books (in any language). The Library in Kakemer is a culmination.

Kiwimbi means "ripple" in Swahili, and the ripple created by you, our supporters, has enabled us to assure that children in 93 schools have reading materials. Each of those schools teaches 500 - 1,000 students! And none of those schools had access to books for the children to read.

Books are just one component of what you are supporting. Our Library has been serving as our Learning Center, from which camps and the full complement of our academic programs are run; where 130 employees and volunteers carry out Kiwimbi's educational initiatives. The ¼ acre on which the Library sits is too small to accommodate all that we do. This is why we have **invested in the construction of a new Community Learning Center**. It is a much needed expansion of our working space, and will enable us in turn to expand access to our programs.

Kiwimbi accomplishes so much on a shoestring budget - we are determined to use the funding granted to us by our supporters wisely - it is your trust and generosity that keeps that ripple spreading to help thousands build a better future for themselves and their families.

Thank you for caring!

Lynne

Lynne Rathgeber
Board Chair



We strive to ensure the information presented in this report is accurate and up to date. If you have any questions, please contact info@kiwimbi.org.



BEFORE...

In 2025, the Kiwimbi Kakemer Satellite Library was established in a remote community, bringing new access to books to over **5,000 students**! This expansion was funded by a generous grant from **Project Redwood**. The ripple of impact grew quickly. The new Library inspired the area's first kindergarten program, providing early academic opportunity for 28 youngsters! We greatly appreciate the support of this important project, and the ability to reach a new generation of students. The photo above depicts the building's original state, and the photo below shows what is possible thanks to our partners and their dedication to our mission.

...AND AFTER



Updates & Expansion

New Academic Opportunities

Kiwimbi teaching assistants increased their presence in the classrooms at our Focus Schools, working alongside the teachers in addition to working with students outside of school hours. This new partnership decreases the student/teacher ratio, demonstrates the trust that exists between the schools and the Library, and gives the students more of an opportunity for personalized academic support.

In addition to the new Kakemer Library, two new schools were added to our outreach program, bringing books for the students on a rotating basis to a total of 93 schools.

Peace Corps Volunteers

During the year, Kiwimbi was fortunate to have the help of three Peace Corps volunteers who supported us in a variety of important ways. One was a huge help to the agri-nutrition project and demonstration garden; another provided important education for teachers, children and parents about malaria prevention and symptoms; and a third was instrumental in teaching math and increasing proficiency at our neighboring secondary school, St. Thomas Amagoro Girls School.

Sports and Games

It is rare for children in rural communities to have access to quality sports equipment but we are able to offer a wide variety of games and sports at our Library including basketball, tennis, golf, soccer, jump rope, as well as indoor games like chess and checkers.

Kiwimbi recognizes and priotoritizes the benefits of physical activity for the students in our programs. Camp days and all weekend sessions begin with early morning physical warm-ups.

Agri-Nutrition program

In 2025, we expanded our agri-nutrition program, thanks to support from the **Roy A. Hunt Foundation**. Over 200 women received instruction, equipment and indigenous seeds, enabling them to establish their own gardens and provide food for their families.

As part of their agreement for participating, the women contributed seeds from their harvest to a new Kiwimbi seed bank and taught other women in their community the farming skills they learned, spreading the impact of the program.

Distribution of 40,000 Shoes

Because International was so impressed with they way we handled the successful distribution of shoes to the students in our Focus Schools in 2024, that they asked us to take the lead in organizing and managing the distribution of 40,000 pairs of shoes throughout the greater community. What a impactful and life-changing partnership!







Above: students in front of Kidek (Focus School); a delivery from Because international; students in front of Ikapolok (Focus School).

Right: students learning in Kiwimbi's tailoring program; a snapshot of our demonstration garden; carpentry students working on their latest project - desks for the children at Kidek.

Bridgit's Story of Gratitude

It is with great gratitude that I have found Kiwimbi Library for providing essential services that have helped to improve my learning. Kiwimbi has provided several teachers for us, thus making it easy for teachers to consult with each pupil. I am ready for the national exam and I am sure I will pass. I want to become an engineer, and when I succeed in life I will come back to my community and uplift those people who have faced so many challenges and troubles. I will be happy to see a better community with people not having to face challenges that I have faced. I am thankful to Kiwimbi for helping me succeed and overcome my challenges.




KIWIMBI


KIWIMBI
TEACHING GARDEN AT KIDEK


KIWIMBI CARPENTRY


KIWIMBI

Our Biggest Update - We're Expanding!

We have grown well beyond the capacity of our current Library space. In 2025, we broke ground on our beautiful, new Kiwimbi Community Learning Center, the flagship of a new Kiwimbi Campus. The Campus will eventually house our vocational programs, many of our educational programs, and much more. We will keep our Library in its current building for as long as the County continues to let us borrow it. This new space will allow us to expand our reach further than ever before.





Our lunch program provides much needed nutrition for hundreds of students every day. This allows children to stay at school rather than walking home mid-day, ensuring they are re-energized and return to their afternoon classes. Many families cannot provide lunch to their children, so Kiwimbi's lunch program meets the need.



The Problem

24.7%
of residents in Busia county, Kiwimbi's focus area, are **illiterate.**[1]

16.4%
of 3rd graders in Busia meet **minimum numeracy** thresholds.[2]

1 in 3
Kenyans **don't earn enough** to fully feed their families.[3]

88.7%
of residents in Busia County (where Kiwimbi is located) are **food insecure.**[4]

44.3%
of Busia county residents rely on **informal income sources**.[5]

52.7%
of Busia county residents live **below the poverty line.**[6]

Your Impact

Kiwimbi **increased math scores** by **185%** at a partner school.

We provided **over 40,000 meals** for children last year.

We **trained 560** locals through our vocational programs.

[1] Busia CIDP, 2022 (https://repository.kippra.or.ke/server/api/core/bitstreams/6dd61792-0e61-42c9-aa4d-b98f2cc5287c/content)
[2] Daily Nation, 2026 (https://nation.africa/kenya/news/education/knec-report-highlights-gaps-in-cbe-5439956)
[3] KBS, 2022 (knbs.or.ke/reports/kenya-poverty-report-2022/)
[4] NICE, 2025 (nice.ethz.ch/busia/)
[5] KNBS, 2015, knbs.or.ke/reports/2015-county-statistical-abstracts-busia/
[6] KNBS, 2022, knbs.or.ke/reports/kenya-poverty-report-2022/

Staff Update - Robert Ikedi, Manager

Kiwimbi bid a fond farewell to Robert, who has gone on to pursue academic opportunities. Robert shared, "Today, I stand on the threshold of earning a PhD in Physics. A reality I never dared to dream when I was younger. But I did not climb this high alone. I have been lifted by the quiet, unwavering strength of giants; people like the leaders, and the many benefactors of Kiwimbi who chose to see potential where others saw impossibility, who chose to believe in children like me.

I found peace in knowing that I was not alone. That somewhere, people were standing in the gap for me, believing, planning, sacrificing all so I could rise. That kind of love… that kind of belief… it changes everything.

And now, I am committed, with every fiber of my being, to continue this legacy. To become a bridge for others, just as Kiwimbi was for me. To carry forward this torch of education and opportunity, lighting the way for more lives, more dreams, more futures.

To Kiwimbi, thank you. For your heart. For your vision. For changing my life.

And to every Kiwimbi benefactor, thank you. Your generosity echoes across generations, across continents, and across hearts."



Financials

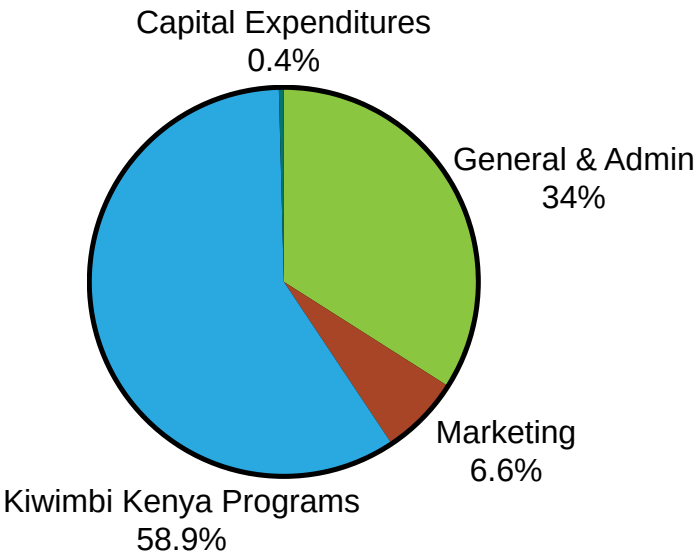
Kiwimbi International raises most of the funds to support Kiwimbi Kenya. Below are the financials for both Kiwimbi International and Kiwimbi Kenya.

Income

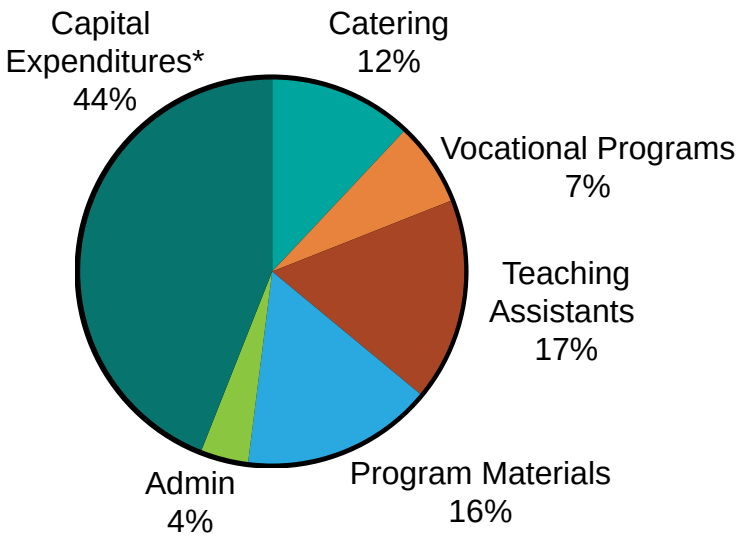
Income source	Amount (USD)	Percent
Corporate Giving	$31,404.00	9%
Individual Giving	$257,291.00	77%
Foundation Grants	$47,000.00	14%

Expenses

Kiwimbi International



Kiwimbi Kenya



**Capital expenditures remain increased in 2025 due to the construction on our new facility.*

Thank you to all who made this possible!



Join us in support of our mission.

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Janet Van Abs - *Vice-Chair*
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Olubayi Olubayi
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John Rathgeber
Jane Steele

Key Personnel

Lisa Connell - Director of Development & Communications
Salima Lihanda - Grant Writer
Catherine Malalah - General Manager, Kiwimbi Kenya

Donors & Supporters

We gratefully acknowledge the support of the many individuals, foundations, corporations, and local businesses who provided opportunity through education with their gifts in 2025.

$25,000 and Above

Lynne and John Rathgeber*
Project Redwood
Jane Steele
Carol Ulmer and Ken Degen

$10,000-$24,999

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The John and Susan Dewan Foundation
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Helen and William Mazer Foundation
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Janet and Daniel Van Abs

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South + Pine
St. Luke's Episcopal Church Parish Life Guild
Lesli Woodruff

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Monthly Donors up to $500

Katie and Zach Bills
Erin Divers

Kiwimbi International is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Thank you to all our donors (including *monthly donors) who gave up to $500. We truly appreciate your support!

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Pro Bono Partnership provides us with access to quality legal advice free of charge, saving our funds for supporting the programs that make a difference. Thank you Pro Bono Partnership!



Special thanks to Kiwimbi's own Duncan Omakada, Anne Zella, Moses Isaa, and Siraj Otele for capturing the photos in this report.