

The background is a solid light pink color. It features several large, abstract, organic shapes in pastel colors: a light green shape in the top left, a teal circle in the top right, a yellow teardrop shape in the middle left, a large yellow blob in the bottom left, and a dark blue shape in the bottom right.

Annual Report 2021

lilipad

Table of contents



01

Foreword

02

About us

03

Numbers

04

Highlights

05

Impact

06

Fundraising

07

Finances

08

Future plans

Foreword from our founder

Earlier this year, the UNICEF Chief of Education called the educational loss generated by the COVID-19 pandemic 'nearly insurmountable'. The dire consequences of the pandemic have hit historically marginalised and poor children the hardest, with equality and opportunity gaps widening to the point of erasing decades worth of progress. The severity of the situation might seem overwhelming or perhaps even paralysing; however, now is the time to act.

2021 was a humbling year for Lilipad. While we were yet again confronted with the harsh realities of COVID, we were impressed by the resilience of the children - in particular, in Uganda, where schools were closed for over one and a half years; by the resilience of their families; by the resilience of our partners - the schools, community centres and refugee accommodations. It might have been a challenging year, but it did not stop us from carrying out our work. Our libraries became even more crucial during this time, providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for children, outside of formal education spaces. We were able to launch our 7th project (in Berlin) and developed our most comprehensive educational offering to date. While these are humble achievements, they are undoubtedly solid foundations preparing us for the next chapter in the Lilipad story. Thank you for following our journey.

Sara Arsalane, Founder



About us

Our Purpose

Since 2017, Lilipad has worked to [address inequalities and barriers](#) in children's access to books and education. We have done this by installing 7 libraries for underserved communities in Uganda, Morocco, and Germany. We have worked closely with [local partners](#) to ensure that each library provides books, educational resources, and learning opportunities. We have also organized [educational events](#) and workshops in these spaces in order to serve the wider community and further encourage reading and learning.

Today, children and young people are increasingly confronted with barriers that can threaten their potential and overall development. At Lilipad, we believe that education is a powerful tool for fighting these inequalities. Through its multifaceted effects, [education can close achievement gaps, uplift and empower communities, and raise people out of poverty](#). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, an estimated 90 percent of the world's school-age children have had their education disrupted. More than ever before, there is a need for more resources to reduce, mitigate and address the inequalities in access and quality of education that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our Mission

Lilipad e.V. is a non-profit organisation founded in Berlin in January 2017. Our mission is to empower children from underserved communities and improve their life prospects by fostering [a love of reading and life-long learning](#). We strive to create multilingual children's libraries that can be a [safe and inclusive space of growth and development](#). To accomplish this, we build partnerships with local institutions and organisations, and provide them with [educational resources and programs](#) catering to the specific needs of their communities. Our projects are in Uganda, Morocco and Germany.

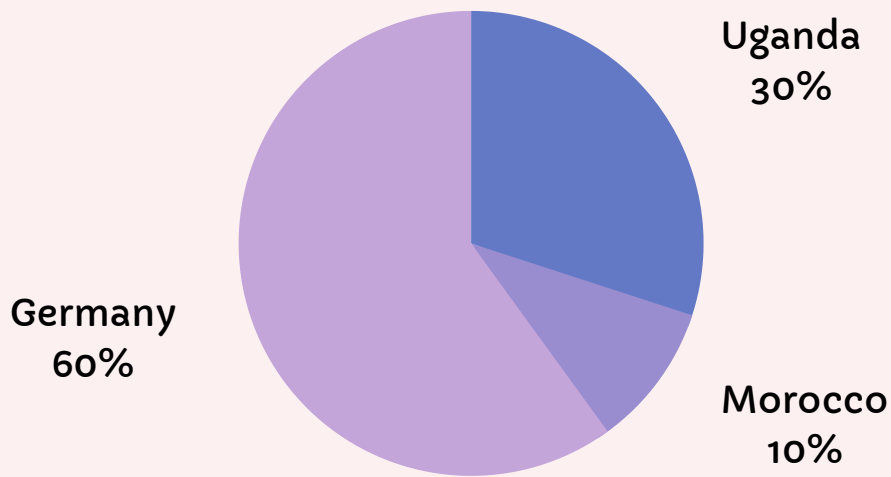


90%

of school-aged
children have
had their
education
disrupted by the
COVID-19
pandemic

2021 in numbers

Over 500 children benefited from our work in 2021



5
active libraries

1,000+
books
donated

90+
reading
activities



Project Highlights



lilipad library

مكتبة ليليپاد • کتابخانه لی لی پد • biblioteka lilipad



Diversified educational workshops in Berlin

We have been working on providing a broader range of educational activities in our libraries. We are working with external experts to diversify our educational offerings, and cultivate our libraries as learning spaces beyond the traditional school environment.

This year, we invited an artist to host a workshop in our library for the first time. The special guest was Xenia Ruiz Martinez, a talented illustrator, whose work can be recognised by her unique choice of colors and quirky portraits. The 2-hour workshop was divided into two parts: a self-portrait session with pastels, and a 'smartphone making' session. The children impressed us with their amazing color combination and choice of shapes!

The workshop attracted many curious minds, with a total of 50 children aged 4 to 15 years old joining the afternoon activity. During the workshop, children were able to socialise with each other, building up both their creativity and confidence.

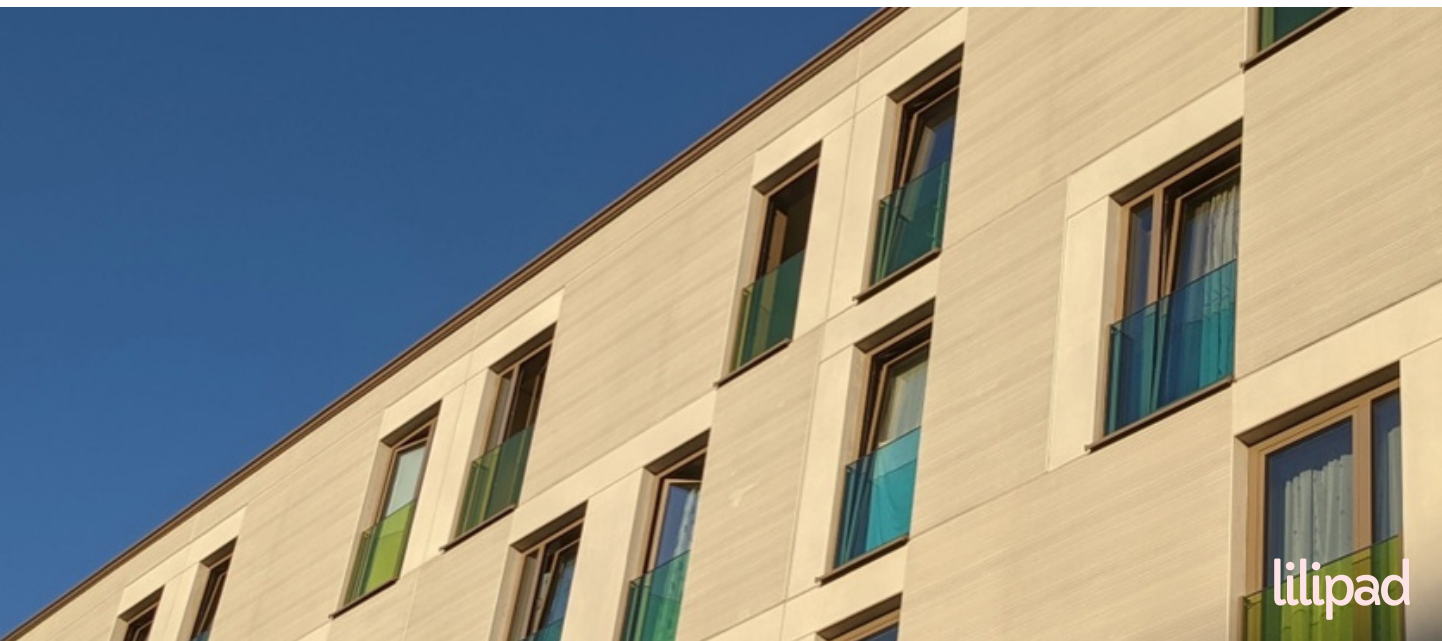


Opening library #3 in Berlin

On November 11th, we opened our third library in Berlin, at the refugee accommodation centre (*Gemeinschaftsunterkunft*) Marzahn. The centre opened in 2020 and is currently home to around 60 families, including almost 200 children. Our library was designed for children of all ages and spans across a reading room and larger activity and games room.

We initially supplied the library with around 500 books, all focused on leisure reading and non-formal education. As per usual with Lilipad libraries, our selection included books from multiple languages (German, English, Arabic,, Farsi being the main languages spoken in the centre).

Our experience has shown us that having a presence in these accommodation centres can have a larger impact, making our services easily accessible to those who live there. Our focus will continue to be on serving this type of accommodation, where children of refugee or migrant background are in need of particular attention to foster their integration and feeling of wellbeing.



COVID-19 response in Uganda

The local context

Uganda has seen one of the longest school shutdowns in the world. Between March 2020 and December 2021, schools closed for a total of 80 weeks. This closure has had devastating consequences on children's learning and overall wellbeing. To solve this, the Ugandan government implemented several measures including: lessons aired on radio and television, upload of educational content for mobile phones and on digital platforms and provision of home-learning packages. Despite these measures, the wide digital divide in Uganda prevented a large majority of Ugandan children from accessing education. Furthermore, the lack of connectivity of rural areas made rural children even more at risk of being left behind education-wise.

Due to the pandemic, our library in Uganda closed its doors for one month, then was able to cautiously reopen with the necessary safety and health restrictions. This meant that the Lilipad library in Kyabirwa village provided a vital learning space for children while schools were closed. Our Ugandan partner, Tukolaganhe Foundation has initiated two programs in particular that Lilipad supported financially:

The response

1 Providing extra educational support to children

As a result of the schools' closure, our local partner observed that many children took up various jobs in the village in order to support their families financially, which was decreasing the likelihood of their return to school. As a response, weekly after-school homework sessions were organised, with tutors helping children go through the home-learning packages provided by the government.

2 Digitalisation: internet and access to online learning

In Uganda, only 9 % of the rural population has access to the internet. To help tackle the issue in Kyabirwa, Lilipad started financing a WIFI connection and helped source several computers for the library. Since we are already sponsoring the salary of a local educator, they were able to kick start regular computer classes thanks to this initiative.

Testimonial

“

Lilipad provided home study materials to keep our students in the learning environment during the lockdown, equipped the library room with many learning materials, paid the librarian and teachers who were helping children during the lockdown, purchased the WIFI equipment and connectivity, and finally provided face masks to over 300 community members; just to mention a few.

”

*Moses, Director of Tukolaganhe Foundation -
Lilipad's partner in Uganda*



Expanding the Lilipad librarian program

Having a librarian is key to ensuring the positive impact of the libraries on their communities, and allows for consistent engagement and support that enables the children to make the best use out of the library and, most importantly, read!

Based on the positive experience in Uganda of having a dedicated librarian, we've started sponsoring a librarian program in Casablanca Morocco, more specifically in the Child Protection Centre Abdesselam Bennani where one of our libraries is located.

Samira is 25 and joined us in August 2021. She is professionally trained as an educator and has transformed the library into a happy and active learning environment! She has been able to create an engaging schedule that includes reading exercises, storytelling and theatre workshops.

It is our wish to continue sponsoring this program, where we champion young and bright individuals from the community as Lilipad librarians. This is also part of creating a program that allows these young people to grow in their roles and develop themselves to their fullest potential. Our vision is to empower young people to become their own inspiring change-makers.



Impact Reporting

Our impact journey

At Lilipad, we care about making a positive difference in the communities that we work with. Everything we do is stakeholder-oriented and we are committed to critically assessing, measuring, and reporting on our impact. We hope that this keeps us accountable to the communities we work with, partners, donors and ultimately helps us improve our impact.

In 2020, we began our impact measurement and management journey. We published our first Impact Report, including our impact framework to help us measure our impact. This included developing:

Overall objective

Reduce educational inequalities and barriers to ensure all children have access to the same opportunities in life

Key desired outcomes benefiting children in our communities

- Increase access to books that are educational, inclusive and culturally relevant
- Increase reading engagement and learning
- Contribute to overall wellbeing (academic, emotional, growth & development)



Key learnings



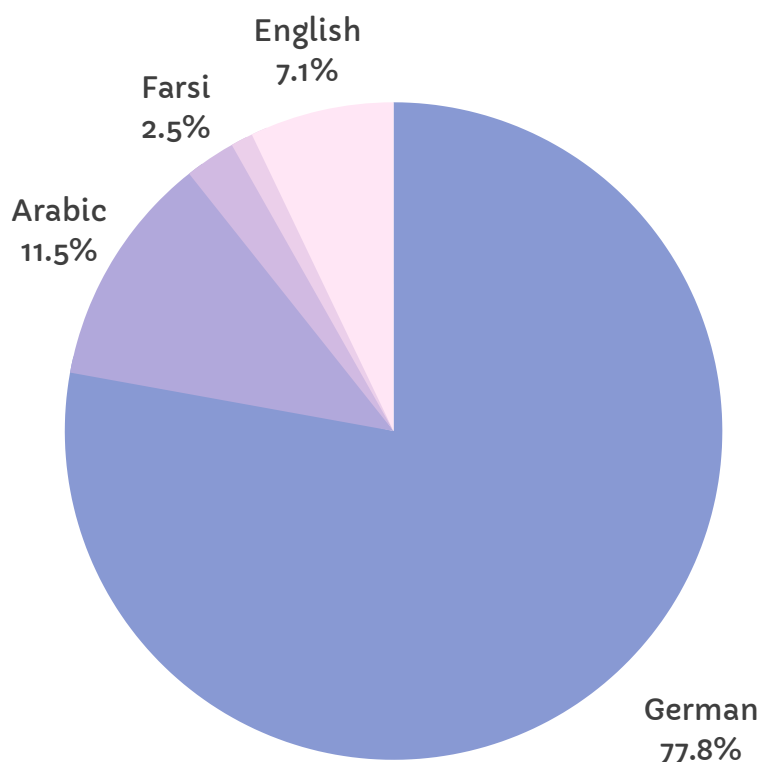
In 2021, we began to test new data collection tools to measure and understand better the level of engagement of our libraries. This is as an ongoing process from which we have learned:

- Since we are still in the beginning stages of designing and implementing much of our work, data collection processes need to be flexible and adaptable.
- We have to cater data collection methods to the different contexts, to understand better what data can be collected and by whom.
- COVID 19 shut down most of our libraries for long periods which stalled the ability to implement activities or collect any data.
- We will start developing/designing more qualitative surveys to better understand our impact.

More diverse and inclusive book selection

Research has shown that education in the mother tongue is a key factor for inclusion and quality learning, and it also improves learning outcomes and academic performance ([UNESCO, 2022](#)). That's why, at Lilipad, we provide books in the mother tongue languages of the children in our communities. We also hope that having multilingual libraries encourages parents as well as children to celebrate linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as encourage reading engagement.

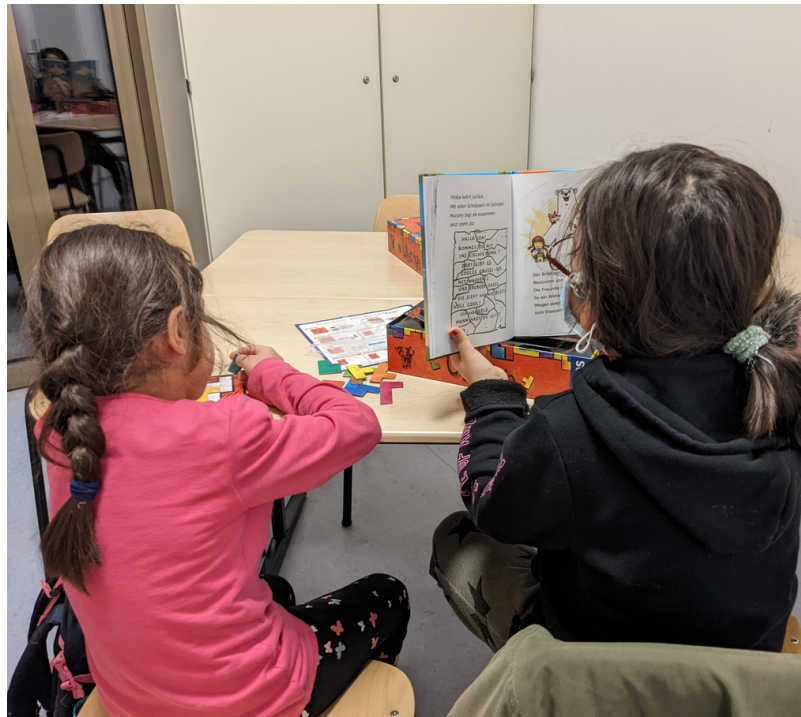
In 2021 we were able to provide children's books in **5 different languages** across our libraries. Seeing as we grew our presence in Germany, over **80%** of our book donations were directed towards our libraries in Berlin. We donated a significant number of German books, aimed at supporting migrant and refugee children in integration and language development.



Reading engagement and learning opportunities

In 2021, we were able to work towards improved reading engagement of the children in our libraries and increased their access to learning opportunities, focusing on our libraries in Morocco and Germany:

- We managed to dramatically increase the opening times of our Casablanca Child Protection Centre AB library. While previously, the library was rarely opened due to a lack of staff, the librarian program allowed us to significantly improve. Now, the library is open and provides reading activities to the children at least 3 days a week.
- We grew the community of children who benefit from our libraries and events in Berlin. We did this by opening a new library, increasing our reach by almost 200 more children.
- We grew our Berlin projects team and now have 2 new team members, which has improved management of our core libraries, and planning of workshops. These team members visit our Berlin libraries regularly to understand the needs of the community and build trust with our local partners. This is a first step towards developing comprehensive educational support and activities that meet the needs of our communities.



Feedback from our partners

Our work would not be possible without our local partners and their feedback is essential to our success.

Since the start of Lilipad in 2017, sustaining long-term partnerships with local organisations has been one of our top priorities. We choose to partner with organisations that have the best social impact, a thorough understanding of the people they serve, and a positive presence in their community. In 2021, we distributed surveys to our 7 implementation partners in order to understand their level of satisfaction. From the responses, our partners expressed positive feedback about their partnership with Lilipad. Here are some insights :

According to our partners, Lilipad libraries are...

A place where community members exchange

"The offer of Lilipad's multilingual library binds families and children with migration experience to our neighbourhood center. It serves as a low-threshold door opener for further offers in our center. Through the joint festivities, children became more enthusiastic about books."

Sebastian, Coordinator at Stephanus-Stiftung Berlin, Germany

A place where all generations learn together

"Lilipad has created a very positive impact in our community. Both young and old have started to like reading books and they enjoy it very much. This led to many people starting to demand an establishment of adult classes. This is a very big achievement for our community."

Moses, Director of Tukolaganhe Foundation Kyabirwa, Uganda

A place where children do more than just reading

"The library makes the subject of reading present, and the residents are always happy to read something in their mother tongue."

Anja, Educator at GU Marzahn - Berlin, Germany

"Children started improving their vocabulary in their native language and in German."

Sebastian, Coordinator at Stephanus-Stiftung, Berlin, Germany

Fundraising

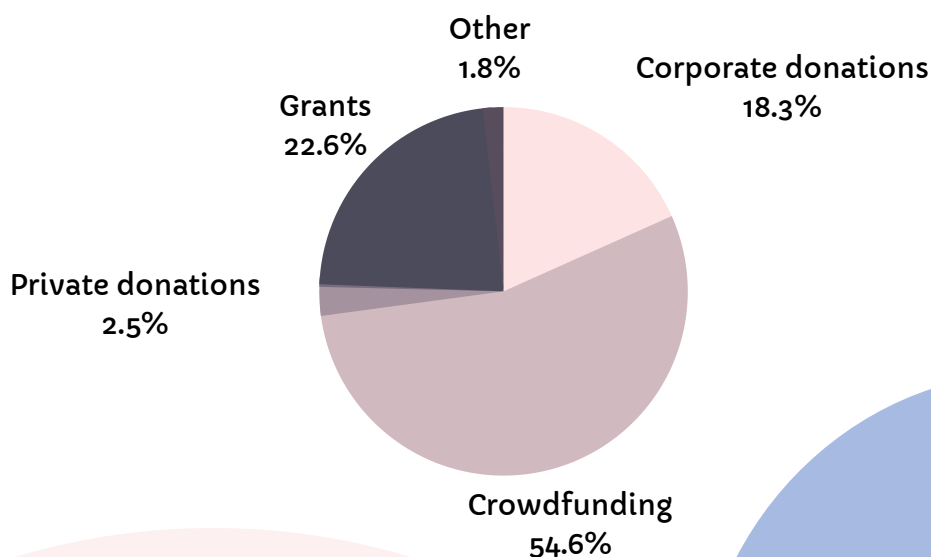
Diversifying our sources of income

In 2021, we worked towards diversifying our funds and becoming more financially stable.

Over the years, we have completely transformed our fundraising due to the pandemic. Only a couple of years ago, we used to raise >90% of our yearly through events. Now, this is no longer the case, as we have increasingly diversified where we get our funds.

We are especially excited to have gained 5 new corporate partnerships this year, and we are confident that we will continue to build upon our relationships with donors and grow our collaboration with the corporate community in Berlin.

2021 sources of income



53,000€
raised
in 2021!

Expensify.org

Lilipad was selected as one of the 10 finalists of the social justice challenge of Expensify.org!

Lilipad was selected as one of the 10 winning campaigns of the Community Justice Grant Challenge from the Expensify.org. The 100K fund can be used to reimburse our volunteers for the work they do with Lilipad, allowing us to scale our efforts for change and make an even greater impact with our Lilipad libraries!

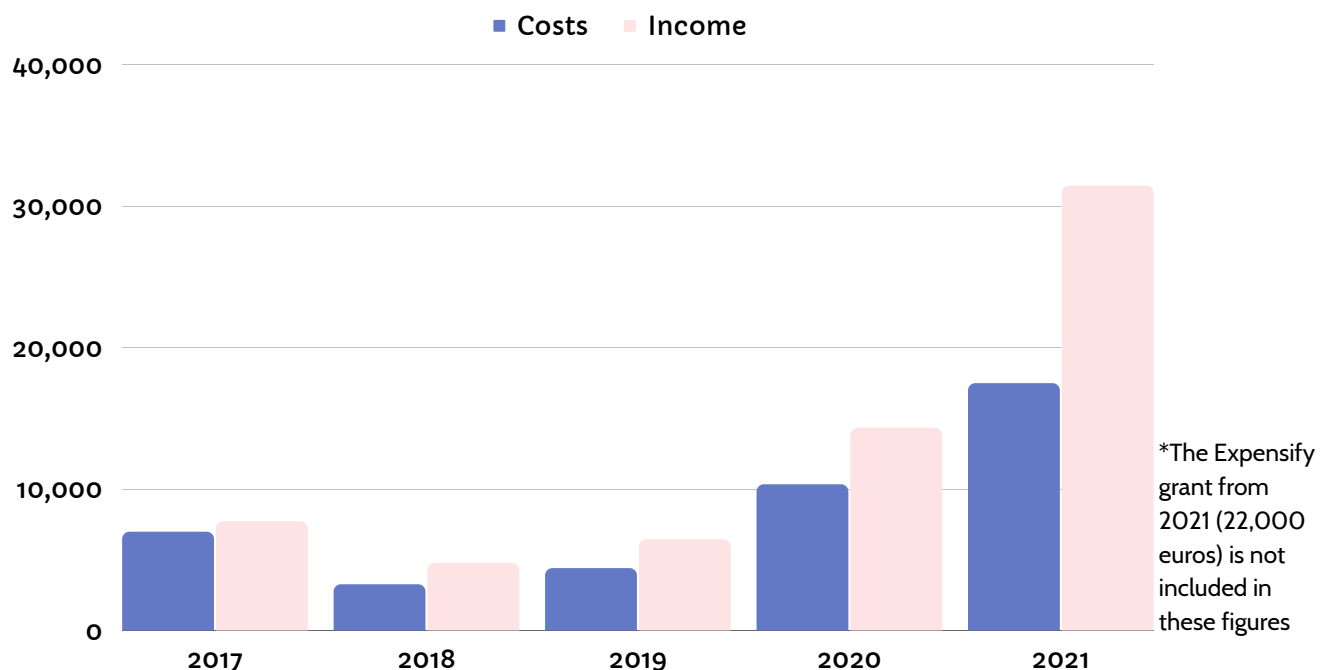
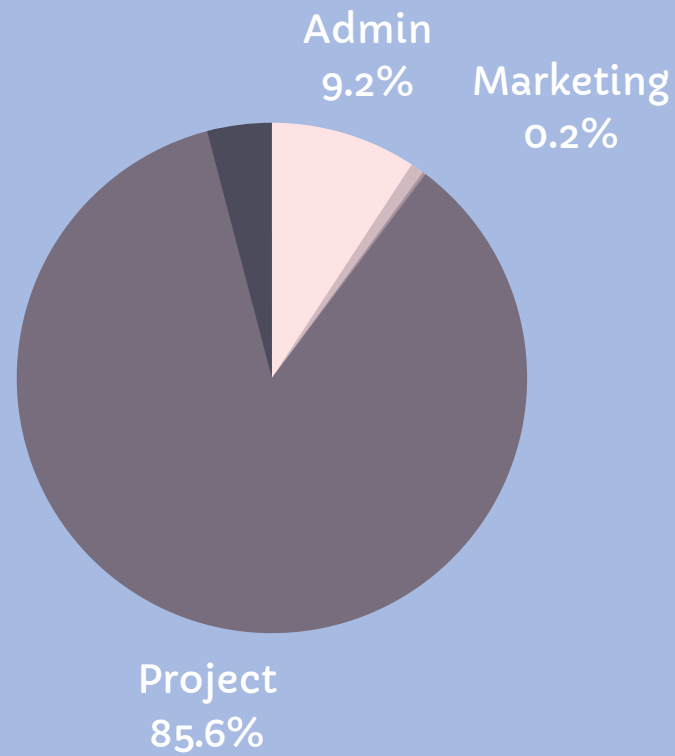
Finances

Lilipad has been entirely volunteer-run for the last 5 years. Therefore, most of our funding has been going directly towards our projects. This means that we have always met our fundraising needs.

This has also come with its limitations, which is why we are aiming to allocate funds towards compensating some of our team. We believe this will improve the quality of our services and operations. We've hired our first freelancer in 2021 and will continue to create a quality team of professionals to deliver the best results.

We are also happy to say that since 2017 we have seen a consistent annual increase in our funds and we are confident that we will continue to do so, with the help of wonderful donors and supporters who help us do the work that we do!

2021 Costs



Future plans

For the next 2-3 years and in pursuit of our vision and mission, we aim to increase our impact by launching new projects in strategic locations where we can have the biggest impact. While we will continue our activities in Uganda, we will mostly focus on:

Germany: Being based in Berlin, Germany, our city is naturally one of the core focuses of our work. Of the total amount of refugees in Berlin, about 19,000 live in government accommodations. This is why we wish to scale our services in this type of accommodation, where children of refugee or migrant background live and are in need of particular attention to foster their integration and feeling of wellbeing.

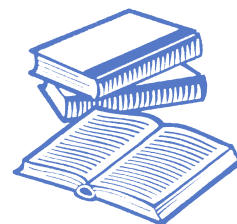
As we all know, Berlin is now facing a new wave of refugee arrivals from Ukraine, with over 10,000 refugees arriving per day as of March 2022. Our work, therefore, has become increasingly important. We plan to coordinate with local organisations in order to help provide educational support for Ukrainian children and facilitate their integration into German society.

Morocco: In Morocco, we mainly support children who are either attending Moroccan public schools (typically the most underprivileged in terms of resources) or not enrolled in school anymore. It is this last category of children that we wish to support further by launching a new project in another child protection centre in the area of Casablanca.

Besides our expansion and growth plan, we also aim to enhance our impact by improving the quality of support to libraries, developing our programs, and broadening our scope of work. For our Belin locations, this includes:

- Developing a volunteer program for consistent and multilingual reading engagement
- Monthly educational workshops in collaboration with educators and experts
- Developing our team expertise through workshops and training

In order to achieve all of this, we aim to build on our organisational stability and sustainability by diversifying our streams of funding and increasing our institutional as well as unrestricted funding from corporate donors. This will also help us work towards an internal transformation and transition from a volunteer-run organisation to hiring staff in order to further advance fundraising goals and partnerships, as well as guide and implement programs and activities.



Contact

Lilipad e.V.
c/o bUm
Paul-Lincke-Ufer 21
10999 Berlin

info@lilipadlibrary.org

Contributors

Priscilla Megalaa
Sara Aarsalane
Léa Ichikawa