

Birthing Kit Foundation
Australia

Annual Report
2024/2025



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Images on cover and pages 2 & 4 of Kit Distribution at Kurudu Primary Health Centre, Abuja, Nigeria.



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 enable systems where women and girls become truly empowered.



OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE



129,000

BIRTHING KITS

were sent to people in under-resourced and humanitarian settings.



27

FIELD PARTNERS

across 11 countries were involved in our global initiatives.



10

TRAINING RECIPIENTS

including women extension workers, literacy teachers and traditional birth attendants (TBAs).

26,000 KITS MADE IN-COUNTRY (UGANDA)

12,000 KITS PRODUCED AT INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY DAYS



15,030

VOLUNTEERS

dedicated their time to assemble Clean Birth Kits.



258,000

MOTHERS & NEWBORNS

were helped with health equipment and/or services.



303

ASSEMBLY DAYS

were held in Australia. 32 were held internationally.

OUR SUPPORTERS

We would like to acknowledge the following supporters who provided financial and in-kind support to BKFA throughout 2024/2025:

PEGGY CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

GENESIS PREGNANCY SUPPORT

MICHELLE PENALURICK

KONICA MINOLTA SA

OLIVIA SARAH-LE LACHEUR

OLIVIA PAYNE

DIANNE BONNICI

LENA GRANT

MICHAEL MCLAUGHLIN

LIONS CLUBS AUSTRALIA

DR GRANT SAFFER

NADINE RYAN

PETER SARGEANT

JENNY COLLINS

AMY MCDOUGALL

AMANDA ELLISON

PETER BERIMAN



CHAIRPERSON REPORT



Jennifer Weaver OAM
Chair of the Board

In October 2024, I visited eastern DR Congo and met women and girls in areas where kits are distributed. What I discovered was incredible poverty and an almost total lack of resources.

In eastern DRC hospitals are rare, some cost a lot of money, and all hospitals and clinics are in desperate need of supplies. Women still rely on local, traditional midwives when they give birth. In remote areas, away from the bigger towns and population centres, a birthing kit, hopefully in the hands of a trained midwife, is the only assistance available when a woman goes into labour.

After nearly twenty years, this is still the reality which shapes the work and drives the plans of the Birthing Kit Foundation. In many African cities trained midwives are more numerous and maternal health resources and facilities have improved greatly. However, elsewhere, services have fallen further behind due to the long-term impact of Covid and the ending of overseas aid from previously reliable providers.

As a result the number of partners we work with has reduced and the Foundation looks for new and creative ways to support birthing mothers. While we completed community training in Ethiopia this year and have plans to extend it, our program development plans have focused on two main areas: how to increase the number of trained midwives and what can be done when no birthing kit is available.

Alongside these programs, kit production has expanded and evolved. An increasing number of kits are produced in-country with the support of The Charitable Foundation. Funds from The Charitable Foundation enabled our long-term partner UACO, in Kampala, to produce 26,000 kits. They were also able to get kits dispatched to Somaliland, an area which was too difficult for our logistics arrangements from Australia.

While Assembly Days in Australia remained steady, the rise of corporate partners and overseas Zonta Clubs producing kits has expanded our overall production. Many companies have included birthing kits as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs, and kits also appealed to many clubs within the Zonta network when they were introduced at the Zonta International Convention in June 2024.

As a result kit production in Europe, the USA and New Zealand is rising and there is great potential for more to come. Thermo Fisher, a global supplier of scientific equipment, was the first company to involve their offices around the world. They funded the production of 12,400 kits over the year as part of their CSR commitment.

We are thrilled that 25,000 more births were supported in this financial year compared to the last and that we have a sound template for expansion overseas.

The BKFA staff have worked diligently to make this happen and the BKFA Board, supported by Company Secretary Erica Osborn, has worked hard with them, with everyone contributing through our committee system. Rising kit numbers places the Foundation in a stronger position, especially since costs have been reduced with the increased use of sea freight. Generous donors have supported us through these difficult years, and we thank them sincerely. The Neilson Foundation, especially, has buoyed us with their support and enabled us to maintain our services.

In the DRC it struck me what a huge responsibility it is to keep faith with the birthing mothers in these communities. Women clearly need and appreciate the kits, and it was touching to receive their thanks for something so simple. It was also obvious that kits gave these women hope, knowing people elsewhere were thinking of them and wanting to help.



Unintended Consequences
All NGO programs result in things which were not planned or anticipated. This is one such story from the DR Congo. It's a tale of women's empowerment.

BKFA has a long history in the eastern DRC. Birth Attendant training started there in 2008 conducted by Mission in Health Care and Development (MHCD). MHCD has now delivered over 273,350 kits, trained 3,430 birth attendants and ignited community support for birthing mothers.

Soon after the first training courses women requested birthing huts; they wanted separate, private spaces to give birth. MHCD obliged by creating simple dwellings used exclusively for birthing and where women would meet regularly to discuss the challenges they faced, not just giving birth but strategies for keeping safe and feeding their families. Over the years MHCD supported the development of these huts into sturdier multi-roomed clinics.

Throughout this time women still met and kept up the support they had created through the birthing hut system, with many groups now finding their own accommodation. Each group functions like a Zonta club combined with a worker's co-operative and a trade union. They all have a common co-operative income producing activity. Some run training programs in everything from domestic violence to agriculture and they all help each other through hard times.

From the humble birthing huts it is now estimated that about 400 "women's clubs" are dotted throughout South Kivu Province. They are encouraged and often supported by MHCD. Today these women are building their leadership skills and communicating through MHCD's IMPACT Radio, helping many thousands of women manage key aspects of their lives.

This legacy runs in parallel with another of MHCD's achievements - the creation of the Great Lakes Midwifery School in Luvungi in 2016, where a government accredited midwifery course is taught. This school was, similarly, the result of demand from women in the community wanting more training and better health support. So far 70 graduates have returned to serve their communities. Today, there are fifty-five students at the midwifery school, forging a career for themselves and committed to improving the lives of birthing mothers.

Therefore, to our thousands of generous donors and volunteers, in Zonta clubs, community groups, educational institutions and the corporate world, thank you for your part in making birthing kit delivery and training a reality for some of the most disadvantaged women on the planet. The Birthing Kit Foundation could not achieve this without you.

Image, opposite page: Mother snd baby in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo

BKFA AND ZONTA ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Dr Julie Monis-Ivett OAM
BKFA Director and Chair, BZEC

BZEC was created to enable Zonta and BKFA to work together on innovation opportunities and to recognise and grow the BKFA/Zonta engagement. This committee consists of powerful and passionate Zontians and BKFA staff, working together collaboratively and respectfully.

BZEC Committee

- BKFA Patron Val Sarah AM DJSJ Past Zonta International President
- 3 BKFA Ambassadors nominated by their respective District Boards. District 22 Simone Ricketts, District 23 Tyril Houghton and District 24 Sandra Gilbert
- Representatives of the current Governors for each District – usually the District Governors
- Kate Dyer - BKFA's Engagement and Marketing Co-ordinator
- Adrian Harris - BKFA's Business and Operations Manager
- Julie Monis-Ivett OAM Chair BZEC committee, BKFA Director and Zonta representative.

This year we expanded the Program of Recognition to acknowledge our many supporters within Zonta across Australia.

BZEC's Program of Recognition

- Val Sarah AM continued in the position of BKFA Patron.
- Three BKFA Ambassadors were appointed.
- 50 BKFA Champions recognised from Zonta Clubs nominations; members who have excelled in commitment to supporting the Birthing Kit Project over many years. With much excitement all were presented with badges at District conferences and Area workshops.
- BKFA Champion Clubs. Silver Champion Clubs = 15+ Assembly Days, Gold Champion Clubs = 30+ Assembly Days and Platinum Clubs = 50+ Assembly Days. Certificates were presented at District conferences and Area workshops. It was lovely to see the joy at the public acknowledgement of their club's achievements and commitment.









ZONTA DISTRICT	22 - QLD	23 - WA, SA, NT, TAS & VIC	24 - NSW & ACT	Total
prior to 2019	529,200	489,220	358,850	1,377,270
2019 - 2020	19,000	8,800	12,000	39,800
2020 - 2021	15,600	15,520	13,800	44,920
2021 - 2022	16,600	19,400	14,800	50,800
2022 - 2023	16,500	19,480	15,740	51,720
2023 - 2024	16,300	19,720	18,950	54,970
2024 - 2025	19,950	17,400	18,300	55,650
Total Kits for District	**633,150**	**589,540**	**452,440**	**1,675,130**

With the desire for increased kit production and support, a BZEC resolution had been prepared for the Zonta International Convention in late June 2024. However, the BZEC agreed to postpone it, opting to hold two kit assembly workshops at the convention instead.

This was a brilliant strategic decision made with unanimous agreement by the committee at the recommendation of Convention chair Judy Gorton. We thank Judy for her wise counsel and Jane Adornetto for facilitating the workshop logistics.

We thank our Patron, BKFA Ambassadors and many volunteers who kept the assembly day tables topped up and the event running smoothly. Thanks to Adrian and Pam Harris for the many volunteer hours to enable these workshops.

From this introduction birthing kits are now being assembled by Zontians in New Zealand, Germany, Italy and the USA.

The BZEC committee spent the later part of the year working on a new resolution to go to Zonta International Convention in Vancouver in 2026. We are excited about the potential for birthing kits and maternal training being supported by Zontians around the world.

Above: Zonta members assemble 2,000 kits at Zonta Convention 2024 in Brisbane, Australia.
Opposite, L: Happy Zontians and BKFA leaders
Opposite, R: Judy Gorton and Jane Adornetto

CLEAN BIRTH KIT PROGRAM & PARTNERSHIPS



Mercy Oloo
Programs Manager

OVERVIEW

Throughout the 2024-25 period, the Clean Birth Kit (CBK) program made a significant impact by distributing 129,860 birth kits across Africa and the Pacific. This was accomplished through collaboration with 27 field partners operating in 11 different countries. Feedback from recipients of the kits has been overwhelmingly positive. Expectant mothers expressed their deep appreciation, noting that the kits provided a sense of security, dignity, and preparedness for childbirth, particularly in rural areas where clean delivery conditions are challenging to achieve.

Essential items such as the plastic sheet and sterile blade were highlighted as especially vital, helping to ensure safer home deliveries and reducing concerns about infection.

Kit distribution in Nigeria by field partner Diocesan Health Initiative (DHI).





A birthing mother is carried on a stetcher to Serki aid post - Photo by SDP Health.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

When the SDP Health Patrol Team arrived in Serki, urgent news reached them: a mother was in labor out in the bush. She was too weak to make the journey to the health facility, her labor already well underway, leaving volunteers unable to bring her in. Determined to help, the team set out to find her and assess her condition on site.

At the bush location, they found her with her birthing kit already open, preparing to squat and deliver her baby. She had been pushing for some time and was visibly exhausted. After examining her, the team recommended she be transported to the facility for a safer delivery.

Four community members quickly fashioned a stretcher from wood and rope, gently placed her on it, and carried her all the way to the local aid post.

At the facility, the team relied on the birthing kit to support her delivery. The plastic sheet served as a mattress cover, and the other items in the kit were put to use to ensure a clean and safe environment.

Serki lies far from the nearest health center, making birthing kits essential for expectant mothers. Village volunteers frequently use these kits to assist women delivering in the bush, and the kits are invaluable for mothers who may give birth en route to a health facility.



Pregnant mothers receive Clean Birthing Kits during distribution activity at Kagini Primary Health Centre, Abuja, Nigeria.

STORIES OF CHANGE FROM NIGERIA

In Yimitu, a densely populated informal settlement supported by the Rotary Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health project, a young mother named Esther recently gave birth to her child. The community faces considerable challenges due to limited access to essential health services. Esther's experience, however, illustrates the positive impact of the project.

Esther chose to give birth at a local health facility after attending a community dialogue session where she received a clean birthing kit supplied by the project. The kit, which included the necessary items for a hygienic delivery, was instrumental in creating a safe environment for both mother and baby.

Wrapped in a white blanket and a small blue hat, her healthy newborn served as a heartening reminder of the value of basic maternal health support. Though exhausted, Esther expressed profound gratitude for the care and resources provided.

Her story is just one example of the transformative effects of community-based health education and access to life-saving resources, demonstrating what can be achieved when partners unite to improve maternal and child health in vulnerable communities.



Esther and her baby. Photo by RMCH.



Mrs. Adebayo - Photo by Divine Act Charitable Trust.

Divine Act Charitable Trust shared a story from Mrs. Adebayo, a 28-year-old mother from the Moniya community, who recently recounted her experience using a Clean Birth Kit for her home delivery. She spoke with heartfelt appreciation, explaining how the kit brought her reassurance and comfort during childbirth.

"**Before I received the kit, I was anxious about infections, our local clinic is distant, making home births feel unsafe. But with the sterile gloves, blade, and clean sheet provided, I felt protected and at ease**," she shared.

A skilled midwife assisted her in using the kit correctly. Both Mrs. Adebayo's healthy baby and her smooth delivery highlight how Clean Birth Kits empower women in remote communities to have safer births, even outside a hospital setting.








CLINIQUE

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

In Kinshasa in November 2024, BKFA Chairperson Jenny Weaver and Director Julie Monis-Ivett met with three current Members of Parliament from Katanga Province in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Together they discussed the problems faced by birthing mothers in DRC and especially in the remote regions of the country. As with Dr Luc and his efforts to improve birthing outcomes in South Kivu Province these men, all medical doctors, expressed their concern for the women in Katanga who face childbirth with few or no resources in a province short of trained midwives.

Their commitment translated into material help in early 2025, with funds provided to Dr. Luc of MHCD, who now resides in South Australia, to organise two containers of goods, including birthing kits, to be sent to the DRC.

In January, 6,000 kits were dispatched to Luvungi for MHCD, and in March, 26,500 kits went directly in a container to Katanga Province. These containers also held many other goods, including Days for Girls sanitary kits for women and girls, hospital beds, and medical resources.

Over the year, BKFA has delivered a total of 47,700 clean birthing kits to three partners via ten shipments to the DRC. The container shipments, paid for by Dr. Luc and the Members of Parliament, saved the normal international air freight costs for the Foundation.

This represents the positive understanding by these government representatives and Dr. Luc of the kits' importance in promoting safer childbirth in rural areas.

Despite having delivered nearly 500,000 kits to the DRC since 2007, there is an even greater need to distribute them throughout the country, as the health system in the DRC is not adequate to support mothers giving birth in remote rural areas.

Images: Top left, Jenny Weaver and Julie Monis-Ivett with birthing kits bound for DR Congo.
Top right, Mulenge Pygmie MHCD leader with birthing kits.
Bottom, Jenny Weaver and a gathering at Luvungi hospital.

IN-COUNTRY CLEAN BIRTH KIT INITIATIVE

BKFA is pleased to report great progress in the third year of the In-Country Production Clean Birth Kits initiative, implemented in partnership with Uganda Australia Christian Outreach (UACO) and funded by The Charitable Foundation.

In 2024-2025, the project focused on assembling and distributing 26,000 Clean Birth Kits to women and girls in Uganda, with an expansion into Somaliland.

The initiative involved nine partner organizations and included a monitoring visit from The Charitable Foundation.

FIELD PARTNER	KITS
Edna Adan Hospital	2,100
Egoli Africa	2,500
Hope for Orphans and Rural Development	2,200
Hope for Sustainable Development Uganda	8,300
Love Mercy Australia	1,000
Marjos Foundation	2,100
Rotary Club of Makindye	200
Think Humanity	800
Uganda Australian Christian Outreach	5,000

"The birthing kit has truly transformed maternity care in our facility. I've witnessed its effectiveness in reducing complications and ensuring safer births. It's an indispensable asset for our community, and I am sincerely thankful to have it integrated into our daily midwifery practice."

Ajwang Lucy, Enrolled Midwife, Kristina HC III Otuke





TOP LEFT
Nantumbe J. receiving a birthing kit at Nyamwamba East. Photo from Hope for Sustainable Development Uganda

TOP RIGHT
Collection of Clean Birth Kits during the visit from The Charitable Foundation to UACO. Pictured are Chief Executive Peder Nygaard Pedersen and Director Peter Dougan.

BOTTOM RIGHT
Ayoo A at Kristina HC III Post Natal ward.
Photo from Love Mercy Australia.



CBK DISTRIBUTION TABLE

ORGANISATION	COUNTRY	ASSEMBLED IN AUSTRALIA	EMER-GENCY	IN-COUNTRY	KITS FOR SALE
Empower Women Foundation	Cameroon	-	-	-	400
Peace and Conflict Resolution	DR Congo	200	-	-	-
Women Glory	DR Congo	9,000	-	-	-
Mission in Health Care and Development	DR Congo	12,000	26,500	-	-
Reitan Ainen Kamatu	Kiribati	600	-	-	-
Orphans of Africa Foundation	Malawi	200	-	-	-
Divine Act Charitable Trust	Nigeria	1,500	-	-	-
Safer Hands Initiative	Nigeria	2,000	-	-	-
Diocesan Health Initiative	Nigeria	3,900	-	-	-
Rotary Action Group for Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health	Nigeria	12,500	-	-	-
Hacey Health Initiative	Nigeria	15,000	-	-	-
Poverty Eradication Initiative	Pakistan	200	-	-	-
Australian Doctors International	Papua New Guinea (PNG)	-	-	-	200
Christian Leaders Training College of PNG	PNG	-	-	-	240
Rotary Club of Glenferrie	PNG	-	-	-	400
Wantaim PNG	PNG	500	-	-	-
Living Child Inc.	PNG	4,000	-	-	-
SDP Health	PNG	6,000	-	-	-
Uniting Church in Australia (Bairnsdale)	Solomon Island	-	-	-	20
SolTuna	Solomon Island	-	-	-	50

ORGANISATION	COUNTRY	ASSEMBLED IN AUSTRALIA	EMER-GENCY	IN-COUNTRY	KITS FOR SALE
Women's Fellowship, Girls Brigade	Solomon Island	-	-	-	50
Helena Goldie Hospital	Solomon Island	-	-	-	100
Reproductive and Child Health Department	Solomon Island	-	-	-	200
Edna Adan Hospital	Somaliland	-	-	2,100	-
Sentru Formasaun Ba Juventude	Timor-Leste	-	-	-	200
Mothers Care Medical Centre	Uganda	200	-	-	-
Think Humanity	Uganda	-	-	800	-
Love Mercy Australia	Uganda	-	-	1,000	-
Rotary Club of Makindye	Uganda	-	-	2,000	-
Marjos Foundation	Uganda	200	-	2,100	-
Hope for Orphans and Rural Development	Uganda	200	-	2,200	-
Egoli Africa	Uganda	-	-	2,500	-
Beaton Foundation Initiative	Uganda	4,500	-	-	-
Uganda Australia Christian Outreach	Uganda	-	-	5,000	-
Hope for Sustainable Development Uganda	Uganda	-	-	8,300	-
Ndola Nutrition Organisation	Zambia	400	-	-	-
Aid for Africa Down Under	Zimbabwe	2,400	-	-	-
	TOTAL	**75,500**	**26,500**	**26,000**	**1,860**













303 Assembly Days were held across Australia throughout 2024/25, bringing together community and service organisations, students, church groups, workplaces and families.





ASSEMBLY DAY UPDATE



Hilary Carruthers
Assembly Day Coordinator

This year marked an exciting evolution for BKFA's Assembly Day program — the introduction of international Assembly Days. What began as a proudly Australian initiative has now grown into a global movement for safer births.

Zonta groups and Thermo Fisher Scientific embraced this new opportunity with enthusiasm, hosting events across Denmark, Hungary, Italy, Sweden, the UK, Ireland, New Zealand and multiple locations in the United States. In total, 32 international Assembly Days were held, producing 12,000 Clean Birth Kits offshore — a significant milestone that reflects the growing global commitment to maternal and newborn health.

At home, momentum also remained strong. More than 300 Assembly Days were held across Australia this year, returning to pre-COVID participation levels. Zonta Clubs continue to be incredible champions, contributing almost 50 percent of all kits assembled. Another valued supporter, Sathya Sai, continues to host numerous events each year and help spread awareness of BKFA's mission through their community.

Looking ahead, an important update to our kits will be introduced in the coming financial year: each kit will now include two pairs of gloves, providing additional protection for birthing mothers and attendants. This enhancement was made in response to requests from our in-country partners and has been made possible through the generous donation of gloves by MUN.

To all our Assembly Day hosts and volunteers — in Australia and around the world — thank you for your continued enthusiasm, compassion, and commitment. Together, we're ensuring safer births for women and girls everywhere.

INTERNATIONAL KIT PRODUCTION



Adrian Harris
Business and Operations Manager

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a business approach where companies integrate social and environmental concerns into their operations and interactions with stakeholders.

It's about going beyond legal obligations to make a positive impact on society and the environment. Being a responsible corporate citizen, considering not just profits, but also the well-being of people and the planet has become very important.

BKFA has now created an avenue for these responsible corporate citizens to host their own assembly days in offices internationally. This practice involves businesses supporting employees to contribute their time, skills, and resources to hosting assembly days. It's a win-win: companies demonstrate their commitment to social responsibility, while employees gain valuable experiences and contribute to positive social impact.

Since 2024 the success of our relationships with corporate partners has seen multiple organisations choosing the volunteering activity of hosting an assembly day as the preferred option for their staff. Several international assembly days have been held in offices of our corporate partners worldwide. These include sites in America, United Kingdom, Ireland, Scotland, Hungary, Sweden, Denmark, New Zealand, amongst others. Bookings have been strong from our existing partners, and there has been interest from other large international organisations.

The importance of these activities cannot be underestimated. It allows employees of these socially responsible companies to engage in activities that have a greater benefit for society.

BKFA's offerings to corporate partners encompass the four pillars of CSR: environmental, ethical, philanthropic, and economic responsibilities. These partners have strategically decided to support this transformative approach to charitable giving.

Whilst research has strongly indicated that individual charitable giving is on the decline due to multiple factors, employers have taken up some of this reduction through offering volunteering opportunities, sponsoring workplace giving by matching donations and supporting salary sacrifice contribution. BKFA now holds a significant place in these corporate partnerships and will continue to develop and grow this offering in conjunction with the other models still strongly supported in Australia.

Images: Staff at Thermo Fisher Scientific sites in Sweden and USA.









SUPPORT A MIDWIFE

BKFA is developing a new initiative to sponsor midwifery students in countries where it currently supplies clean birthing kits.

Nations such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somaliland, Nigeria, and Ethiopia face some of the highest maternal and neonatal mortality rates related to childbirth in Africa.

This program will support the education and training of midwives from rural areas, who will return to serve their communities after graduating.

The goal is to build a skilled, local healthcare workforce that can improve maternal and newborn health outcomes where it is needed most. BKFA plans to cover tuition and exam fees for selected midwifery students in need, ensuring they gain both essential knowledge and practical skills. By doing so, the initiative aims to empower local communities and help reduce maternal and infant mortality rates in areas with the greatest need for support.

Drawing from successful past projects in places like the DRC and Ethiopia, where BKFA offered short-term training for Traditional Birthing Attendants and community health workers; this program is designed to build upon and expand that positive legacy.

BKFA will initially support two main programs: (i) the Mission in Health Care and Development (MHCD) Great Lakes Midwifery Course in the DRC, and (ii) the Edna Adan Hospital University in Somaliland. Both are nationally accredited and offer advanced midwifery training for students.



Image: First year midwifery students in DR Congo, with Board members Jenny Weaver and Julie Monis-Ivett. Supplied by MHCD.



Edward (Ted) A'Bear
Director

GREAT LAKES MIDWIFERY COLLEGE, D.R. CONGO

The project aims to improve access to skilled maternal healthcare in South Kivu, DRC, by sponsoring 10 midwifery students to complete a four-year accredited training program at Great Lakes Midwifery College. These students will be selected based on vulnerability and community need and will receive financial support covering tuition, examination fees, and learning materials ($875 USD per year).

After graduation, the midwives will return to serve in their local communities, addressing the acute shortage of qualified maternal health professionals in rural regions.

MHCD will manage the implementation of the sponsorship project, with oversight from BKFA. Regular monitoring will track academic performance and post-graduation deployment to measure impact.

By training local midwives who remain embedded in the community, the project contributes to sustainable improvements in maternal and newborn health outcomes.

EDNA ADAN MATERNITY HOSPITAL, SOMALILAND

This project seeks to work with BKFA' partner Edna Adan Hospital to improve maternal and infant health outcomes in remote communities by training local women to become qualified midwives. Specifically, it will identify, support, and educate four female students from rural areas of Somaliland.

These young women will receive full scholarships to undertake a four-year midwifery degree at Edna Adan University in Hargeisa, one of the country's leading institutions for post-secondary education.

Students will reside at Edna Adan University Hospital while studying, allowing them to be fully immersed in clinical practice and surrounded by expert mentors. Scholarships will cover all costs associated with the program, including tuition, accommodation, living expenses, and a modest allowance.

The cost per student is USD$1,428.50 per year. Once the project has commenced, Edna Adan University will seek matching grants to support the training of the four students and can also go towards covering food and accommodation.

Importantly, students will be selected from their own rural communities and, upon graduation, will return to those areas to serve as skilled midwives. This addresses the acute shortage of trained health care workers in rural communities but also ensures cultural familiarity, community trust, and long-term sustainability of maternal health improvements.



MATERNAL MORTALITY



Dr Joy O'Hazy OAM
Deputy Chair

In April 2025, the United Nations Maternal Mortality Estimation Interagency Group published its latest report, drawing on data from 2023.

The maternal timeframe covers all of pregnancy and the 6 weeks following delivery.

In 2023, approximately 260,000 women worldwide lost their lives due to complications related to pregnancy. 92% of this occurred in low and low middle income countries.

Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 70% of this number. In fact, one country, Nigeria, accounts for more than 28% of the total number. 74,500 women, out of the 7.5 million deliveries there each year, do not survive childbirth.

Despite these current figures, Sub-Saharan Africa has had an overall 40% reduction in numbers of deaths (since 2000) and globally the numbers are the lowest ever recorded.

Another aspect is the Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) which is the number of maternal deaths for every 100,000 live births recorded.

Globally, this rate has reduced from 328 per 100,000 in 2000 to 197 in 2023. The aim is to get this down to 70 per 100,000 by 2030.

- Nigeria currently has a MMR of 993/100,000.
- India, which has 23 million births yearly, has a MMR of 80/100,000.
- Australia, with 304,000 births annually, has a MMR of 2/100,000.

The reasons for fatal outcomes are still the same – haemorrhage, infection, increased blood pressure/eclampsia, obstructed labour and unsafe abortions.

Poor women in remote areas in Sub-Saharan Africa are the least likely to receive adequate care during this vulnerable time in their life cycle.

These are the women that BKFA, together with many local partners, are aiming to support.

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 2025.

Clare Quartuccio
Treasurer

Income for the BKFA increased by 36% on last financial year, to $1,068,000 due to an increase in donations. Donation revenue comes from Assembly Day income, General Donations and Program Income. Assembly Day Income grew by 25% to $641,000, and with General Donations, a total of $794,000 was raised. This funded the production and distribution of 149,860 kits. Program Income of $260,000 was an increase of 186% on last year. Funded by The Charitable Foundation, this was used for funding clean birthing kit production in Uganda.

Kit supplies and distribution costs accounted for 50% of total expenses, Program costs accounted for 32% and all other expenses and overheads made up 19%. Kit costs and overheads remained stable compared to last year, which is a pleasing result given that kit numbers increased by 30,000. Program costs increased in line with the higher Program Income.

This resulted in a surplus for the year of $72,562 (last year loss of $3,866).

I acknowledge the continued support of the Neilson Foundation, whose generosity has had a significant impact on our work. We are also grateful for the ongoing support from Zonta and other clubs and groups involved in assembly days. In addition, income from corporate partnerships continues to grow, with special thanks to Thermo Fisher, contributing through multiple assembly days as part of their CSR program.

BKFA's summary financial reports comply with standards set out in the ACFID Code of Conduct.
The full financial statements are available upon request at info@bkfa.org.

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 2025

	2025 $	2024 $
Revenue and other income		
Donations	1,055,893	769,704
Kit Sales	1,000	
Membership fees	1,720	1,500
Finance income	10,396	11,358
Total revenue and other income	1,068,009	782,562
Other expenses		
Community development program costs	(315,725)	(166,263)
Fundraising and marketing	(4,888)	(3,697)
Cost of birthing kits	(491,412)	(438,343)
Administration and accountability	(179,557)	(174,285)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(3,864)	(3,840)
Total expenses	(995,446)	(786,428)
(Loss) / surplus for the year before income tax	72,563	(3,866)
Income tax expense	-	-
(Loss) / surplus for the year after income tax	**72,563**	**(3,866)**
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-
Total comprehensive (loss) / income for the year	**72,563**	**(3,866)**

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
for the financial year ended 30 June 2024

	2025 $	2024 $
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	601,869	488,517
Trade and other receivables	35,808	11,305
Inventories	60,589	69,804
Other assets	2,091	9,328
Total current assets	700,357	578,954
Non-current assets		
Intangible assets	1,689	5,553
Total non-current assets	1,689	5,553
Total assets	702,046	584,507
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	42,857	37,772
Employee benefits	77,361	61,365
Other liabilities	162,061	140,880
Total current liabilities	282,279	240,017
Non-current liabilities		
Employee benefits	9,088	6,374
Total non-current liabilities	9,088	6,374
Total liabilities	291,367	246,391
Net assets	410,679	338,116
Equity		
Accumulated surplus	410,679	338,116
Total equity	410,679	338,116

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

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. 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.



Pregnant mothers receive Clean Birthing Kits during distribution activity at Kagini Primary Health Centre, Abuja, Nigeria.

Erica Osborn
Company Secretary

Work Health and Safety
There were no workplace injuries or incidents reported in the 2024/2025 year.

Complaints
There were no complaints reported in the 2024/2025 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 Chairs 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.

Erica brings to BKFA key strengths in strategy, governance, and compliance and is passionate about community development and evidence-based social impact.



Paris Neilson, Kerr Neilson and Beau Neilson of The Neilson Foundation - major supporters of BKFA.

MUN Chief Operating Officer Andrew Dillon (centre) and staff - generous sponsors of our gloves for kit supplies.



OUR BOARD AND TEAM



Jennifer Weaver OAM
Chairperson
Board meetings attended: 12/12



Dr Joy O'Hazy OAM
Deputy Chair
Board meetings attended: 12/12



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



Edward (Ted) A'Bear
Director
Board meetings attended: 11/12



Madhumita Mazumdar
Director
Board meetings attended: 10/12



Clare Quartuccio
Treasurer (Incoming 03/25)
Board meetings attended: 4/4



Angelina Arora
Director
Board meetings attended: 9/12



Fatemeh Afzali
Treasurer (Outgoing 02/25)
Board meetings attended: 1/8



Erica Osborn
Company Secretary



Adrian Harris
Business and Operations Manager



Hilary Carruthers
Assembly Day Coordinator



Mercy Oloo
Program Manager



Kate Dyer
Engagement and Marketing Coordinator



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

Birthing Kit Foundation Australia

www.facebook.com/BirthingKitFoundationAu

www.instagram.com/bkfa.au