



ANNUAL REPORT

2023

BANANA FOR SCALE

You are in the desert. Or in the countryside, or in a big city. You live in Africa, India, the US or even Antarctica. Places change, but there's always one thing that does not: there is little to no connectivity around you, and trying to look up any kind of information is a pain. So much so that most of the time, you give up.

And then someone tells you about this little app. It is free. And even though you probably don't care (you should), it collects none of your data. It won't even try to show you ads. This little app, which runs on your phone or computer, or whose content you can access on your local school's network, finally gives you access to that information you had been longing for. It is not the greatest thing since the invention of the wheel or instant messaging. But having it clearly made your day.

This app is called Kiwix. It can be moody (not to say buggy) but things have been regularly improving since you first used it. So much so that a lot of people around you are using and sharing it, even though you never saw any ad for it.

The last update allows you to store the entirety of Wikipedia on your not-so-new phone. 6.6 million entries, including images. It's not even on your phone, but tucked on a microSD card you bought for \$10 or so. The card is as big as your thumbnail.

In your other hand is a banana.



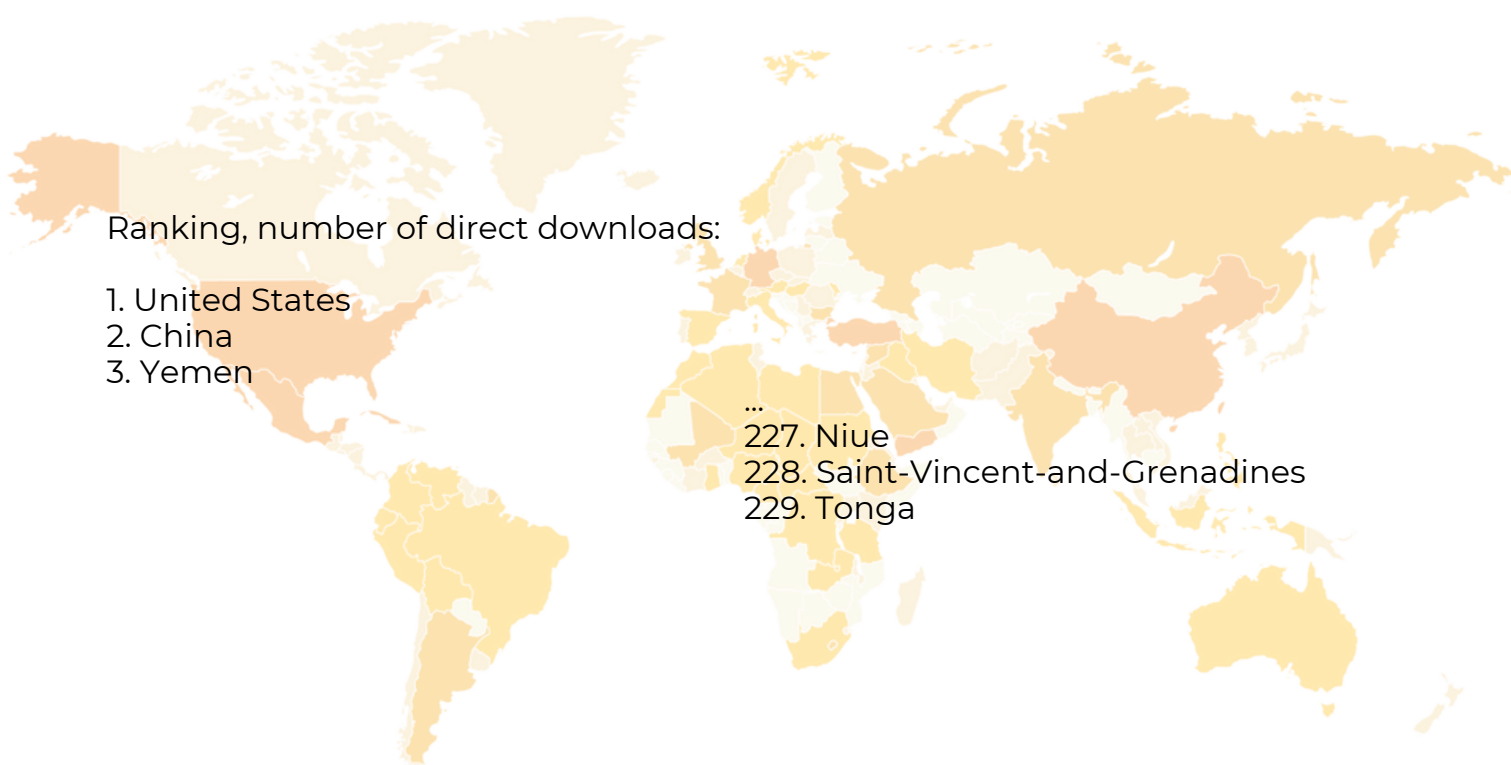
OUR NUMBERS

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 so these numbers should be as a lowball estimate.



MILLION USERS
IN 229 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES



Ranking, number of direct downloads:

1. United States
2. China
3. Yemen

- ...
227. Niue
228. Saint-Vincent-and-Grenadines
229. Tonga

TECH UPDATES



Kiwix for desktop is the historical first iteration of Kiwix. It is popular in Africa (Kiwix-JS also runs on older, refurbished computers), middle-income countries (Russia, Iran), schools and prisons.

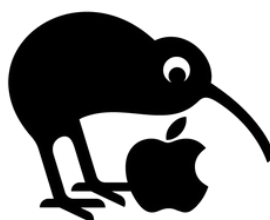
Multiple releases this year on the browser extensions and the Windows/Linux distributions.



Kiwix for android is the go-to solution outside of institutional deployments, with users in India, the Philippines, the Middle East or Cuba.

We see a lot of potential in the growth of custom apps, *i.e.* specific content attached to a whitebranded app.

A major update to the Google playstore had made it impossible to open zim files that had not been downloaded directly from the app (which is an issue in our case as many people would share files offline from a single downloader). Kiwix-Android 3.8 was released in the Fall and fixed this.



Kiwix for Apple is the one product we did not expect to see grow in popularity as iPhones aren't very commonly seen among the Global South populations we were aiming at. But in the US, Germany, and China, it definitely is a go-to solution.

Kiwix 3.0 was released this year, a major milestone that allows the same app to run on iPhones, iPads and macOS computers.

TECH UPDATES



Kiwix Hotspot was developed as a classroom-friendly device. It uses off-the-shelf, low-cost technology that can serve up to 25 users. Mostly used in Africa and the US, where it became unexpectedly popular with the Prepper community.

There was no major update this year, but a lot of groundwork has been covered ahead of planned 2024 releases (along with the usual fixes).

Kiwix' code is stored in more than 40 repositories, which we maintain with the same assiduity.



Backend tools get little love, but without Kiwix tools, the Zimfarm and all of our openZiM scrapers there would be nothing to share offline. A large part of our OPEX is actually dedicated to them, one way or another.

Major updates on Youtube, Gutenberg, and iFixit scrapers. We continued to resorb the technical debt on Mediawiki Offliner, the Wikipedia scraper.

THIS HAPPENED

THIS YEAR'S OTHER BIG MOVES

Q1

Paris Hackathon

In partnership with Libraries without Borders



Q2

Athens Hackathon

Simultaneously held with the Wikimedia Foundation's own hackathon



Docker images moved to ghcr.io

In FOSS we trust



Q3

Wikipedia-on-demand released

Users can now build their own Wikipedia subset in a few clicks

New website

And our first newsletter!



Q4

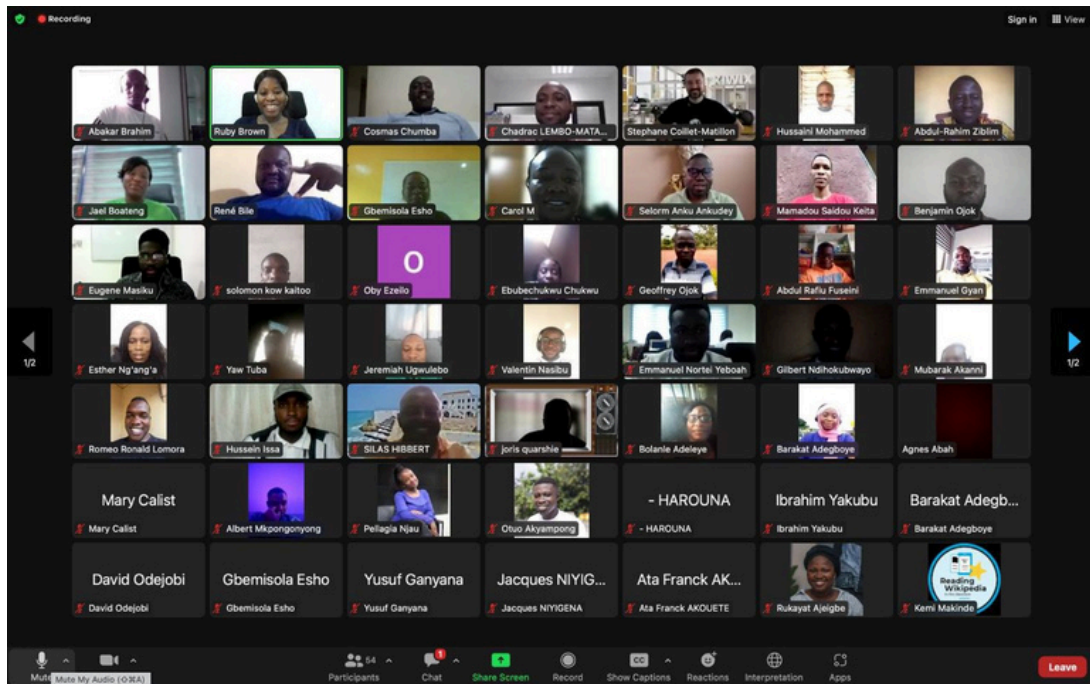
Zimit 2.0

Project launch for the universal website scraper

Android & iOS custom apps

New toolchain makes it easier to publish apps

SCALE UP



The Kiwx4Schools Program is an initiative organized by Open Foundation West Africa, born out of a pilot project started in 2015 by Felix Nartey at a high school in Wa, in northern Ghana. Through community-centered approach, the program aims to provide sustainable access to offline educational resources in Ghanaian schools, particularly in regions where internet access is limited or expensive. While Kiwix does not manage or engage in local deployments, we do support such programs in any other way we can (media, localized content, etc.).

The program uses a mini-fund opportunity to reach schools in diverse regions and provide meaningful engagement and skill-building opportunities to community volunteers. It has been running for two years, training about 30 community volunteers, and focusing on Senior High Schools (SHS) as they are more likely to have computer laboratories. Students learn about digital citizenship, and how to navigate the Kiwix software to access resources such as TED conferences, PhET simulations, Wikipedia and the Wiktionary, etc.

OFWA ended up being approached by many community members from other African regions who expressed interest in learning about the project because they saw the need for it. As a consequence OFWA launched the Offline Kiwix4Schools Regional Mentorship program. The first cohort of 70 would-be mentors and evangelists from all over the continent graduated in 2023.

DEPLOYMENT STORIES - TANZANIA

The Dunia Salama Foundation is on a mission to bridge the digital divide among Tanzanian children.

Named after the Swahili words for 'Safe World,' the foundation has launched the '*Mimi Na Tehama*' ('I and IT') project to equip young minds with essential digital skills, opening doors to knowledge and opportunities.



In many parts of the world, internet access and digital resources remain a luxury. Tanzania is no exception; countless children lack the means to explore the vast digital landscape. In our increasingly tech-driven world, digital literacy is paramount. '*Mimi Na Tehama*' ensures that Tanzanian children won't be left behind in this digital age.

The journey commenced in November 2022, and by August 2023, the Dunia Salama Foundation had already made significant progress. They empowered the first cohort of 40 children, spanning primary and secondary school levels. '*Mimi Na Tehama*' allowed these children to experience the digital world as if they were online, breaking barriers and expanding horizons.

What sets this project apart is its commitment to not only digital proficiency but also online safety. In an era where online threats loom, the Dunia Salama Foundation equips these children with the skills to navigate the digital landscape securely. This holistic approach includes introducing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and cybersecurity—an often-overlooked aspect in traditional education.

Kiwix here serves as the backbone of this initiative as an offline-friendly browser. It simply brings these young minds the wealth of knowledge available on the internet. As a result, the availability of these free knowledge tools has been nothing short of extraordinary for these kids. Now, the Foundation aims to impact even more children's lives and enrich its repository of Swahili content tailored to their specific needs and aspirations.

PARTNERSHIPS



cc-by-sa Aman Agrahari

A small part of our job is to support Wikimedia Foundation user groups with their accounting (we act as fiscal sponsors, meaning that we lend them our non-profit status so that they can lead their activities and we take care of the paperwork).

The groups we work with are for the most part located in countries and regions where registering a non-profit or association is fairly complicated, even more so when funding comes from abroad.



cc-by-sa Tapas Kumar Halder

Some of them also work across different regions and have no fixed seat.

Among these are the Wiki loves Folklore organizers, and boy aren't the results totally worth it. These pages show some winners of the 2023 edition.



cc-by-sa Summering2018



cc-by-sa Kliencyril08

The side benefit for Kiwix is that it provides contacts for deployments in regions we traditionally target: though the official aim of these groups is to support Wikipedia editors and content, the reality is that in many places they cover, internet connectivity is still very much lacking.

A side benefit is the general management fee that we are allowed to charge provides a small but non-negligible additional source of revenue for our own activities.



cc-by-sa Edgar Kanaykō Xakriaba

Groups we supported in 2023

- African & Proud / Afroyanga
- Arab Leadership Development Group
- Maghreb Environment project
- Nigerians for Sustainable Development
- Philwiki Community
- Wiki Advocates Philippines
- Wikimedians of Japan User Group
- Tanzanian University Students User Group
- West Bengal Wikimedians User Group
- Wiki Loves Butterflies
- Wiki Loves Folklore
- Wikimedians of Arusha User Group
- Wikimedians LGBTQ+ User Group
- World Heritage User Group



cc-by-sa Mohamed El Idrissi

FINANCIALS



Operating Income

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Donations and Grants | 352'201.16 |
| Sales of services | 90'769.34 |
| Previous year income (adjustment) | 52'500.84 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 495'471.34 |

Operating Expenses

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Staff & Contractors | (461'350.52) |
| Rent & Infrastructure | (13'782.84) |
| T&E | (14'619.22) |
| Other expenditures | (34'309.20) |
| | <hr/> |
| | 524'061.78 |
| | <hr/> |

Net revenue (loss) after taxes (28'590.44)

All amounts in CHF. Kiwix is a registered not-for-profit with tax-exempt status.

Revenues were stable in 2023, the small operating loss being due a late grant payment (that will therefore make 2024 look a little better).

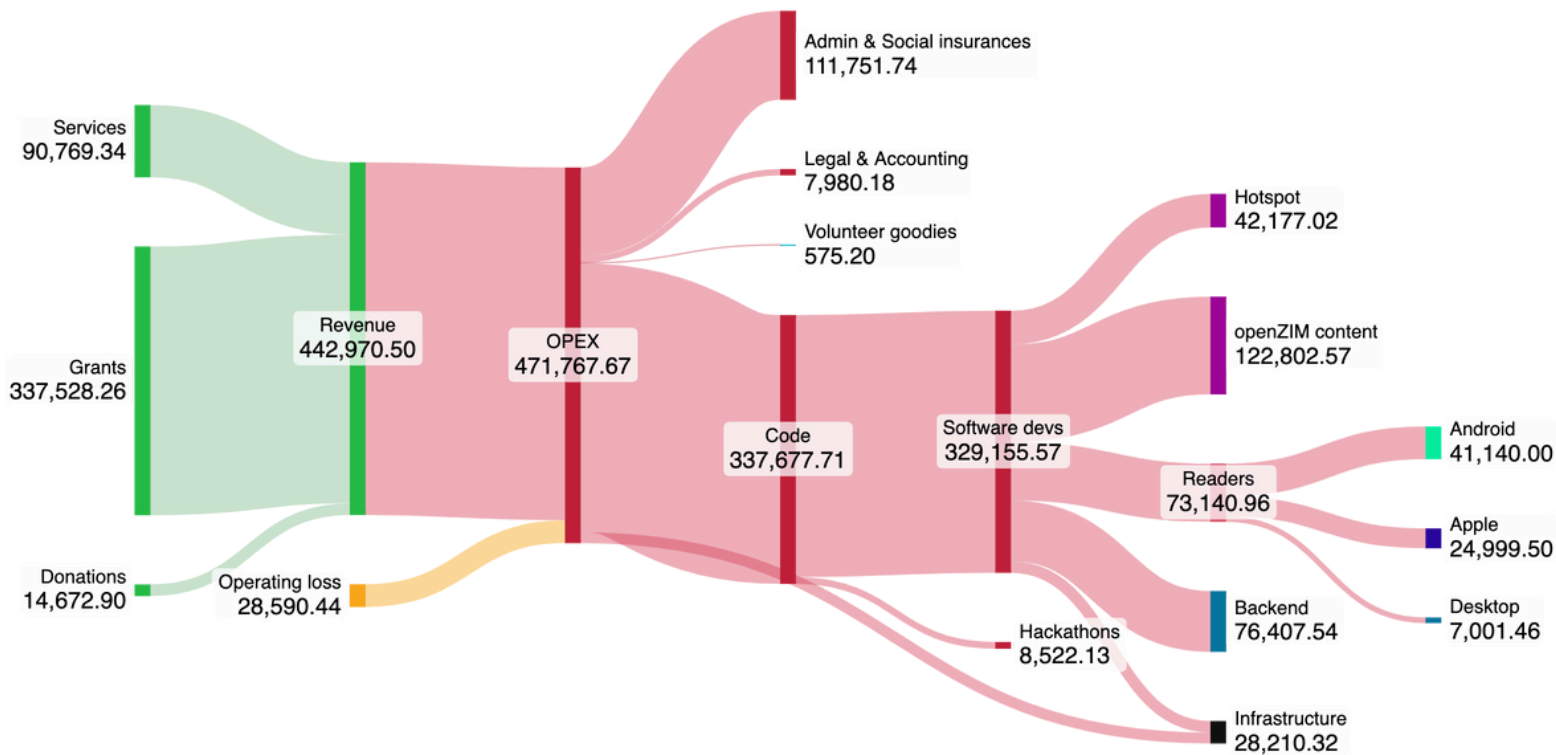
Staff spending increased compared to the previous year as we got an extra headcount.

Legal spend also increased as we decided to hire our first lawyer to review our contracts. This was partly compensated in decreased infrastructure cost as for the first time a lot of our compute was covered by an in-kind donation.



WHERE DID THE MONEY GO?

EXC. ACCOUNTING ADJUSTMENT & CURRENCY LOSSES






All amounts in CHF


A better way to look at our income statement is to ask where the money went. The good news is that most of our spending is on code, which is how things are supposed to be.

Infrastructure comes fairly cheap as far as servers go, until one realizes that we get a lot of free compute and that the actual numbers would probably be 50% higher without our generous sponsors, mirrors, and volunteer farmers. Thanks to them.

Of note: significant spending was made this year on our content scrapers, first among them mediawiki offliner which took close to half of the total effort.

FEELING APPRECIATED

  **r/preppers** · Posted by u/Mrz0mb1e · 19 hours ago 

420 


I just found game changing info

Prepping for Doomsday

This is not an ad

I just found an app you can download on the apple store that lets you download all of Wikipedia.... Yes all of Wikipedia do you understand how that is game changing info it also allows you to download all of the project Gutenberg library that's over 1 million books and over 57,000,000 wiki articles you can just download on your phone or hard drive for when you're bored when SHTF I just got it yesterday so I have checked everything they offer but the wiki and Gutenberg are legit and I'm gonna download anything else that will help me out there

EDIT: I forgot to name the app stupid me the app name is Kiwix also please upvote so more people can see this post

 190 Comments



Martha Bridegam



@MBridegam@federate.social

@nelson

Wikipedia on a phone in [@kiwix](#) is extremely useful for settling arguments during hikes. Memorably, about the appearance of beargrass, which doesn't look real but is, and about the existence of a team called the Baltimore Ravens, which is too obvious to possibly be real but somehow also is.

Has Kiwix gotten any better? I tried to use it a few years ago, but the user experience was super rough. Fantastic idea, but there were lots of UI stalls and glitches that soured my trial.

[reply](#)

  1 day ago | root | parent | next [-]

Honestly? The UX is dogshit lol, at least on the Android app, when you go and download something to find out if it has downloaded or not is a chore and there is no progress notification or indication it's doing anything at all.

I'm considering sending some contributions whenever I have time again for OSS contributions.

However, I find it usable enough that I've been using it quite a lot recently when I don't have internet access to read Wikipedia, StackOverflow and a few other things I downloaded.

 **My love from Cuba.**



reported via email

10 hours ago (Mon, 3 Apr 2023 at 2:57 AM)

 To: stories@kiwix.org

Hello, my greetings from Cuba. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to download different wikipedias to our mobiles and computers, I have already downloaded several, but only those of less GBS. The connection in Cuba is terribly bad, I hope one day to download the wikipedias in English and Spanish. I wish there was also the Wikipedia project in Spanish, but only from Spain. And only with articles in Spanish, as there is the Wikipedia of Venezuela, that of baseball, football, weather, etc. Only for Spain is what I would like. Thank you very much and continue helping with your downloadable wikipedias for those who do not own internet, such as Cubans. My greatest desires for love and successes. A blessed Palm Sunday. Love from Cuba.

Thanks to our partners and supporters!



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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