

2022/23

ANNUAL REPORT

BIRTHING KIT FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA





Birthing Kit
Foundation
Australia



Photo: Ugandan women at Bundibugyo Hospital with their clean birth kits



**Birthing Kit
Foundation**
Australia

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 www.instagram.com/bkfa.au



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OUR VISION

A world in which all women and girls have access to a clean and safe birth.



OUR MISSION

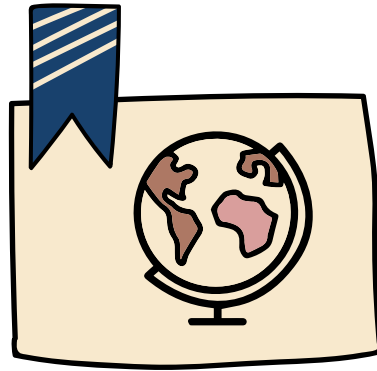
To positively impact the lives of mothers and babies in developing countries.

To partner with and empower our partner organisations and communities to advocate, educate and provide resources to improve outcomes for expectant mothers.



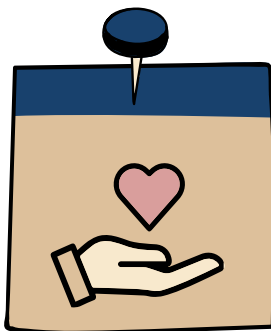
Enable systems where women and girls become truly empowered.

OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE



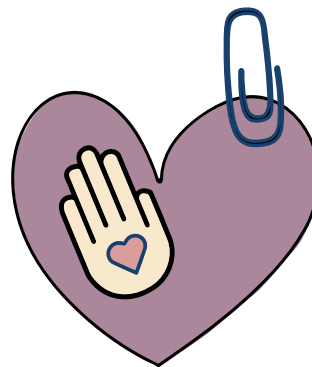
31

GLOBAL PARTNERS
across 11 countries were
involved in our global initiatives



11,183

VOLUNTEERS
dedicated their
time to assemble
Birthing Kits



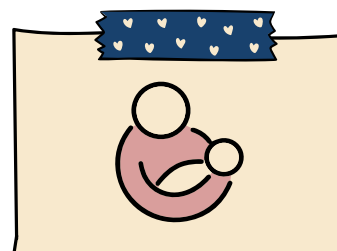
219

ASSEMBLY DAYS
were held in
Australia



113,640

BIRTHING KITS
were sent to people in
under-resourced and
humanitarian settings



261,000

MOTHERS & NEWBORNS
were helped with health
equipment or services

Chairperson Report



The 2022 to 2023 year may well turn out to be a pivotal one for the Birthing Kit Foundation. Changes brought on by the pandemic started trends that have challenged us to consider new options for kit production and delivery. Our initial goal was a production target of 120,000 kits in Australia. As it became clear that this goal was beyond our reach, we sought alternative solutions by leveraging the capacity of experienced partners overseas.

Kit Assembly Days were still occurring at nearly the same rate as in previous years, but kit production was down about 5% on the previous year, with just over 95,000 kits assembled. With only one Assembly Day through the year producing more than 2,000 kits, it became apparent that service clubs and community groups were struggling to return to pre-pandemic levels of support.

Nevertheless, nearly 114,000 kits were dispatched over the year, mainly to sub-Saharan Africa, taking the total close to 2.7 million since the first Zonta Birthing Kit was created in 1999. This total is testament to the dedication of the Zonta Clubs around Australia, which still make half of all our kits either directly through club Assembly Days or by supporting community groups and schools. This loyal support was officially acknowledged this year through our Ambassadors and Champions Program, when we publicly honoured individual Zontians for their contribution.

In response to the decline in local kit numbers the Board sought to boost in-country kit production. The Neilson Foundation, the Foundations' greatest single donor, provided much needed funds to allow us to do this. Kits are now made regularly by

APDA in Ethiopia and MHCD in DR Congo. Local kit production employs women, can give partners in remote areas more security of supply and, in the case of APDA, a tailor-made kit more suited to the needs of the local women. It includes a baby wrap for example, an item too bulky to include in kits from Australia.

By mid-year, an exploratory visit by Program Manager Mercy Oloo identified that, in Uganda, some of our long-term partners had matured to the point where they too could manage the logistics of kit production and distribution, providing kits to needier partners in their own country and across borders. Special funds sourced from The Charitable Foundation allowed this work to start and it is very satisfying to see some of our most enterprising partners take on new responsibilities.

The pandemic has left more women in need. UN Women statistics "estimated that 47 million women and girls have been pushed into extreme poverty since the declaration of the pandemic." ¹ By implication, this tells us that the satisfying trends of the pre-pandemic years of increasing maternal and infant survival might be reversed.

In response, we began researching options for women in eastern DR Congo. What do women do when no birthing kit is available? This is the question we are investigating and for which we hope to find viable solutions. While still in its infancy, we are looking to build in-country resilience and sustainability via a new project.

We thank all our supporters for providing us with the capacity to adapt to the changing times. The Neilson Foundation, in particular, has become a valued ally in our work. Funding from this family foundation has been regular since 2008. It has been a life saver for the BKFA on several occasions and has been a major factor in our survival in recent years.

As the Foundation gradually gets back on its feet, we thank them for their enormous contribution.

I would also like to thank the Foundation's staff and Board. They have worked cohesively and conscientiously over the year and I thank them for their dedication. It has been slow and steady work rebuilding after the pandemic but there is a sense of achievement and optimism now as we develop new options and find new pathways to help birthing mothers in the poorest countries in the world.

Jennifer Weaver | *Chairperson*

Photo: Traditional Birth Attendants from MHCD producing clean birth kits in-country



¹ <https://press.un.org/en/2021/sgsm20822.doc.htm> Sourced July 2023

From UNICEF ²

From 2000 to 2020, the global maternal mortality ratio (MMR) declined by 34 per cent – from 342 deaths to 223 deaths per 100,000 live births, according to UN inter-agency estimates. This translates into an average annual rate of reduction of 2.1 per cent. While substantive, this is about one third of the 6.4 per cent annual rate needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of 70 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births by 2030.

Though there has been significant progress in reducing global MMR between 2000 and 2015, the numbers have been stagnant when averaging rates of reduction between 2016 and 2022. In most regions, the rate of reduction stalled and in Western Europe and North America, and Latin America and the Caribbean, MMR increased over the 2016-2022 period.

JENNIFER WEAVER, BKFA CHAIRPERSON AWARDED AN OAM

In June, our Chairperson Jennifer Weaver was awarded with an Order of Australia medal on the King's Birthday lists. Congratulations once again to Jenny. We had the opportunity to chat with Jenny about her time with BKFA including career highlights, and what the OAM means to her.

Tell us the story behind the BKFA and why you chose to get involved in the early days?

The Foundation emerged out of the Zonta BKFA project, of which Julie Monis-Ivett – BKFA Board Director, was involved in. It was Julie who initially introduced me to the concept of birthing kits. Originally the project caught my eye as it sounded achievable; it was a practical way we could support women in the developing world who had no access to health care. I was captured by what the project was trying to do, which was to stop women dying unnecessarily or from getting infections, whilst in child birth. There was so many possibilities with the project.

Highlight of your years being involved with BKFA?

Without a doubt the highlights are always visiting the women we support in the countries where we help them. I have visited India, Vietnam, Ethiopia and DR Congo during my time with BKFA. This motivates me to keep going, and it keeps me grounded. Every time I am reminded how little these women have, often they are illiterate with no one to rely on for basic health services. This reminds me how empowering the kits can be and how critical the work is BKFA undertakes. To some, it may just be a kit, but to the women on the ground there are a huge number of ancillary benefits, including status, power to look after oneself and greater authority in their own communities.

Why should individuals choose to support the BKFA vision and cause?

The death rate of women during child birth in developing countries is still too high. There are still too many women in this world who have no access to health care and no support. Further to this, Covid set the project back significantly. This means there is still a need for the birthing kit project, we need to continue with the important work we do.

What does it mean to you to be recognised with an OAM?

The OAM gave me a sense that the work is worthy and genuinely important. It has been recognised by the Australian Government. With over 2.7 million kits distributed, we have saved the lives of thousands of women and the number of infections we have prevented is phenomenal. BKFA is a small group of people working hard, and being recognised for that consolidates your belief in the project. It is a very satisfying achievement.



DR JOY O’HAZY, BKFA CO-FOUNDER AWARDED AN OAM

Dr Joy O’Hazy is one of Birthing Kit Foundation Australia co-founders. Awarded an OAM in January 2023, Joy is a Doctor with a particular interest and qualification in women’s health. It was her interest in women’s health that inspired her ideas behind the clean birth kit. We had the opportunity to chat with Joy about her BKFA journey.

Tell us your story behind Birthing Kit Foundation Australia?

A group of Adelaide based Zontians, who had started the Zonta Birthing Kit project in 1999, saw the benefit of continuing the project as an autonomous Foundation. Thus, Birthing Kit Foundation Australia was inaugurated in 2006.

You were the brains behind the kit itself, tell us more about how you came up with this idea?

On turning 40, I asked myself the question – what can I, as one individual, do to make the most difference for women?

After reflecting on all I’d learnt and experienced, I remembered hearing Sally Field - as an ambassador for Save the Children, talk at the 4th World Conference on Women. She discussed the concept of simple birthing kits that women in Nepal used in childbirth. I explored birthing kits for two years before presenting the idea to my Zonta Club

in the Adelaide Hills.

What are the highlights of your time involved with BKFA?

I have had a number of highlights including the those I have shared below.

1. BKFA has been a catalyst for many other programs for women - for example the projects we deliver in DR Congo.
2. That Zonta has continued to support the District Birthing Kit project for 20 years.
3. That we have made and distributed more than 2.7 million kits.
4. The opportunity to work with a group of similarly committed individuals over many years.

Why is the work BKFA do so important?

All women deserve to have a safe and clean birth. But many women around the world don’t have the resources to do so. We provide basic resources, education and support, via on the ground partners, to women in this demographic.

You were awarded an OAM - please tell us more about this, when? What did this honour mean to you?

I received my OAM on Australia Day 2023 for services to the community and medicine.

I appreciated the great honour bestowed in recognition on my many and varied efforts to improve the status of women.

Photo: Ugandan midwife Clementina



Photo: Clementina's home where all the deliveries take place

BKFA Ambassadors and Champions

Early in 2022 the BKFA embarked on a Program of Recognition. This was to recognise our supporters who helped enable the birthing kit project to grow.

To make and distribute 2.7 million birthing kits, one needs a huge supporter base. Zonta supporters have now assembled over 1.56 million kits which is 65% of the kits made by volunteers. Zonta Clubs have always been, and still are, our greatest supporters.

BKFA Patron: From Zonta, the BKFA Board invited Val Sarah PIP AM to be our Patron and we were thrilled she accepted. Val had supported the Birthing Kit Project since 2000 when, as Zonta International President, she approved the kits being called Zonta Birthing Kits and the use of the Zonta logo on all kits. Val was our BKFA Ambassador from 2011 and we welcomed her as our BKFA Patron in June 2022.

BKFA Ambassadors: Next was to appoint a BKFA Ambassador for each of the 3 Zonta Districts, 22, 23 and 24 across Australia.

Each District Board nominated a person who was a passionate advocate for the BKFA Vision and Mission, for the benefits of birthing kits on maternal and newborn health, for the benefits of Traditional Birth Attendant training programs and for the achievements of the Foundation.

BKFA Ambassadors are significant figureheads for the Foundation and their primary goal is to help BKFA achieve greater visibility and public awareness and to encourage more kits to be assembled by Zonta Clubs. They provide

leadership at a regional and local level and serve the specific objective to represent the BKFA within Zonta. They promote the work and achievements of the BKFA by speaking at Zonta Club meetings, PR events, Area Workshops, District Conferences and Assembly Days.

We welcome our 3 BKFA Ambassadors.

- D 22 BKFA Ambassador Simone Ricketts
- D 23 BKFA Ambassador Tyril Houghton
- D 24 BKFA Ambassador Sandra Gilbert

BKFA Champions: The BKFA wanted to officially recognize past and present Zonta members who have been dedicated to fundraising and organising Birthing Kit Assembly Days for their contributions as BKFA Champions. They are nominated by their Zonta clubs for their work at club level.

A BKFA Champion's primary goal is to organise more Assembly Days and advocate for every woman to have a clean and safe birth, to promote the work and achievements of the BKFA and advise the BKFA of promotional opportunities. Each club may have several BKFA Champions.

BKFA Champions were recognised at recent Zonta Area Workshops and were presented with their badges.



The Clean Birth Kit Program

During the 2022-23 period, the Clean Birth Kit (CBK) program demonstrated its impact by distributing 113,640 birthing kits across Sub-Saharan Africa and the Pacific through partnerships with 30 field partners.

Among the inspiring stories received, one hailed from Papua New Guinea (PNG), where BKFA collaborated with PNGSDP Health Services. In the vast expanse of the country's western province, outreach health teams traverse challenging terrains to provide essential care. In PNG clinical services are scarce, and women often give birth in remote areas. PNGSDP patrols deliver basic training to volunteers, enabling them to create sterile birthing environments and avert obstetric emergencies.

Testimony from Mother in Suabi Village who used a birthing kit to assist in her delivery:

"I started feeling labour pains in the morning at around 3am on Sunday 31st July 2022. My mum told me to wait till daybreak so we can walk to the garden. I tried to sleep but the pain was coming stronger, so I stayed up and waited for dawn to break. Around 5am mum and I collected our things and started a three hour walk to our garden. I tried to be strong so that we could get to our garden before I gave birth. After arriving, mum cleared the bush for me to have my baby there. By then I felt the pain coming stronger. I gave the kit to mum and explained to her how to use it.

She opened the kit and got the black plastic out. She placed it on the cleared bush. I was still walking around trying to control my pain. I tried to eat but I couldn't because the pain is so much to bear for me. I asked mum for some water to drink and continued walking.

At around 10am my baby's water broke so I sat on the plastic. I told mum that I felt the baby was coming so I went and squatted on the plastic. I told her to wear her gloves and she did as instructed. I squatted and the baby's head came out first. Mum caught the baby and placed it on the plastic beside me. The baby's cord was still hanging, and mum asked me to continue pushing down for the placenta to come out. After a while the placenta came out and then I started bleeding. Mum took the baby to the side and tied the baby's cord with the white rope and then cut the cord with the clean blade. She covered the baby with a nappy and blanket and placed her in her bilum. I cleaned myself up using the small piece of gauze in the pack. I got dressed and then walked to a small shelter built in our garden. Mum brought the baby to me, and she started a fire for me to warm myself up. I felt weak so I slept and didn't breastfeed my baby. I woke up to her crying, so I got her out of the bilum and tried breastfeeding her. I was hungry as well, so mum gave me kaukau to eat. It was already afternoon, so we decided to walk back to the village. On our way I had my bath in the river with the soap. We reached the village at night, but I couldn't sleep. I cried of pain throughout the night and neglected my baby. One of my cousin sister saw that and came and breastfed my baby since she had a baby as well. My family took me to the health facility waiting house on Monday morning and asked for help. We heard the SDP health team is coming to Suabi so we waited there. The team arrived on Tuesday and came to assess me for my very bad bleeding, and treated me. I am very grateful for the birthing kit and the SDP health team as well."

This story encapsulates the program's significance, showcasing the tangible impact of accessible resources and well-coordinated field efforts in ensuring safer childbirths, even in the most remote corners of Papua New Guinea.

Mercy Oloo | Program Manager





Maternal & Neo-Natal Mortality

Several United Nations organisations published Trends in Maternal Mortality from 2000 to 2020 in February 2023.

The numbers of women dying from childbirth related reasons has stagnated at about 287,000 in 2020.

249,000 of these deaths were in 2 of the 9 regions of the world:

- Sub Saharan Africa - 202,000 women
- Southern Asia - 47,000 women

More than half of all maternal deaths occurred in 5 countries in 2020, those listed below:

- Nigeria - 82,000
- India - 24,000
- DR Congo - 22,000
- Ethiopia - 10,000
- Pakistan - 9,800

However compared to the year 2000, there has been a 33% reduction in the numbers.

Another indicator used in the report is the Maternal Mortality rate. It is the calculation of the number of women who die out of every 100,000 women who had a live birth that year .

The rate in Australia is 3 per 100,000.

There are 3 countries where this rate is more than 1,000 per 100,000, these are South Sudan, Chad and Nigeria. Women in Chad have an average of 6.26 children each.

So if you are a 15 year old woman living in Chad, you have a 1 in 15 chance of dying from a pregnancy related issue in your lifetime, whereas if you are a 15 year old in Belarus it is a 1 in 65,000 chance of the same.

The 3 biggest ways recommended to reduce maternal deaths are;

- Providing Oxytocics to prevent excess bleeding
- Good hygiene, clean birthing practices
- Blood pressure checks and Magnesium Sulphate for eclampsia

Currently BKFA focuses its kits supply to Sub Saharan Africa, mainly Nigeria, DR Congo and Uganda, but also provides some kits to PNG and Haiti.

In Ethiopia the Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA), are making their own kits in country.

We are honing in on the clean birthing practice recommendations by supplying the kits, but also educating the birthing attendants and pregnant women, on hygiene and clean practices.

We have also started sponsoring midwifery students at the Jonglei Health Science Institute in Bor - South Sudan.

Joy O'Hazy | Deputy Chair

References, World Health Organisation - <https://www.who.int/publications/item/9789240068759>

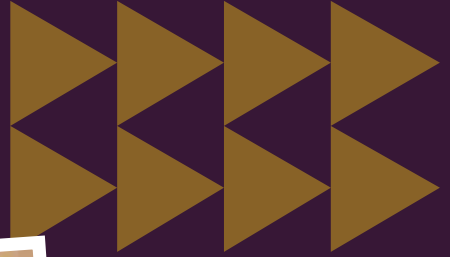


Photo: Congolese women work with MHCD to produce clean birth kits



Future Directions Committee



The Future Directions Committee makes recommendations to the BKFA Board to determine target audiences, future programs and partners. Its role is to find work with specialists who have entrepreneurial, technological and creative experience to explore future options for BKFA, including new fundraising models. The Future Directions Committee's achievements over the past year are outlined below.

We continue to recognise **our major partner Zonta** through a program of BKFA Ambassadors and Champions in each of the three Australian Zonta Districts. This is achieving greater awareness and support for Clean Birth Kit assembly days.

During the year Australian Zonta Districts prepared a resolution for their respective District Conferences to be passed in readiness for the 2024 Zonta International Convention to support the Clean Birth Kit Program. The objective is for Zonta International support to increase the number of kits produced and more traditional birth attendants to be trained by involvement of Zonta Clubs globally.

The BKFA are working with **Rotary International** to establish a similar model that is being used with Zonta to increase the number of kits to be assembled. The relationship continues with the University of NSW through their educational organisation 180 Degree Consulting to sharpen the focus of the engagement and communication strategy. Other organisations and education establishments are being pursued to increase the number of kits being assembled in Australia.

We continue to identify organisations to fund in-country kit production and training of traditional birth attendants. The Charitable Foundation are funding programmes in Uganda and the Neilson Foundation continue their support of the programme in Ethiopia. We also commenced support to a clinic in South Sudan.

The BKFA does not have the capacity to supply a birthing kit for every woman who is birthing in a developing country. Clean birthing kits are also often not available due to a lack of supply, border shutdowns or transport issues. To address this challenge, we are working with a field partner in DR Congo, Dr Luc Mulimbalimba and Sharon Wollaston a development consultant, to finalise a graphical poster/handout and video outlining how to provide a safe birthing environment when a birthing kit is not available. This can then be adapted for regional and cultural differences.

Ted Bear | Director

Photo: S.O.U.L Foundation – Uganda, works with women to produce kits





Birthing Kit Distribution

2022/2023

During the 2022/2023 year a total of 113,640 kits were sent to our global partners in Africa, Haiti, South Asia and Papua New Guinea

ORGANIZATION	LOCATION	KITS SENT
Mission in Health Care and Development	DR Congo South Kivu Province North Kivu Province Kinshasa Province Kongo Central Province Tanganyika Province	
Women Glory	DR Congo South Ubangi	5000
Redefined	DR Congo Oro Province	5000
SOS Jeunesse et Enfance en Detresse	DR Congo South Kivu Province	3000
Reef & Rainforest Research Centre	Papua New Guinea Torres Strait Region PNG Treaty Villages	1000
Rotary Action Group for Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health	Nigeria Kano State Kaduna State Federal Capital Territory Ondo State Enugu State	10,000
Safer Hands Initiative	Nigeria South-West Region	8000
Beaton Foundation Initiative	Uganda Eastern Region	1500
Golden Change Concerned Youth Forum	Nigeria FCT Abuja	12,000
Egoli Africa	Uganda Eastern Region	2500
Living Child Inc.	Papua New Guinea East Sepik Province	6000
Think Humanity	Uganda Western Region	800
Supporting Opportunities for Ugandans to Learn Foundation	Uganda Eastern Region	1000
Aid for Africa Down Under	Zimbabwe Masvingo Province	2000



Women's Health to Wealth	Ghana	Ashanti Region	3000
Foundation for Development and Relief Africa	Uganda	Oyam	2000
Caris Foundation International	Haiti		10,000
Diocesan Health Initiative	Nigeria	Niger State	2000
Teso Women Peace Activists	Uganda	Eastern Region	2500
Hacey Health Initiative	Nigeria	Lagos State Ogun State	15,000
Uganda Australia Christian Outreach	Uganda	Central Region	6,840
SDP Health	Papua New Guinea		4700
Our Uganda Monstries	Uganda		1200
Love Mercy Australia	Uganda		1000
No Roads	Papua New Guinea	Oro Province	400
Rotary Club of Makindye	Uganda	Eastern & Central Region	1000
Better Healthcare Organisation	South Sudan		5000
Community Responsibility Plan	Tanzania		200
Partners in Community Social Action	Uganda		1000
			113,640

**Adelaide BKFA
Headquarters**

Our Ethiopia & DR Congo Projects

BKFA continues to provide funding for its training programs in Ethiopia and Congo, demonstrating its commitment to enhancing healthcare in these regions.

Through sustained efforts, BKFA has contributed a total of \$39,795 to Mission Health Care and Development (MHCD) and \$45,555 to the Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA) in 2022-23. MHCD's impact is centered on the implementation of the "Delivery Sets for Safer Childbirth" initiative in South Kivu, DR Congo, and they have worked with BKFA since 2008. Simultaneously, APDA has been dedicated to the advancement of reproductive, maternal, and newborn health in Dullass, located within the Afar Region, which has been ongoing since 2009.

MHCD's program has experienced great engagement from traditional midwives, who actively collaborated to assess the suitability of locally sourced items for childbirth. Informed decision-making was facilitated by research conducted by Uvira Community University (UVC). As a result of these efforts, each midwife was equipped with 200 CBKs, complemented by additional medical gloves. This direct intervention translated to tangible benefits for approximately 10,000 expectant women and newborns. Furthermore, the project extended its reach through the support of 50 Community Health Workers, who provided assistance to over 2,700 birthing women lacking access to these essential kits. The project's ripple effect was profound, touching the lives of nearly

30,000 individuals, encompassing vulnerable women's families, expectant mothers' relatives, and villagers. The initiative left an incredible positive mark on many aspects of these communities' lives. A notable impact was observed in cleaner birthing environments for over 10,000 newborns, while approximately 200 children gained access to education. A remarkable outcome emerged as well, with the assembly of 10,000 kits, enabling traditional midwives to launch microfinance projects that actively counter poverty.

On the APDA front, the training program remains ongoing. Madina's story provides an update of the ongoing work in Afar region. Approximately three months ago, Madina faced a challenging situation when she gave birth to quadruplets in Kilaalu, a remote location situated three hours away from the nearest asphalt road. Tragically, the first newborn did not survive the home birth. However, Madina's story takes a turn towards hope and resilience.

With swift action, her husband and a local leader mobilised resources to secure transportation for Madina's journey to APDA's Barbara May Maternity Hospital in Mille. This remarkable feat involved a grueling seven-hour drive over challenging terrain. However, it was a critical step in ensuring the well-being of Madina and her remaining three sons.

Upon arrival at the hospital, Madina received the necessary medical attention and underwent a cesarean section. This procedure resulted in the successful delivery of her three precious boys, each with varying weights: 1.9 kg, 1.6kg, and 1.4 kg. Thanks to the dedication of the medical staff and the resilience of Madina and her family, the boys are steadily growing and thriving. Their story is a testament to the positive impact of the APDA program, which continues to make a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals and families in the Afar region.

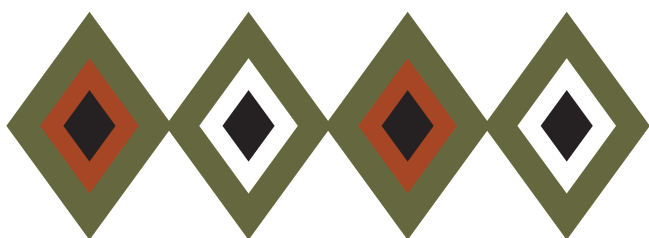
This signifies BKFA's sustained commitment to fostering progress and development in the Afar region. BKFA is grateful for the support of Neilson Foundation who have made significant donations to make these life-changing outcomes possible.



Photo: MHCD works with Traditional Birth Attendants to produce in-country kits for expectant mothers



Three boys born February 20th 2023 with mother Madina in their house



East Africa Uganda Trip Report



In December 2022, Mercy Oloo (BKFA Program Manager) closely observed the activities of our Ugandan field partners as part of evaluating BKFA's Clean Birth Kit (CBK) Program achievements over the past two decades. Dr. Edward Sembatya from Uganda Australian Christian Outreach (UACO) emphasized the vital importance of the program. Over the last twenty years, Uganda has seen a significant drop in its infant mortality rate, going from 87.908 in 2000 to an impressive 39.171 by 2023.

Two decades ago, resources were severely limited, leading to instances where some women had to resort to using animal skins during childbirth. Additionally, health workers grappled with the challenges of HIV/AIDS, as well as insufficient support within healthcare facilities. The introduction of BKFA CBK has had a significant impact, ensuring safer deliveries for women and girls but also offering disease protection for healthcare personnel.

Despite economic challenges and a rise in pregnancies, our field partners remained steadfast in their commitment. The BKFA CBKs continued to play a pivotal role in ensuring hygienic deliveries. This was evident as we adeptly navigated challenges like COVID-19 and Ebola and continued to ensure the program's success.

During Mercy's visit to Supporting Opportunities for Ugandans to Learn Foundation (S.O.U.L), she had the privilege of meeting a remarkable Traditional Birthing Attendant (TBA), Clementina, who supports women and girls, even as the Uganda Ministry of Health has banned the work of TBAs. Hospital resources remained inadequate for pregnant women due to Uganda's high fertility rate, which has strained the healthcare system. Despite the limited recognition and training, TBAs like Clementina excel in their roles, showcasing their dedication.



Photo: UACO (Uganda) works with women to produce kits for distribution

*Photos right:
A Ugandan midwife and
SOUL Foundation working
with women to produce
kits and conduct antenatal
education training classes*

Victoria, a nurse from Egoli Africa, praised the effectiveness of BKFA kits while also suggesting areas for improvement, such as larger plastic sheets and surgical gloves, which shows the need to empower the field partners to make kits that fit their own cultural requirements.

Through the generous funding of The Charitable Foundation (TCF) in the amount of \$119,130, BKFA has developed an In-Country Kit Production program in collaboration with S.O.U.L and UACO. Starting in January 2023 TCF's support aims to assemble and distribute up to 25,000 CBKs. Our partnership with seven Ugandan field partners will ensure the distribution of these kits during the program's inaugural year. UACO will engage with up to 20 women and girls in procuring the kits. Already in the first 6 months, seven women and girls are actively involved in assembling up to 20,000 kits. The SOUL foundation is also involved, conducting Antenatal Education Training for 450 women and girls, five Village Health Teams, and three midwives. Additionally, 30 women and girls will assemble up to 5,000 kits as part of the program. Egoli Africa, Rotary of Makindye, Teso Women Peace Activists, Think Humanity, Uganda Australia Christian Outreach and Love Mercy will distribute the Clean Birth Kits.

In conclusion, the program has achieved remarkable outcomes assembling 5,000 kits in 2022-23, leading to safer childbirths and overall enhancements in maternal and infant health across Uganda.

Mercy Oloo | Program Manager





**WE COULD
THIS WITH**



We would like to thank our volunteers from across Australia for pa



DO NOT DO
WITHOUT YOU



Assembling thousands of kits that have been distributed across the globe.

Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to present the audited financial statements of the Birthing Kit Foundation Australia (BKFA) for the year ended 30 June 2023.

The financial statements included in this Annual Report are an extract only and the full statements are available on request at info@bkfa.org.au

The surplus for the year was \$38,773 compared to a deficit of \$11,197 in the previous year (2021/22). It should be noted that approximately \$59,000 of funds received from benefactor grants in 2022/23 has been allocated to current programs continuing into the next financial year.

Kit and general donations for the year were \$551,481 (last year \$439,192) and funded the production and distribution of 115,690 kits to our overseas partners (last year 88,300)

While we continue to recover from the impact of COVID-19, the current year and the short-term outlook reflect our inability to produce sufficient kits to cover overheads.

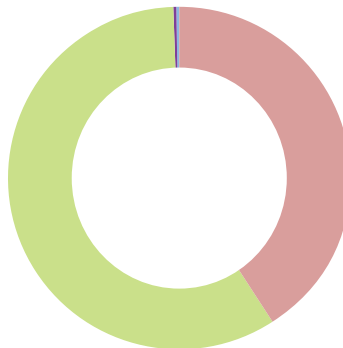
This has come in light of increasing costs (in particular, international freight) during COVID-19 and inflationary pressures now evolving.

While we will continue to drive increased kit production, it is evident that we will continue to rely on top-up funding from our benefactors as highlighted on the adjacent page. We will be looking for innovative solutions to achieve this while maintaining the donation per kit at the current level.

Russell Westmoreland | Treasurer

Where our support comes from

Kit making donations made up 58.5% of revenue compared to 73.2% last year. Donations and gifts have increased from 23.7% of revenue to 41.1%.

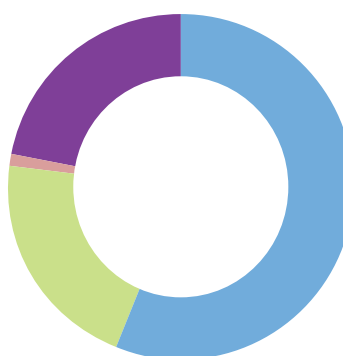


- Donations & Gifts 41.1%
- Kit Making Donations 58.5%
- Interest 0.2%
- Membership 0.2%

Expenses

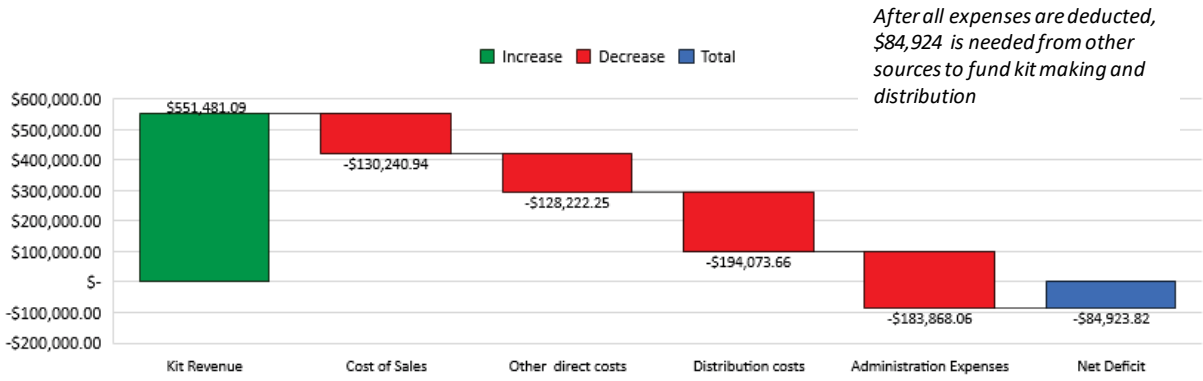
This year's Administration and Accountability expenses were \$175,752, or 21.8% of total expenses, (last year \$130,228, or 22.6%).

Fundraising and marketing expenses were \$8,116, or 1.0%. (last year \$11,428, or 2.0%).

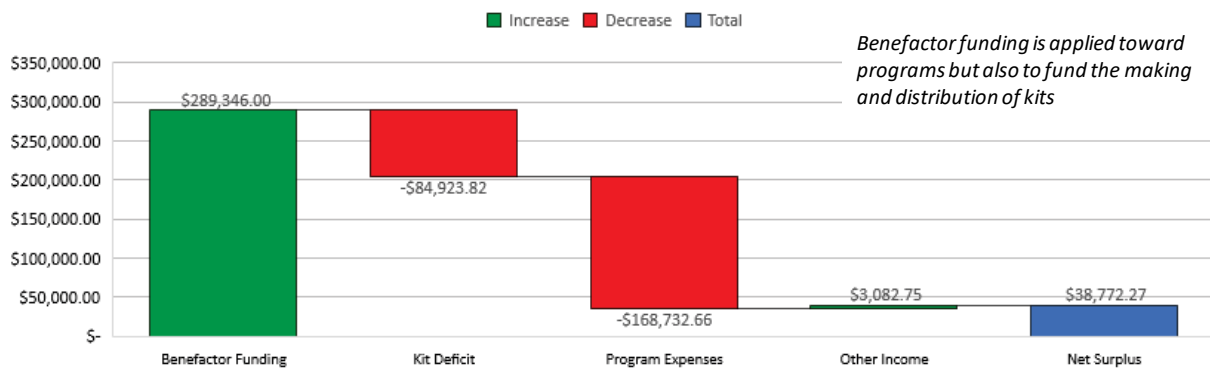


- Cost of Birthing Kits 56.2%
- Cost of Community Development Programs 21.0%
- Fundraising & Marketing 1.0%
- Administration & Accountability 21.8%

Kit Making and Distribution



Reliance on Benefactor Funding



Kit Funding and Costs Per Kit

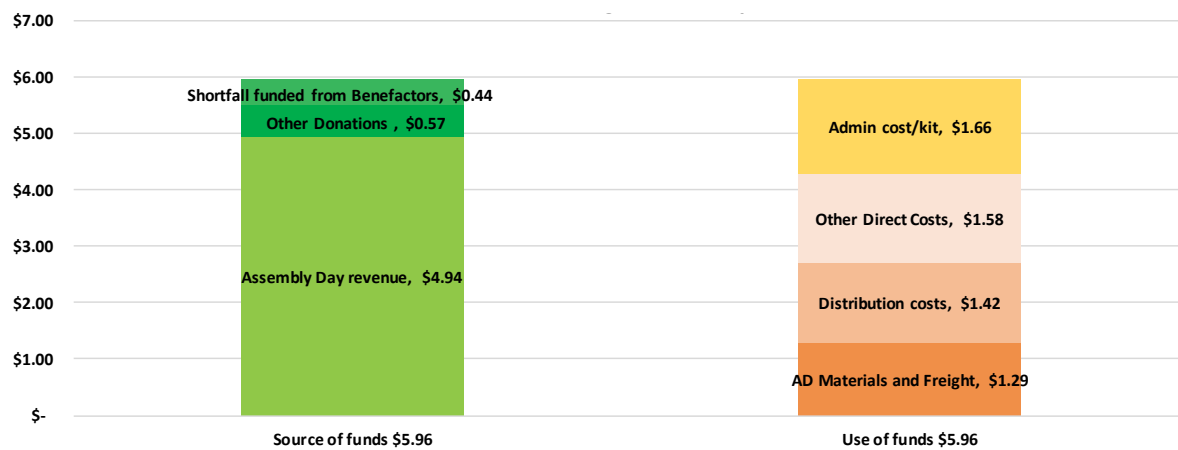


Photo: MHCD facilitates birthing classes with Congolese women





Corporate Governance Statement

Birthing Kit Foundation Australia (BKFA) is committed to achieving best practice in corporate governance for non-profit organisations.

Corporate structure, compliance and tax status

The Foundation is an Australian public company limited by guarantee, registered under the Australian Corporations Act 2001, and complies with the requirements of the Act. The Foundation is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for profits Commission (ACNC). BKFA has the benefit of tax concessions as a Health Promotion Charity, and the Foundation's Maternal Health Gift Fund has been declared as a developing country relief fund under subsection 30-85 (2) of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997, making donations to the fund tax deductible in Australia. As of 1 December 2016, registered ACNC charities are exempt from requiring a fundraising licence in South Australia and ACT. These ACNC achievements greatly reduce the time commitment in fulfilling state and territory requirements, and hopefully lays the groundwork for similar decisions in the remaining states. Where required BKFA holds fundraising licences in other states.

Corporate governance and financial accountability

Under the Constitution, the Board of Directors is responsible for the overall management of the Foundation. Directors are elected by the membership of BKFA and are unpaid. The Board structure, numbers and processes for appointment are set out in the Constitution, which is available on the BKFA website. The Board meets monthly, with additional meetings for strategic planning, including the annual budget process. Financial performance reports are prepared by the Treasurer and are reviewed by the Board at each meeting. Audited financial statements are provided to the ACNC, and to other regulators required by law. A summarised version of these statements is included in this Annual Report. A copy of the full audited statements is available on request.

Work Health and Safety

There were no workplace injuries or incidents reported in the 2022/2023 year.

Complaints

There were no complaints reported in the 2022/2023 year.

Complaints about the performance or conduct of BKFA may be lodged via the link on our website, emailed to us at info@bkfa.org.au or addressed to: Chair, Birthing Kit Foundation (Australia), P.O. Box 330, Belair, South Australia 5052.

Company Secretary

Erica sits on the Risk and Compliance Committee supporting risk management and policy review. Erica has previously worked in a variety of roles within BKFA and has extensive experience in corporate and community strategic planning and stakeholder engagement working with local government, community service providers and the not-for-profit sector. Erica brings to BKFA key strengths in strategy, governance, and compliance and is passionate about community development and evidence-based social impact.

Our Supporters

We would like to acknowledge the following supporters who provided financial and in-kind support to BKFA throughout 2022/2023.



Grant Saffer

Mama Maya

McIntyre Foundation

MUN Global

Nadine Ryan

Peggy Charitable Foundation

The Charitable Foundation

The Neilson Foundation

Zonta – Districts 22, 23, 24

**THANK YOU TO
ALL OF OUR DONORS
AND VOLUNTEERS,
FOR THEIR GENEROUS
SUPPORT.**

Extract from Audited Financial Statements

Birthing Kit Foundation (Australia) (a company Limited by guarantee)
Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the financial year ended 30 June 2023

	2023 \$	2022 \$
REVENUE		
Donations	840,827	581,542
Other Income	1,273	18,177
Membership Fees	1,810	630
TOTAL REVENUE and OTHER INCOME	843,910	600,349
EXPENSES		
Cost of Birthing Kits	461,717	341,513
Administration & Accountability	179,709	164,858
Community Development Program Costs	155,899	93,747
Fundraising & Marketing	6,346	11,428
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	1,466	-
TOTAL EXPENSES	805,137	611,546
NET SURPLUS /(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	38,773	(11,197)
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME/(LOSS) FOR THE YEAR	38,773	(11,197)

BKFA full financial reports are available upon request at info@bkfa.org.au

Birthing Kit Foundation (Australia) (a company Limited by guarantee)
Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2023

	2023 \$	2022 \$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash & Cash Equivalents	390,680	326,181
Trade & Other Receivables	20,261	26,747
Inventories	57,112	43,396
Other Assets	3,940	11,544
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	471,993	407,868
Intangible assets	7,594	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	7,594	-
TOTAL ASSETS	479,587	407,868
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Other liabilities	49,190	41,000
Trade & other payables	32,759	20,037
Employee Benefits	51,572	42,283
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	133,521	103,320
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Employee benefits	4,084	1,339
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES	4,084	1,339
TOTAL LIABILITIES	137,605	104,659
NET ASSETS	341,982	303,209
EQUITY		
Accumulated surplus	341,982	303,209
TOTAL EQUITY	341,982	303,209

BKFA full financial reports are available upon request at info@bkfa.org.au

Our Team and Board

Meet our team



Adrian Harris
*Business and
Operations
Manager*



**Hilary
Carruthers**
*Assembly Day
Coordinator*



Erica Osborn
*Company
Secretary*



Mercy Oloo
*Program
Manager*



Victoria Lewis
*Digital
Marketing
Coordinator*



**Julie Ann
Quast**
Volunteer

Meet our board



Jennifer Weaver
OAM
*Chairperson -
2022/2023*
Board meetings
attended: 10/12



**Dr Joy
O'Hazy** OAM
*Deputy Chair -
2022/2023*
Board meetings
attended: 12/12



**Rusell
Westmoreland**
*Treasurer -
2022/2023*
Board meetings
attended: 11/12



Bridget Mather
Director
2022/2023
Board Meetings
attended: 3/6
(Resigned December
2022)



Dr Julie Monis-Ivett OAM
Director
2022/2023
Board meetings attended: 11/12



**Madhumita
Mazumdar**
Director
2022/2023
Board meetings
attended: 11/12



Edward (Ted) A'Bear
Director
2022/2023
Board meetings attended: 10/12



Photo: A mother in Papua New Guinea with her new born baby



ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

bkfa.org.au



Birthing Kit
Foundation
Australia