

2021

book  
bunk.



# ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

# INTRODUCTION

2021 was an incredible yet challenging year for us; Government-mandated lockdowns due to Covid19 meant libraries remained closed to the public for the better part of the year, so we focused on digital offerings while managing the architectural restoration of Eastlands Library in Makadara. The restoration of the Eastlands Library ran from August 18th, 2020 to June 29th, 2021, when the building was officially re-opened by Book Bunk and Nairobi City County's government officials.

With the renovation of this building, we stretched its capacity's possibilities, delivering new designs that responded fully to users' needs, gathered from users' surveys and other data points. Every inch of the building was restored, with highlights including the removal of toxic asbestos and repurposing the space into reading nooks; the construction of a new outdoor terrace, toilet block, community gardens, performance and play spaces for adults and children. We also installed a rainwater harvesting system, low energy lighting, solar panels and other green solutions. This library now offers free WiFi access to users as well as new books and visual art on the walls commissioned from local artists.

We also expanded our team this year, hosted our first (virtual) literary festival - the NBO Litfest, and launched the #NRBLibraries digital archive, which now offers free, public access to digitized archives held at the McMillan Memorial Library and dating back to the late 1800s. festival and the launch of our online digital archive.

**Looking back on this year, despite our collective loss and the upheaval of the year, we have seen leadership within our teams, built and forged new, meaningful connections, and continued with our mission to transform some of Nairobi's public libraries into true palaces for the people.**



*Angela Wachuka &  
Wanjiru Koinange*

**FOUNDERS.**



Hosted our first-ever #NBOLitfest

8,376 books acquired for the libraries

Interviewed and visited 150 public libraries in Nairobi

# Our year

IN NUMBERS

Featured on 19 international media and 10 local media

Employed 47 on full time or parttime

Supported approx. 26 visual artists and musicians



Completed renovation of two libraries



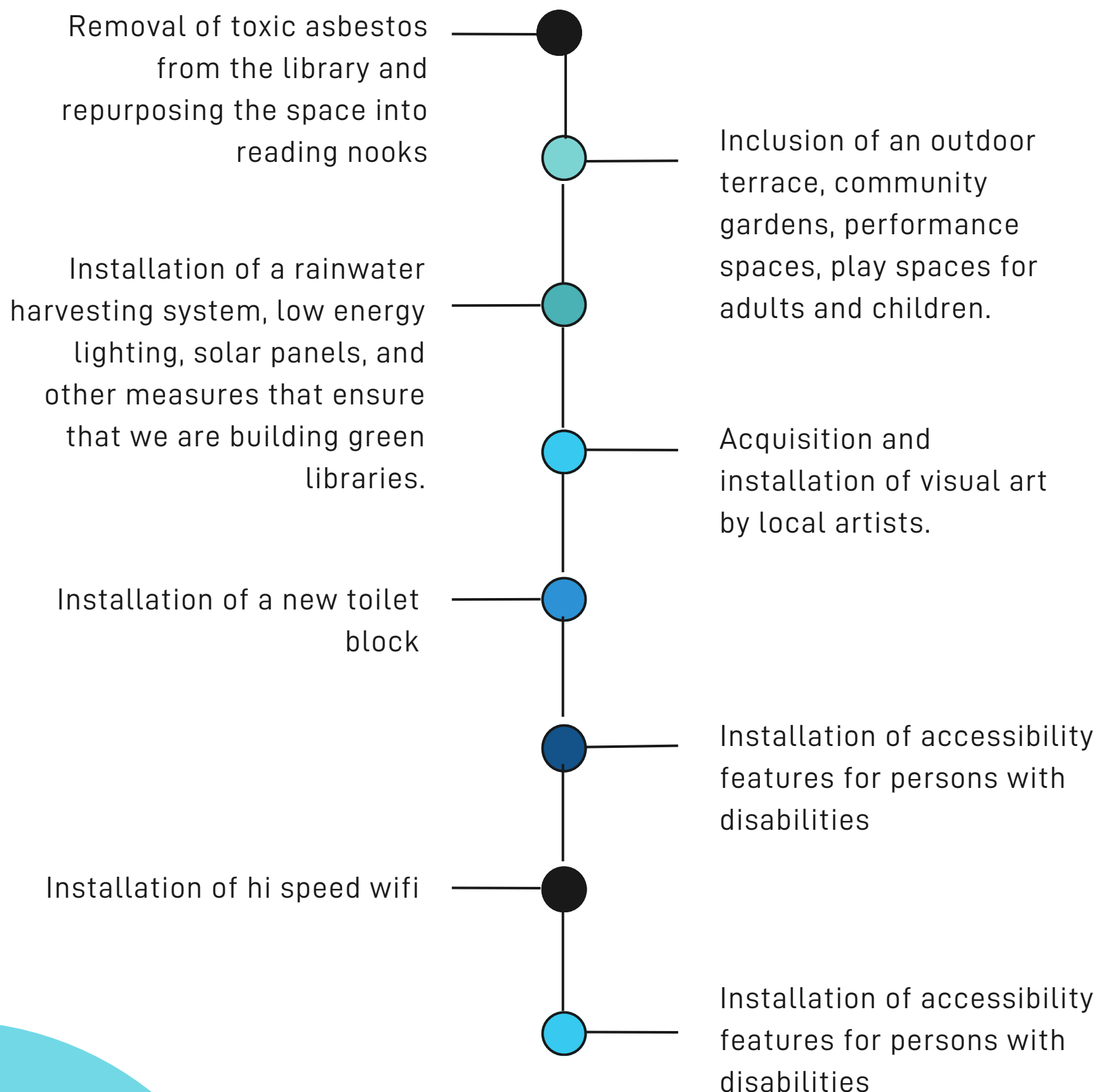
Approx 1,385 library users per month

Created the first-ever public access online archive of the libraries' collections

# OUR WORK IN ARCHITECTURE

## *Eastlands Library*

**Some highlights of changes at Eastlands Library;**



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# Eastlands Library

## BEFORE



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# Eastlands Library AFTER



This year, #NRBLibraries reopened after a long hiatus following government-mandated closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

This year, we completed the [renovation of Eastlands Library](#), in addition to the Kaloleni Library last year. Since reopening in June, the libraries have been busy, with approx. 1385 users every month across the three libraries.

Adding more funk to the newly revamped libraries, we invited visual artists to submit their work to the libraries' collection and supported seven visual artists to do so.



*Yes to libraries as  
palaces for the people!*

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We hope to continue putting money into artists' pockets in 2022!







## INTRODUCING GREEN BUNK

*WE ARE GOING GREEN!*

In addition to Art at the Library, the Eastlands Library now also features a community garden!

We have also partnered with Davis and Shirtliff to install solar panels at the library! So, if you haven't already, pop into the libraries next year and catch all this magic as we go green!

# LIBRARY USERS

2021 Data

01

**MCMILLAN MEMORIAL  
LIBRARY, CBD**  
3,369 Users

03

**EASTLANDS LIBRARY**  
2,700 Users

02

**KALOLENI LIBRARY**  
1,888 Users

**Due to COVID, the libraries were officially closed from 15th March, 2020 and opened on 29th June, 2021.**

*Here are some highlights from library users!*

"I'm impressed by the way workers here are friendly and helpful."

*Bridgit (18-24 years old)*

"I would like to see the library services expand for other pupils to be able to use it."

*Hellen (12-17 years)*

"There is wifi connection and computers which one can use to study."

*Denis (18-24 years old)*

"My favorite thing about the library is that it's clean, close to home, and has clean toilets."

*Allan (25-35 years old)*

The library looks marvelous and fantastic with many facilities. I really hope we can get more school books and computers because the place does get full on school holidays."

*Alexander (18-24 years old)*

**Before the Eastlands and Kaloleni libraries were renovated, they attracted an average of 1,363 users a month. This number has grown to 3,155 in the period between January - March 2022.**

# PROGRAMMES

## #NBOLitfest

In October, we hosted our inaugural edition of this literary festival, anchored in public libraries and celebrating the 90th anniversary of McMillan Memorial Library.

The festival featured African writers and artists with 835 of you tuning in from across the world for this magic.

We also hosted acoustic music sessions recorded at the library featuring Karun, Sanaipei Tande, and Tetu Shani.

Thank you for signing up for sessions, pressing the Q+A button, tweeting about your experiences, and sending us messages.

[Here](#) is a playlist of the 3-day event.



# #NBOLitfest 2021 Authors



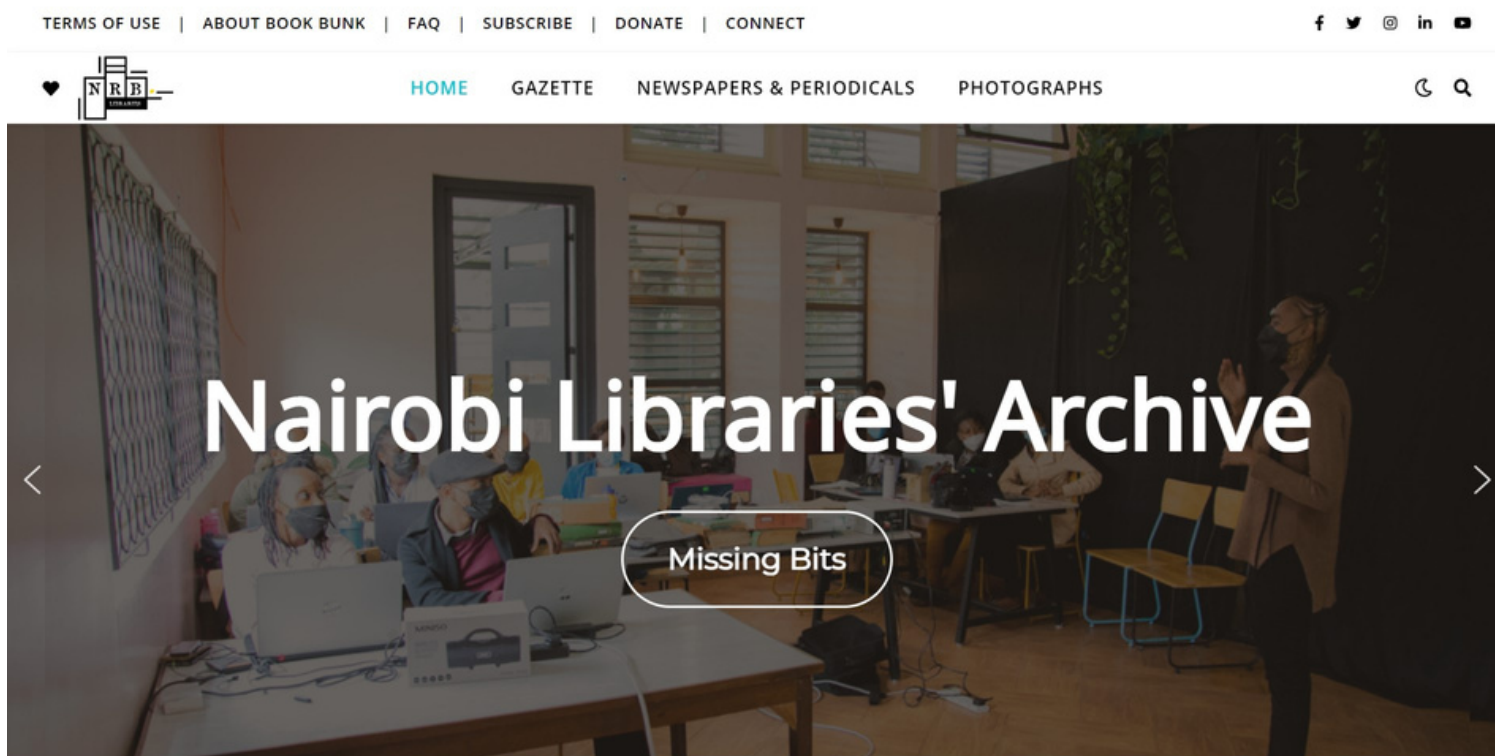
From left to right:

Wanjiru Koinange, Billy Kahora, Lauren About, Nanjala Nabola, Eric Klinenberg, Muthoni Garland, Troy Onyango, Ellah Wakatama, and Remy Ngamije

# Research and Inventory

## Creation of #NRBLibraries Archive

### Round 1



In July 2021, we completed digitization of approx. 31,549 items identified as some of the rarest and most endangered, housed at the McMillan Memorial Library.

We then created [the library's first-ever online archive](#), which is available for free, public access. We also have some tutorials on [how to digitise your personal archive](#) and [how to protect them from climate damage](#).



# Phase 2 Begins



In October 2021, we began our second phase of digitization work, supported by the British Council's Cultural Protection Fund, with the aim of digitizing an additional 40,000 items over the next few months. We are calling this project, "[The Missing Bits](#)", which is our attempt to engage with the community and fill in gaps we have found in the archive. As part of our project deliverables, we will be working with different partners to; curate an exhibition, and panel sessions as well as install digitization booths at the library for members of the public to digitize their own personal archives.

*Here's to more digitisation work in 2022!*



## Libraries Ecosystem Research

### We love data!

This year, our research and inventory team worked to crunch the numbers on public libraries in Nairobi City County and eventually, across the country. From the data we collated, there are 149 public libraries in Nairobi. Stay tuned for our research report in 2022!

You can see this as a permanent feature at [Eastlands Library, Makadara](#).

## Inventory Cataloguing & Shelving of new books

We are thrilled to have received a total of 8376 books to add to the libraries' growing collection.

We also created a donations policy so if you'd like to donate, [check out our wishlist here](#).



# OUTREACH

## Podcast

This year, we completed the release of the first season of our podcast, [A Palace For The People](#).

Our founders; Angela Wachuka and Wanjiru Koinange, host the podcast.

The podcast has had a listenership of **4061 users** with an average of **508 listeners per episode**.

We were also thrilled to have such a diverse group of listeners across the globe!

Here's to Season 2 in 2022!

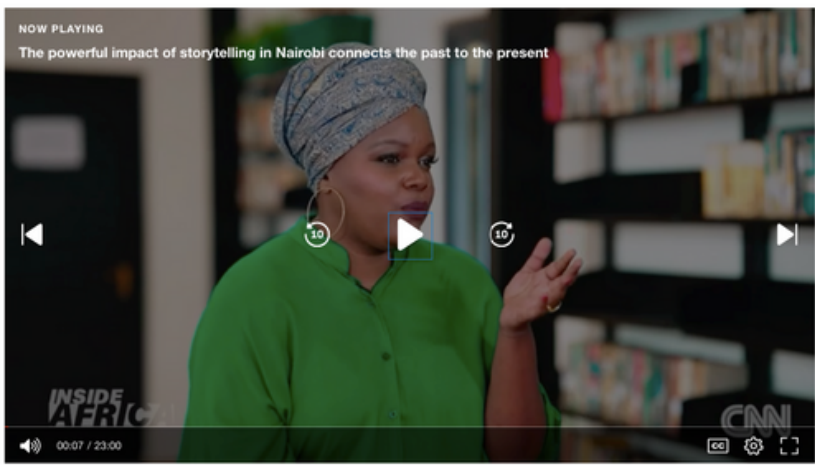


## A PALACE FOR THE PEOPLE

A PODCAST ABOUT NAIROBI'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

World Africa Americas Asia Australia China Europe India Middle East United Kingdom

INSIDE AFRICA



The powerful impact of storytelling in Nairobi connects the past to the present

## Media Mentions

This year, we've been in the news for our work restoring #NRBLibraries. Notable features include [BBC Africa](#) and [CNN](#).



Meet Book Bunk, the people restoring history in Kenya

We are thankful for all the coverage and the well-crafted stories that have gone a long way in amplifying the stories of these libraries and the communities that benefit from them.



# Fundraising and Partnerships

## Overview



This year, we have received much-needed support from our network of partners to support operational costs, digitization of archives, automation of access services, and library programming. Through new corporate partnerships, we have installed solar panels, water tanks and pumps, security systems, and features and received book donations. This year, we paused hosting our annual fundraising gala,

*A Night At The Library - We will be back next year!*

## Impact Numbers

### 01 Users



- CBD - 3,369 Users
- Kaloleni - 1,888 Users
- Makadara - 2,700 Users

### 02 Employment



- Core - 10
- Interns - 12
- Librarians - 8
- Library Management Team - 11
- Artist and Local Businesses - 6
- Partner Organisations for Px E - 10
- External contracts/casual labour - 4

### 03 Event Attendance



Physical Event Attendees

- Gala, Hepa Jam, Music Bunk, Storytelling, Jamhuri and Madaraka - 0

Virtual Event Attendees

- Gala and Event Lit Fest - 837

### 04 Digital Audience

- Instagram - 4,039
- YouTube - 383
- Facebook - 3,152
- Twitter - 2,904

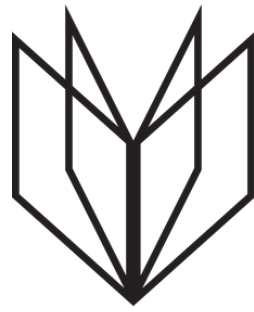
### 05 News



News Features - 31

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# Our gratitude to:



20  
19  
الشارقة  
عاصمة عالمية  
للكتاب  
SHARJAH  
WORLD BOOK  
CAPITAL

SIGRID RAUSING TRUST

# UCLA Library



Department for  
Digital, Culture,  
Media & Sport

linktree PRESENTS

# PASSION FUND

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Square

*Many thanks to our corporate partners*



# People

## Advisory Board



We have benefitted from the guidance of our new Advisory Board, constituted in January this year and composed of;

### **Anne Miltenburg**

#### *Communications:*

Anne joined our Advisory Board to strengthen our brand and direct our work increasing both reach and impact. She is an award-winning brand developer specializing in brands for social change. After a storied career at agencies such as Studio Dumbarr and Interbrand in Europe and South-East Asia, she founded [BrandTheChange.org](http://BrandTheChange.org) in Nairobi, an educational company that trains social entrepreneurs to build stronger brands to accelerate change. She is the author of Brand The Change and creator of the Brand Thinking Canvas and her brand- building tools are in use by more than 10,000 people across four continents.

### **Balmoi Abe**

#### *Architecture:*

Balmoi, a Cultural Impact Director and Founder at [Mambo Heritage](http://Mambo Heritage) joined our Advisory Board to advise on the architectural aspects of McMillan Memorial Library. He led a consortium that produced our Architectural Research and Historic Preservation Framework. Other commissioned material includes measured drawings and building plans, and reports on Architectural Status, Non-Destructive Structural Testing, Quantity Survey, Archival Status, Land Use, Land Heritage and Sustainability.

### **Victor Gitobu**

#### *Sustainability:*

This year, we began to explore some sustainability options, and Victor joined our Advisory Board to advise on how we can make these palaces for the people sustainable beyond the bunk! Victor is a finance specialist, an entrepreneur, and an investor with over 30 years of experience in corporate banking, investment banking, and consulting in East Africa.

**The three have added such immense value to our restoration work, and we hope to keep engaging with more industry experts in the coming year!**

## Core Team

This year, we added two members to our core team; [Jonathan Bii](#), our Communications Manager and [Cess Karimi](#), our Digital Guru.

## Facilities Team

We hired 10 new staff for Book Bunk's newest department, Facilities Management. This is the team charged with the security and wellness of library users, as well as maintenance of the buildings including janitorial and security positions.

This team were hired from the community around the libraries and have all served Book Bunk and its restoration projects as interns, casual labourers, construction workers and more.

A major highlight of this restoration project is the livelihoods it has been able to secure. We intend to keep supporting library communities in this and other ways in 2022. Meet this incredible team on our [website!](#)

# Financial Statement

What we raised

**90.93%**

Grants

**Ksh. 36,258,401**

**0.20%**

Earned Income

**Ksh. 80,437**

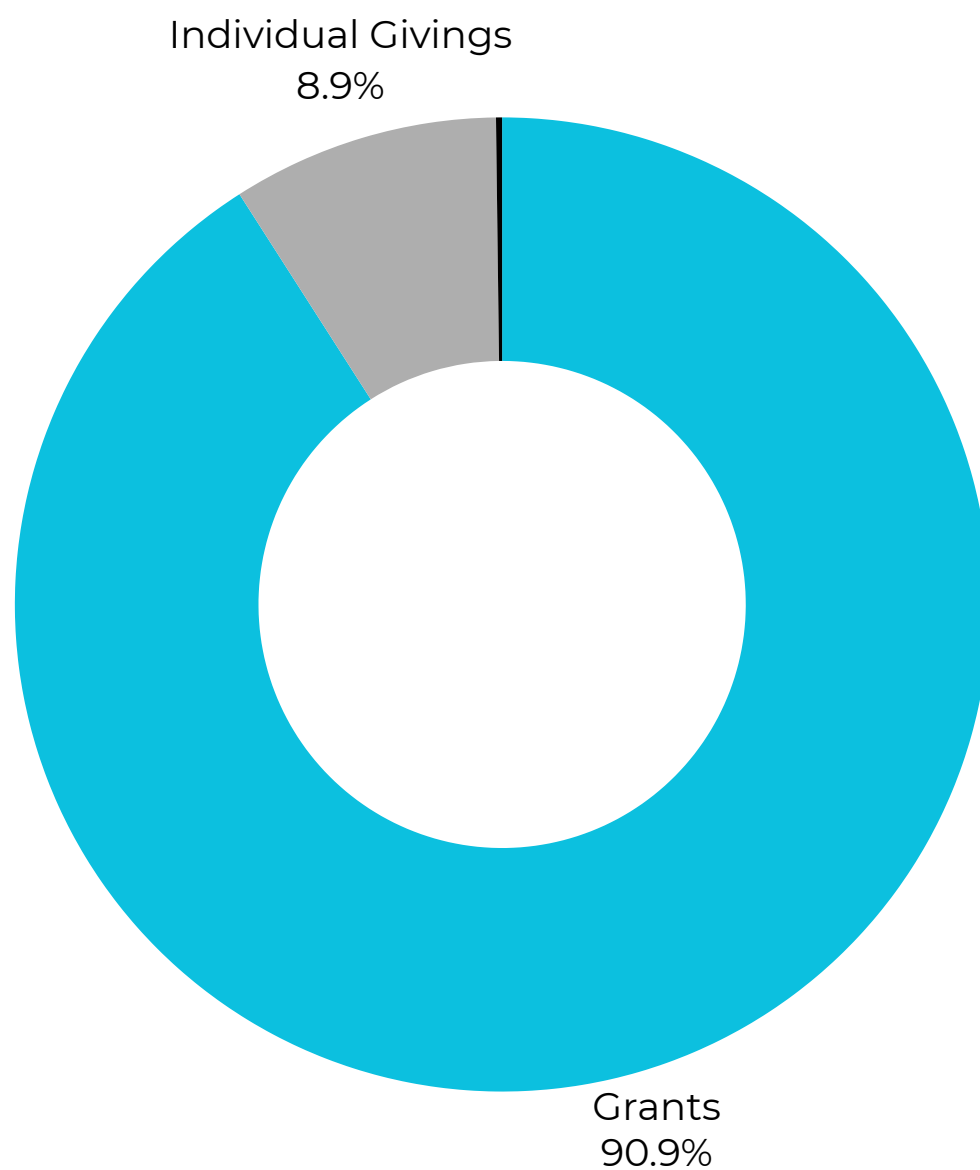
**8.86%**

Individual Givings

**Ksh. 3,534,524**

**TOTAL RAISED**

**KSH. 39,873,362**



# Financial Statement

What we spent

**19.31%**

Architectural Expenses

**Ksh. 10,857,315**

**14.56%**

Programmes & Outreach Expenses

**Ksh. 8,189,041**

**35.13%**

Research, Archives & Collections Expenses

**Ksh. 19,751,278**

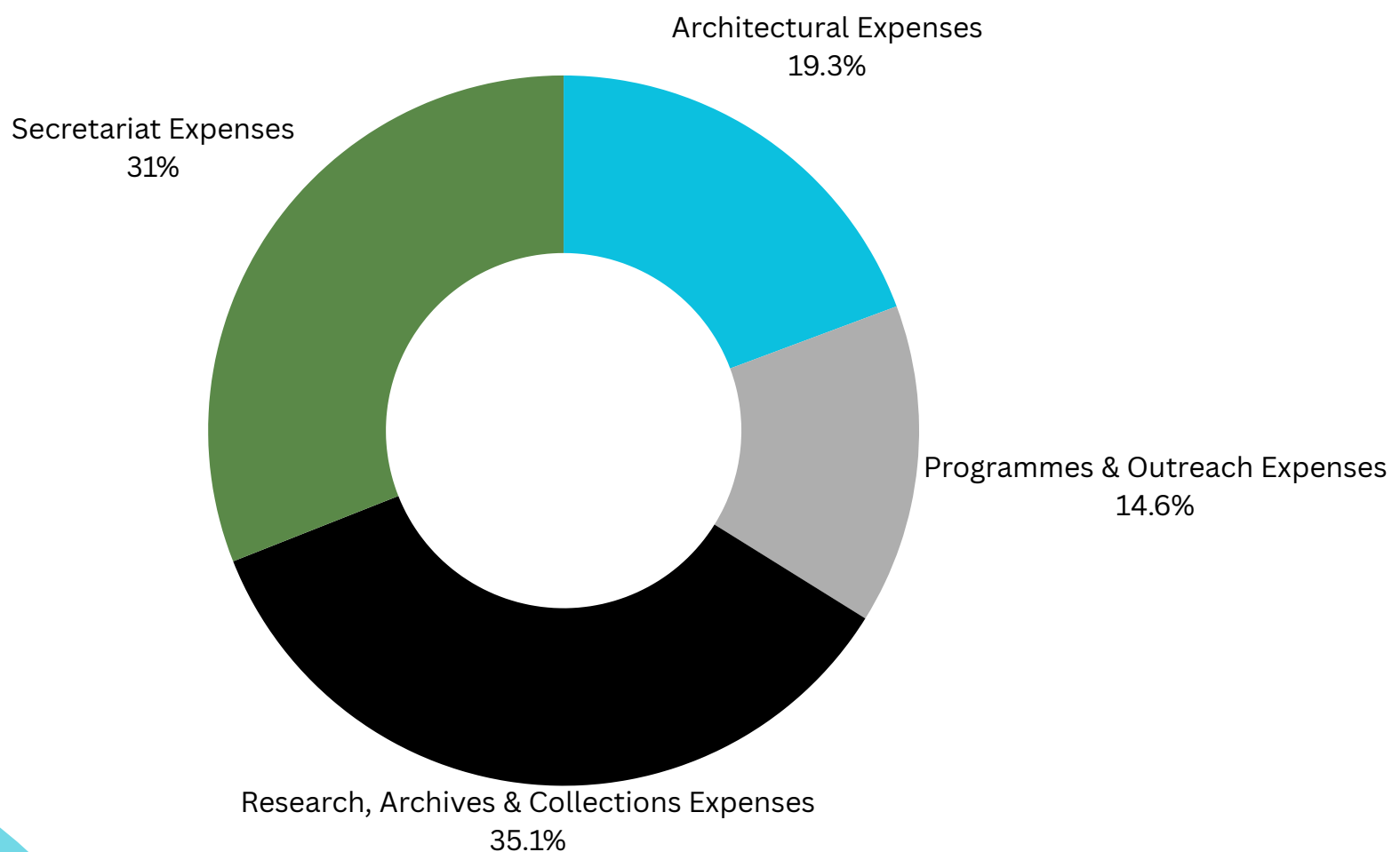
**31.00%**

Secretariat Expenses

**Ksh. 17,432,193**

## TOTAL EXPENDITURE

**KSH. 56,229,827**



# What's Ahead?

2022 will see us in full swing as we seek to digitise even more archives at the library. Most importantly, we are hoping to make it possible for members of the public to come get involved and participate in this process. With government-mandated COVID-19 restrictions lifted, we hope to host more in-person events at the library and revamp our programming. Expect Music Bunk, Dance Bunk and our annual fundraising gala as part of our 2022 event offerings.

2022 will also be special for us, as we hope to begin pre-restoration work on the McMillan Memorial Library on Banda street. In the coming months in 2022, we will unveil our hopes and dreams for this iconic public library.

*Come join us in dreaming  
for this library's future!*



Thank you  
for bunking  
with us!

we build  
libraries!