

KIWIX

ANNUAL REPORT



2022

FROM OUR CHAIR

Kiwix underwent significant changes in 2022, with a new of chairperson and the addition of new members to the team.

However, this transition was well-supported by the Committee and Kiwix team. As entrepreneurs, ongoing support is crucial for the success of our businesses, and meeting the expectations and needs of our users remains a top priority for the Board. This will require a constant effort, including the reinvention of certain models and activities, to ensure that Kiwix remains a strong and constructive voice in an open and responsible economy that serves people and society. We are proud of this ambition, and it is only possible with the support of our members, partners, and users.

Maintaining the trust of these stakeholders was a focus of our activities in 2022, and we are grateful for their ongoing support. This trust will also be crucial as we face new challenges beyond our borders.

We are excited about achieving our common goals and projects and look forward to the journey ahead.

Isabelle Cohen-Solal
Board Chair

IT NEVER GOES ACCORDING TO PLAN

The message we received on 9 March 2022 was quite unusual. Instead of regular users asking how to get this or that piece of content, this one message came from a Yuri, who simply wrote: "Have you noticed any uptick in Kiwix downloads from Russia?"

Yuri is/was a journalist at Kommersant, a liberal, somewhat still free daily newspaper from Russia. Days only after the beginning of the invasion of Ukraine, the Russian government had blocked most foreign social media and threatened heavy fines and censorship on Wikipedia.

Turns out that Yuri had seen something we had not. For a few weeks, the share of Russia-based traffic on our servers jumped from 2% to 40%, with a global volume of downloads that had but tripled in a matter of days. Their government threatened censorship, and ordinary Russians voted with their clicks.

Kiwix was initially built with rural, African schools in mind. Five years after the organisation to support it was founded, we see it used in places and for reasons we had never considered. Refugee camps, prisons, and even war zones.

It is easy for those who have to forget how many ways there to join the have-nots. Kiwix, it seems, has now also become an insurance policy,

Stephane Coillet-Matillon
CEO



OUR NUMBERS

Measuring offline audiences is notoriously hard.

Besides direct server connections, we ask every organisation we work with to tell us how many people they served over the past year. Lateral distribution (people sharing Kiwix with their neighbours and friends) is therefore not accounted for.

Users are typically split among three types of platforms:

- Mobile devices (Kiwix app and custom app, e.g. WikiMed)
- Desktop (Windows & Linux)
- Servers (usually Raspberry Pi microservers)

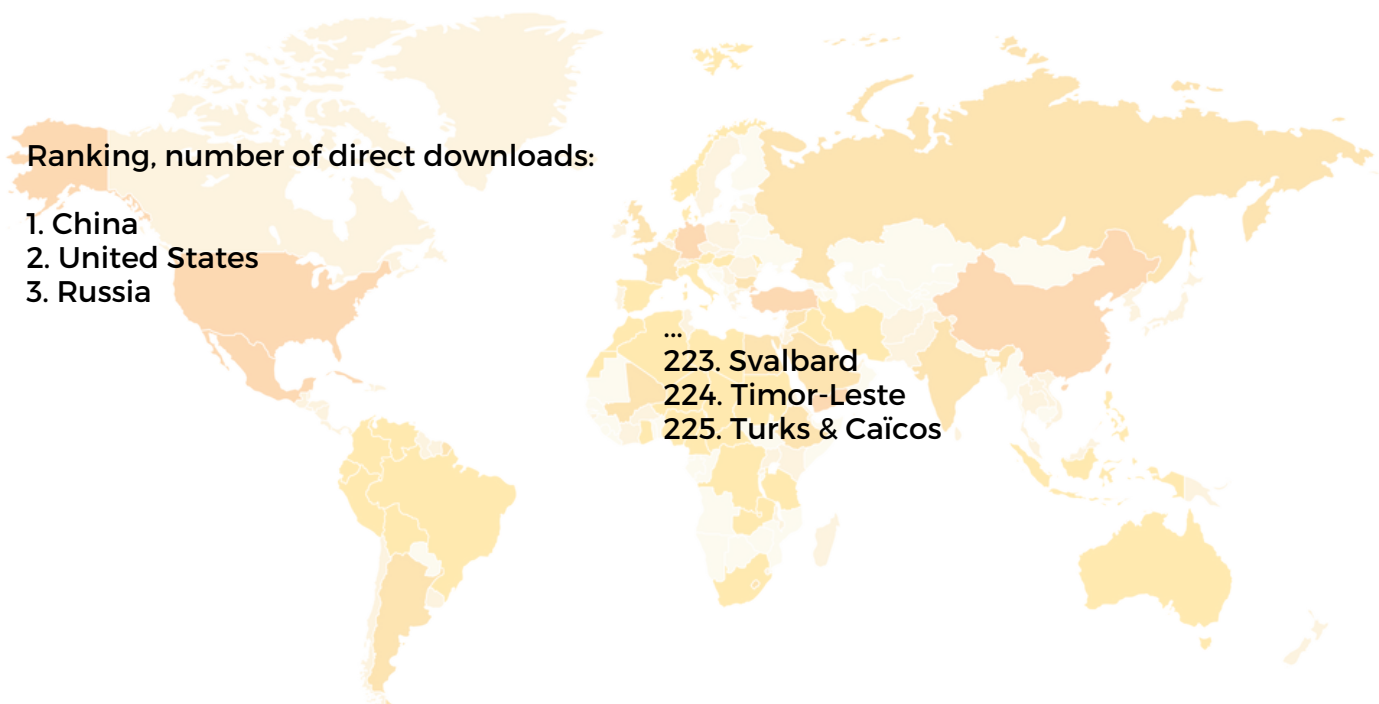
8M

USERS IN 229 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

Ranking, number of direct downloads:

1. China
2. United States
3. Russia

- ... 223. Svalbard
224. Timor-Leste
225. Turks & Caicos



2022 IN REVIEW

JANUARY - MARCH

Kiwix began a new partnership with **Swarm**, a web3 storage solution to allow for censorship-resistant access to Wikipedia.

New library layout was released - available at library.kiwix.org, it makes it easier for people to browse available content.

War in Ukraine: Kiwix downloads from Russia increase by 2,000%, overall traffic triples in a week.



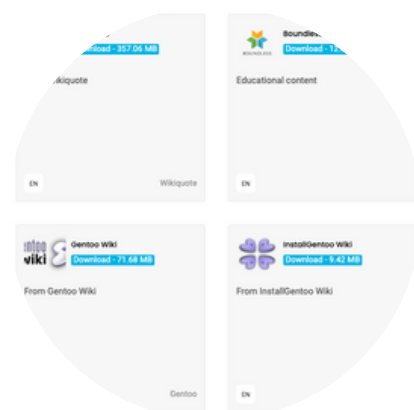
APRIL - JUNE

Wikipedia for Schools, a selection of 10,000 Wikipedia articles curated by Arizona State University, is now available in Arabic

Kiwix-JS 2.0 is released. The Javascript-based version allows users to browse zim files from the comfort of a browser extension. It also makes it possible to use Kiwix on old 32-bit computers (e.g. those still running Windows 98 or Vista), which are still very much around in many parts of the world

Spring Hackathon takes place in Crest (France).

iFixit, the free collection of online repair guides for electronics, appliances, cars and everything inbetween, is now available offline in 12 languages



2022 IN REVIEW

JULY - DECEMBER

StackOverflow, the largest discussion forum for developers and coders, is now available offline. Twenty-two million questions and answers that power this world's computers.



Kiwix joins the **Offline Internet Consortium**, whose aim is to coordinate activities and share information among organisations running offline deployment programs around the world.

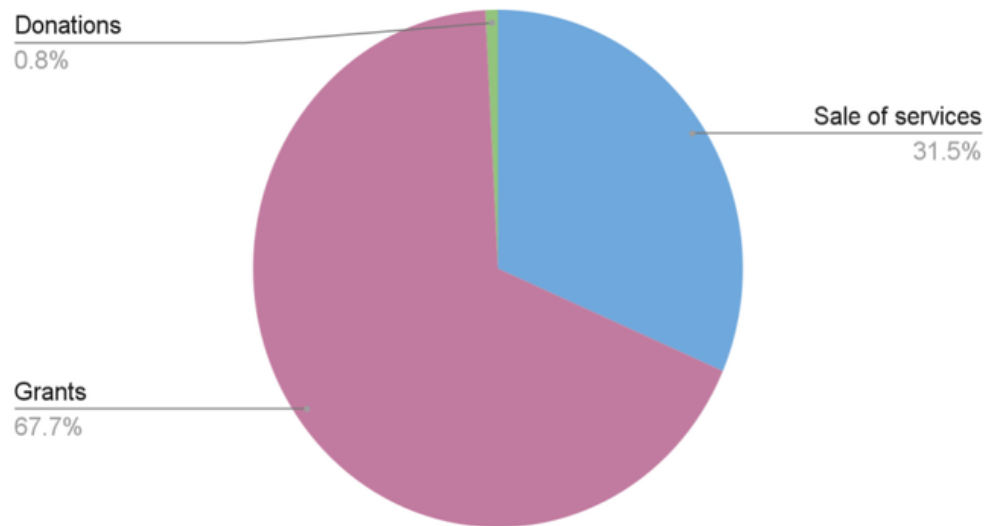
Kiwix for macOS/iOS 3.0 has been officially released. Better download management, lots of bug fixes and overall better user experience. A beautiful project more than three years in the making.

End of year rush with releases for **libzim**, **zim-tools**, **libkiwix**, **kiwix-tools** and **kiwix-desktop** (linux & windows): lots of bug fixes, and overall easier to use for anyone wanting to develop or use offline tools.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW - REVENUE

CHF 502,137



Grants from our partners constitute the lion's share of our revenue and come in two flavours:

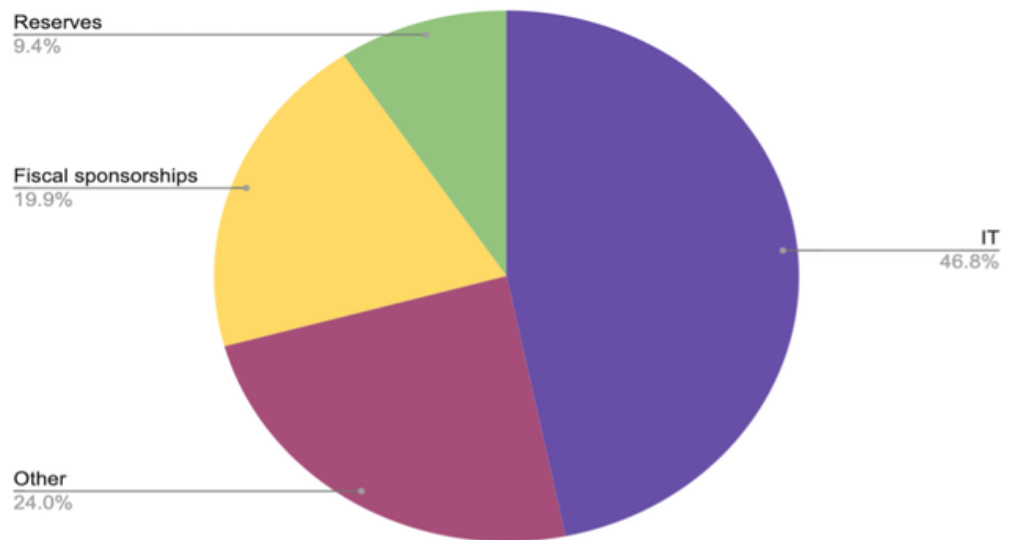
- unrestricted, which means that we can use them to pay for rent, admin, and backend projects that are essential to Kiwix but find little appeal with donors (typically, moving our infrastructure to Kubernetes - essential but hard to sell);
- restricted grants, on the other hand, are those whose purpose is to specifically support a given project. They more often than not reflect a donor's choice to support a given piece of content for our library. StackOverflow and Khan Academy would be good examples.

Donations from individual users may seem small (and in absolute terms, they are), but remain important to us as they show that we do enjoy support from those who can afford it. Considering our users base being 80% in the Global South and the type of problems they are dealing with, we cannot reasonably expect them to actively support us (some do send thank-you emails or pictures, and these are highly appreciated). But seeing how small our budget still is, every penny counts. Thanks to everyone in Europe and the US who pitched in this year.

Services mostly cover access to our online hotspot installer, some specific software development done for partners, and fees for fiscal sponsorships. Kiwix does not sell ads nor user data.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW - SPENDING

CHF 502,137



Kiwix had a grant total of 8 employees and contractors at the end of 2022, none of them working full-time: Kiwix is still young, it is growing (we had a new hire joining to work on content in November) and we manage our budget on a strict need-to basis.

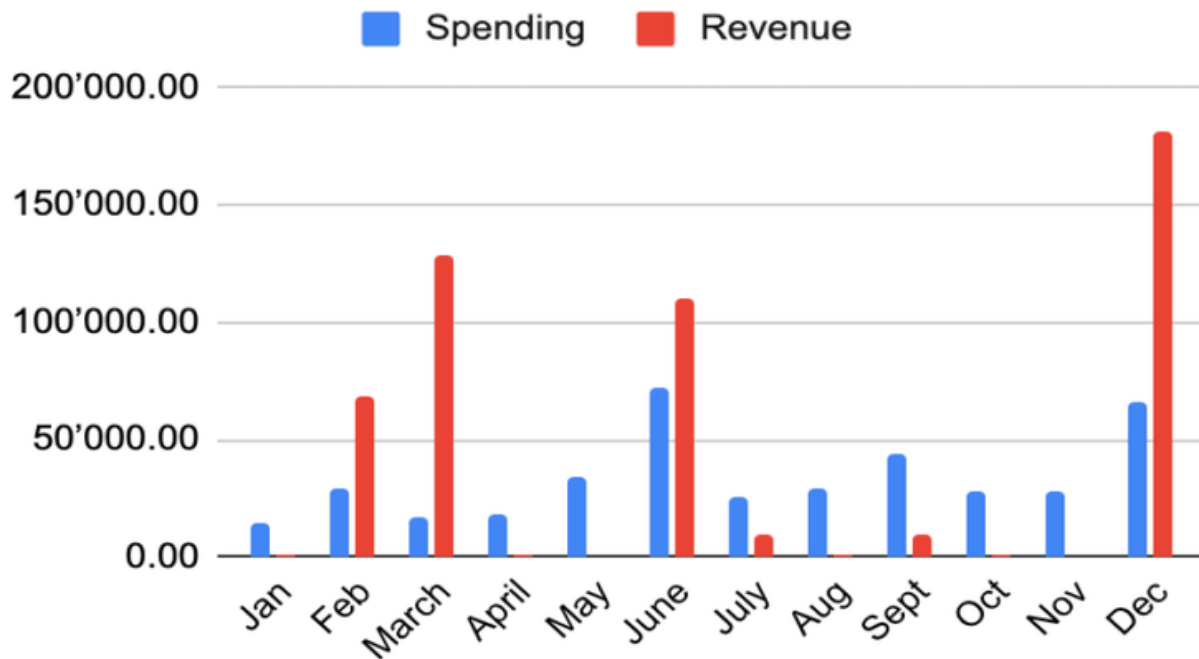
Being a software platform means of course that most of our spending goes to pay developers, as well as our IT infrastructure (servers, licenses, etc.)

"Other" represent various admin costs: rent, non-software related salaries, taxes, but also goodies for our volunteers, etc.

Fiscal sponsorships reflect our close connection with the Wikimedia Foundation: Kiwix actually manages on behalf of the WMF a few grants that are distributed to Wikimedians around the world (East Africa and South Asia, for the most part). They help the movement, and help with our cash-flow.

We also put some cash aside as reserves, as those took a serious hit during COVID.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW - MONTHLY SPENDING AND REVENUE



Our 2022 monthly burn rate was around CHF 35,000. Grants usually arrive during Q2 and Q4, hence the rather seasonal structure of our income. We aim to change this in the future by growing our non-grant revenue. This is also why non-profits (or companies, for that matter) will always prefer a smaller, recurring revenue than big donations or sales: they make cashflow more predictable and, therefore, less of a headache.



FREE AND OPEN-SOURCE SOFTWARE FOR THE WIN



This old man and his grandson live in the village of Jaz-Kechuu, Kyrgyzstan. The place only got electricity last year.

They're watching a very traditional game of Kok-Boruu or, as everyone knows, "horseback polo with a goat".

The Kyrgyz government decided at the start of the pandemic that all schools should be connected to the internet. Problem is, places like Jaz-Kechuu are so remote that it's not a viable option.

That's when our friends at the Internet Society Kyrgyzstan Chapter decided to step in and provide internet content without internet access. They loaded up Kiwix offline onto their very own, and very cool Ilimbox, packed it with local educational content, and distributed it around rural, mountainous Kyrgyzstan. An Ilimbox uses 5V to power, so electricity is not an issue, and it can create a local network for a whole classroom. Problem solved.

This could not have happened if Kiwix' code had remained proprietary and closed.

The strength of open-source software is that it is easier to fix, easier to adapt, easier to scale. Don't let anyone fool you into thinking otherwise.

OUR FIRST STEPS IN INDONESIA

2022 also saw our first step in sharing Kiwix in Tangerang, Indonesia.

Together with [Wikimedia Indonesia](#) and [Institut Teknologi Tangerang Selatan](#) (ITTS), we journeyed to the outskirts of Tangerang to visit a local school – Global Tangerang. With 109 students enrolled, 6 teachers, and 5 classrooms, they have insufficient resources to spare for a stable internet subscription.

What did we do?

We shared the wonders of Kiwix and demonstrated how to setup a Kiwix server using their current PC to students (age 14-16 years old). In our demo, we installed Kiwix using a USB-thumbdrive and showed them the ability to browse Wikipedia Bahasa Indonesia, and several educational videos offline, serving wirelessly at zero cost.

What did we want to achieve?

At this current stage, we wanted to share what an offline Content Management System (CMS) can achieve and its ability to provide free educational content to areas of limited/no internet connectivity. With an aim to lower the barriers to education by providing accessible educational content to underprivileged children or rural areas in order to assist their educational journey.

What did we learn?

To our surprise, Kiwix was quite well-known among the EduTech folks in Jakarta, Indonesia. Kiwix's message to spread offline internet has reached certain parts of Java. However, this open-sourced technology ability to democratize knowledge, through an offline CMS wasn't widespread. Moreover, the knowledge in setting up, recycling, and utilizing old PCs/phones in order to deploy Kiwix was siloed.

This presents an exciting challenge for an archipelago with over 18,110 islands, where this is just the beginning of our journey in Indonesia. Onwards we shall march in democratizing knowledge by providing accessible educational content!

FUTURE PLANS

Kiwix' code is stored in more than 40 repositories which we maintain continuously. Here is what we plan to do next year



Mediawiki Offliner 2.0

This tool helps us build our flagship content that is Wikipedia offline. It is getting old, however, and has accumulated a significant amount of technical debt. We are looking at significantly upgrading it over the next few months.



ANDROID

Another platform in needs of a serious revamp is Kiwix for Android, which could do with some UX/UI improvements. While we don't expect a release in 2023, serious work will start already next year



ZIMIT

Zimit, in a nutshell, is the Content scraper to, well, scrape them all. The technology is still in its infancy, but we will be looking at improving existing services and compatibility



HOTSPOT 3.0

We want to make it easier and faster to generate a local hotspot with Kiwix content on it



Illia Ponomarenko  

@IAPonomarenko



On these nights in Ukraine, one can discover awesome little things. For instance, you can actually download English Wikipedia and read it offline. All articles, all pictures.

Basically, the whole knowledge of humankind just on your laptop.

11:44 PM · Dec 10, 2022

532 Retweets **10** Quote Tweets **7,044** Likes

Thanks to our partners and supporters



A million more thanks to our volunteers, in particular

Abdul
Artyom
Chris
Galton
Geoffrey
Kevin
Kunal
Mossroy
Travis

Support our mission with a donation at <https://support.kiwix.org>
or via direct bank transfer via IBAN : CH26 0900 0000 1454 0229 0
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And thanks to you!