

# WALKABOUT FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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**ABOUT US**

# LETTER FROM OUR CO-FOUNDERS

Dear Walkabout Community,

2024 marked a significant milestone for Walkabout Foundation as we celebrated our 15th Anniversary. In this remarkable year, we distributed over 2,800 wheelchairs and provided vital rehabilitation for up to 100 children.

In Kenya, our team continued to assemble, distribute, and personally fit wheelchairs at our Centre, while also carrying out outreach distributions for those unable to travel to us. As part of our rehabilitation programme, we continued offering therapy for children in need. In addition, our UK team had the opportunity to travel to Kenya together with volunteers from our partner, Free Wheelchair Mission, and some of our board members visited the Centre together with staff from Istituto Leone XIII.

We completed another major distribution in Uganda and continued our *Monitoring, Evaluation & Repairs Project*, following up with past beneficiaries and addressing service gaps.

In Haiti, despite ongoing unrest, we remained steadfast in our commitment to support people with mobility disabilities, working with 45 local partners to distribute wheelchairs across the country.

This year, we hosted two of Walkabout's signature fundraising events. In June, we held our annual *Closet Treasure Sale*, raising £51,000 and counting for our global projects. In November, our *Virtual Holiday Auction* raised over £175,400 thanks to everyone who took part and supported our cause.

None of this would be possible without the hard work of our teams, the support of our partners and suppliers across the globe, and, of course, the incredible generosity of all of you. Your commitment to our mission is truly inspiring, and we are deeply grateful for the difference you help us make in the lives of so many. Together, we're creating lasting change, and we look forward to continuing on this remarkable journey with you.

**Carolina and Luis Gonzalez-Bunster**  
Walkabout Foundation Co-Founders



# THE NEED

**100 MILLION**

PEOPLE IN THE WORLD NEED A WHEELCHAIR

**65 MILLION**

PEOPLE CANNOT AFFORD ONE

**EVERY 60 MINUTES**

SOMEONE IN THE WORLD SUSTAINS A SPINAL CORD INJURY



# OUR MISSION

OUR MISSION IS TO RESTORE DIGNITY,  
FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE BY PROVIDING

**WHEELCHAIRS**

AND

**REHABILITATION**

IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD, WHILE FUNDING

**RESEARCH**

TO FIND A CURE FOR PARALYSIS



# GLOBAL IMPACT



**29,000**

WHEELCHAIRS DISTRIBUTED



**26**

COUNTRIES REACHED



**74,400**

LIVES IMPACTED



**\$2M**

GIVEN TO RESEARCH



# 2024 AT A GLANCE

## JANUARY

The Kenya team distributed over 100 wheelchairs in Trans Zoia, Kenya, as a part of our outreach programme

## APRIL

Six Walkabout Heroes, Brian, David, Einius, Elizabeth, Freddy and Luke, ran the 2024 London Marathon, fundraising over £18,000

## MAY

Our Kenya staff hosted a training for caregivers and community workers supporting children with disabilities together with Bethany Kids

## JULY

Our East Africa Director, Muhoro, travelled to Uganda to train Hope Health Action's team on the repair and upkeep of Free Wheelchair Mission chairs

## AUGUST

We partnered with L'Oréal East Africa to host a sports day in Nairobi as a part of the L'Oréal Citizen Day programme

## SEPTEMBER

Three Walkabout Heroes, Aleks, Paolo and Pawel, ran the 2024 Berlin Marathon in our honour

## OCTOBER

The Kenya team took part in an innovative training for Appropriate Paper-based Technology, in partnership with Potter's House CBO

## DECEMBER

Our Kenya staff distributed over 200 wheelchairs in Bugoma and Migori counties

## APRIL

Three Walkabout Heroes, Avraham, Damien and Lara ran the 2024 Paris Marathon

## JUNE

We held our annual *Walkabout Closet Sale* in London, raising over £51,000

## JUNE

The Kenya team distributed 200 wheelchairs in Kisumu and West Pokot counties

## AUGUST

Our co-founder, Carolina, travelled to Kenya together with her family and staff members from Istituto Leone XIII

## NOVEMBER

We held our *Virtual Holiday Auction*, raising over £175,400 for our global projects

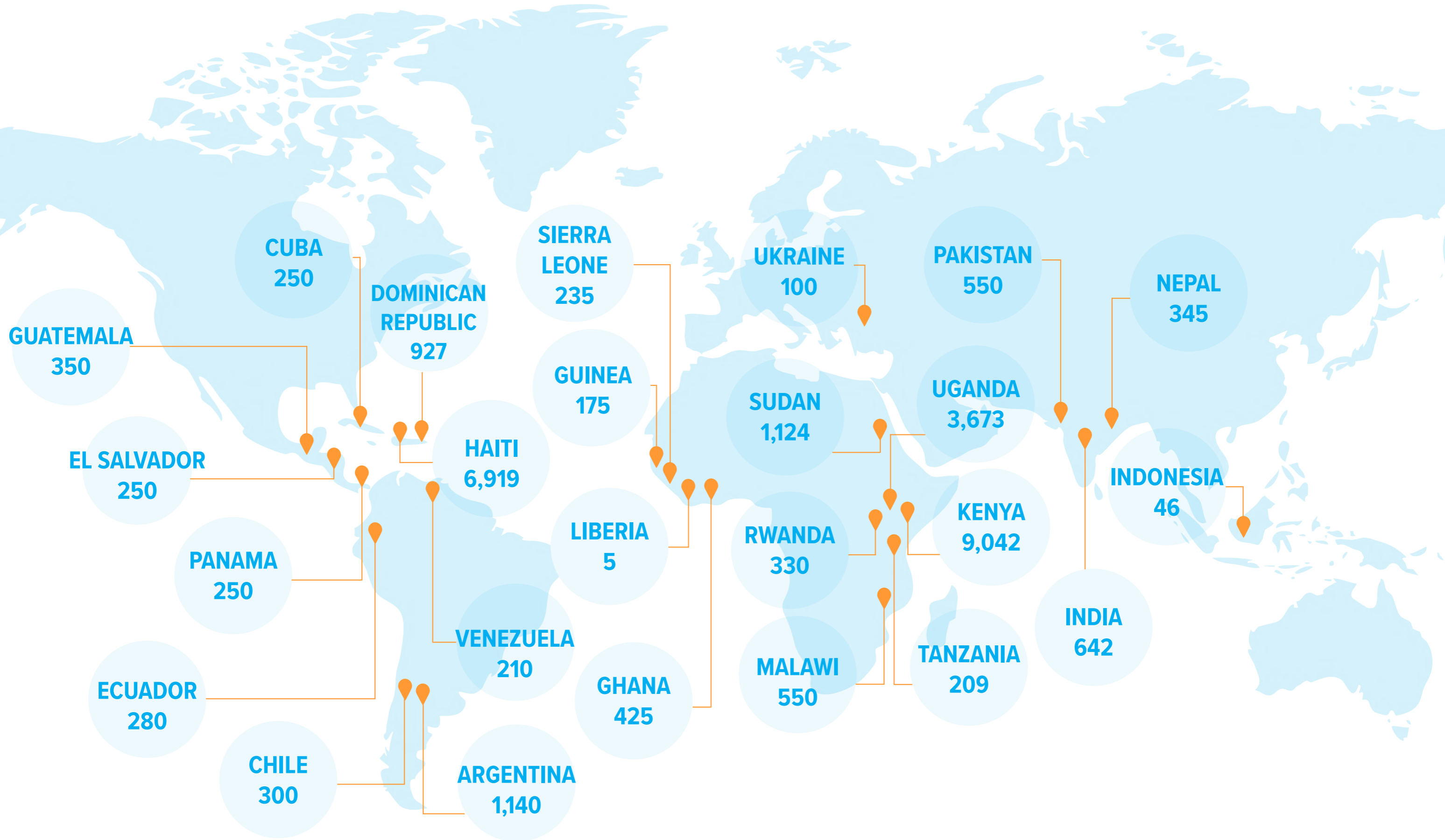
## SEPTEMBER

Our Kenya staff distributed over 220 wheelchairs in Migori and Kisumu counties

## MARCH

Our UK team travelled to Kenya together with our partner, Free Wheelchair Mission, and a group of volunteers from Right at Home

# OUR WHEELCHAIR FOOTPRINT





**RESEARCH**

# THE SHIRLEY RYAN ABILITYLAB

Finding a cure for paralysis is at the heart of Walkabout's mission. Since inception, we have been committed to some of the most pioneering breakthroughs in the field of Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) research. Since 2010, we have committed to support a range of innovative studies aimed at reducing and reversing the effects of SCI. Over a decade later, we have funded **\$2 million** to support these ground-breaking efforts.

In 2024, we funded another \$50,000 to support the *Shirley Ryan AbilityLab* research study, *"Functional Restoration after Spinal Cord Injury by Hebbian and Transcutaneous Spinal Stimulation"*. This study involves 15 participants with SCI and combines Hebbian and transcutaneous stimulation with exercise to promote the recovery of function. We are proud to have contributed to this important work, which brings us one step closer to finding a cure for paralysis.





# WHEELCHAIRS & REHABILITATION

# KENYA



CHAIRS  
DISTRIBUTED

1,386

CHILDREN IN  
REHABILITATION

100

DIAPERS & PADS  
DISTRIBUTED

1,550

Since its opening in 2018, our *Wheelchair Assembly & Repair Centre* in Nanyuki, has become the largest wheelchair provider in the country. On average, our Centre distributes 100 wheelchairs per month. In 2024, we distributed **1,386 wheelchairs** from our Centre across the country.

We continue to provide rehabilitation for up to **100 children**, as well as training programmes for parents and caregivers. The programme covers everything from physical exercise to understanding their specific disability, giving the child the best chance at a higher quality of life.

As a part of our rehabilitation programme, we produced over **300 reusable diapers** and **1,250 reusable sanitary pads**, which are essential for individuals with disabilities. Our Community Outreach Officer, Charity Nana, also held several workshops for caregivers, teaching them how to make their own diapers and pads.

The local team hosted a training for caregivers and community workers in partnership with Bethany Kids, focusing on essential topics like play, freeing and communication. As a result, six caregiver support groups have now been established, reaching 60 families across the country and significantly reducing the need for families to travel long distances to access our Centre. By equipping local caregivers with practical skills, we are creating a community-led model of care that will continue to grow and support more families over time.



# KENYA

## DANIEL'S STORY

Meet Daniel, an 11-year-old boy from Nyeri, Kenya. He has Cerebral Palsy and has never been able to move around independently, which meant he couldn't go to school.

We gave Daniel his first-ever wheelchair during our outreach distribution at the Metropolitan Sanctuary. His face lit up the minute he was fitted into the chair! Now, Daniel can finally get an education, while his mother can return to work to better provide for herself and her son.



## JOHANNA'S STORY

Johanna is a 5-year-old girl from Kenya with Cerebral Palsy. She has been enrolled in our rehabilitation programme since 2022. When Johanna first joined, she struggled to sit, stand or take steps independently, making everyday tasks challenging.

Since then, Johanna has made remarkable strides in her development. From being unable to stand or walk, she can now stand up straight, walk with the assistance of a walking aid and even take a few steps independently.



# UGANDA



CHAIRS  
DISTRIBUTED **195**

TRIKES  
DISTRIBUTED **34**

Northern Uganda is one of the poorest parts of the region and the heart of one of the biggest refugee settlements in the world. With hundreds of people crossing the border every year, fleeing conflict and famine in South Sudan, Uganda is host to over 1 million refugees. An astonishing 6% of the population needs a wheelchair.

In 2024, we distributed **195 wheelchairs and 34 trikes** from our stock in Uganda and South Sudan. Our East Africa Director, Muhoro, also travelled to BidiBidi to provide training to our partner, Hope Health Action and their Community Based Representatives. The training focused on wheelchair repairs and maintenance using locally sourced materials, increasing the lifespan of our chairs and empowering local teams to provide long-term support for our beneficiaries.



## MICHAEL'S STORY

Meet Michael and his wife Beatrice from South Sudan. In 2016, the couple fled to Uganda to escape the civil war. They settled in the BidiBidi refugee settlement in northern Uganda with their six children.

As a child, Michael had suffered from Polio, which left him immobile. Thanks to our supporters, we gave Michael his first-ever tricycle, transforming his life. He can now travel independently, take part in community activities and return to work to better support his family.





# HAITI

CHAIRS  
DISTRIBUTED  
**1,306**

Despite the regional turmoil in Haiti, we were able to continue supporting people with mobility disabilities across the country. In 2024, we distributed **over 1,300 wheelchairs** from our *HHA Walkabout Wheelchair Distribution Centre*, impacting over **3,400 lives**.

Our Centre in Cap-Haitien is the single largest wheelchair provider in the country, filling a critical service gap. We continue distributing wheelchairs from our stock, working together with 45 local partners, who play a key role in ensuring our wheelchairs can reach those in need, particularly across Northern Haiti.

## GABI'S STORY

Gabi is a 25-year-old woman from Bas Saline, Haiti. She has a developmental delay and has never been able to walk. Despite the challenges, Gabi is very happy and always smiling and finds joy in playing with the children in her village every day.

Gabi's first wheelchair, which she received at the age of 10, no longer met her needs, leaving her unable to move around independently. Now that she has a brand-new wheelchair, Gabi is excited to be able to go outside, visit her aunt and attend church services alongside her community.





**FUNDRAISING**

# CORPORATE PARTNERS

In 2024, we were proud to receive support from several corporate partners, including Bloomberg Philanthropies, Euromonitor International and L'Oréal East Africa. These partnerships have been instrumental in helping us transform the lives of people with mobility disabilities around the world.



**Euromonitor International** has been a valued corporate donor since 2017. Their support has played a vital role in the growth and expansion of our projects in Uganda. Thanks to their contributions, we have been able to go beyond wheelchair distributions, following up with past beneficiaries and carrying out repairs. This has extended the lifespan of our wheelchairs and increased the sustainability of our programme, creating lasting change in the communities we serve.

In 2024, one of Euromonitor's employees, Einius Macijauskas, ran the 2024 London Marathon in honour of Walkabout, fundraising to provide 12 life-changing wheelchairs to those in need.



**Bloomberg Philanthropies** has been supporting us since 2022, and we are deeply grateful for their continued commitment to our work. Their contribution has made a profound impact, enabling us to transform countless lives by restoring dignity, freedom and independence to individuals with mobility disabilities. With their support, we have been able to expand our reach and strengthen the long term sustainability of our programmes in the region.



This year, we proudly partnered with **L'Oréal East Africa** through their Citizen Day programme. The collaboration raised vital funds for our projects in East Africa, and help raised awareness of mobility disabilities in the region.

# WALKABOUT VILLAGE

In May, our co-founder, Carolina hosted the first ever *Walkabout Village* fundraising event at Istituto Leone XIII in Milan, which raised over **€12,300** for our global projects. In August, Carolina together with staff members from the school and a few of our supporters visited our Centre in Nanyuki, Kenya. They assembled and distributed wheelchairs, played sitting volleyball, visited local schools and connected with the communities we serve.



# CLOSET TREASURE SALE

In June, our annual *Walkabout Closet Treasure Sale* returned to Kings Road, London. Over the course of three days, we sold a curated selection of pre-loved and designer clothing, shoes and accessories, all generously donated by our incredible supporters. The sale was a huge success, raising over **£51,000** for our global wheelchair and rehabilitation projects! We couldn't be more grateful to everyone who donated, purchased and volunteered!



# L'ORÉAL SPORTS DAY

In August, Walkabout Foundation partnered with L'Oréal East Africa for a Sports Day in Nairobi as part of the L'Oréal Citizen Day programme, raising over **£5,700** for our projects in East Africa. The event featured various team-building exercises and wheelchair-friendly activities, including sitting volleyball matches with the Nanyuki sitting volleyball team. The day brought together our Kenya team, L'Oréal employees and Friends of L'Oréal to raise awareness of mobility disabilities.



# VIRTUAL HOLIDAY AUCTION

In November, we held our third *Virtual Holiday Auction!* We invited our global community of supporters to bid on many incredible auction items, such as unique experiences, hotel stays, holiday homes, jewellery pieces, watches, designer clothes, homeware, handbags and more. The event raised over **£175,000** for our global projects. None of this would be possible without our incredible donors and supporters.



Some of the incredible items and experiences that were a part of our *Virtual Holiday Auction*

# WALKABOUT HEROES

WALKABOUT  
HEROES

12

RAISED OVER

£25,700

In 2024, 12 incredible #WalkaboutHeroes raised over **£25,700** for our global projects by taking part in the Berlin, London and Paris Marathons.



A fundraiser from corporate partner, Euromonitor International, Einius Macijauskas, ran the London Marathon in honour of Walkabout.



David Griffiths ran for those who can't at the London Marathon and raised over £3,000!



Our #WalkaboutHeroes, Brian VanVelzor, Elizabeth Vega and Luke Deterding travelled from the US to take part in the London Marathon, fundraising to provide 34 wheelchairs to people in need.



Avraham Feldman, Damien Fitzpatrick and Lara Brooksbank ran the Paris Marathon in honour of those who can't!



Three incredible supporters, Aleksander Dabrowski, Pawel Kaminski and Paolo Biagi ran the Berlin Marathon for Walkabout Foundation. They raised over **£11,000**, the equivalent of 44 wheelchairs!



**OUR FAMILY**

# OUR BOARD



**CAROLINA GONZALEZ-BUNSTER**  
CO-FOUNDER,  
CO-CHAIR



**LUIS GONZALEZ-BUNSTER**  
CO-FOUNDER



**ADRIANA CHRYSSICOPOULOS**



**ALEXANDER VAN HOLK**



**FADI ABUALI**



**ROLANDO GONZALEZ-BUNSTER**



**STEFANO BONFIGLIO**



**ZEINA NASSIF**

# OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM



**MARINA NAKANO**  
CEO



**JENNIFER FUGES**  
CHIEF DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICER



**MARIA PYATAKOVA**  
MARKETING &  
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER



**NINA PIGORINI**  
PROGRAMMES  
MANAGER



**MARIA GABRIELA GELPI**  
EVENTS & OPERATIONS  
ASSOCIATE



**HENRIQUE SERUCA**  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
& VIDEO



**DAVID MUHORO**  
EAST AFRICA  
DIRECTOR



**PAUL MAINA**  
KENYA COUNTRY  
MANAGER



**TABITHA WANJIKU**  
WHEELCHAIR CENTRE  
MANAGER



**MAUREEN WANJIRU**  
WHEELCHAIR  
DISTRIBUTION OFFICER



**KATE NANDI**  
OCCUPATIONAL  
THERAPIST

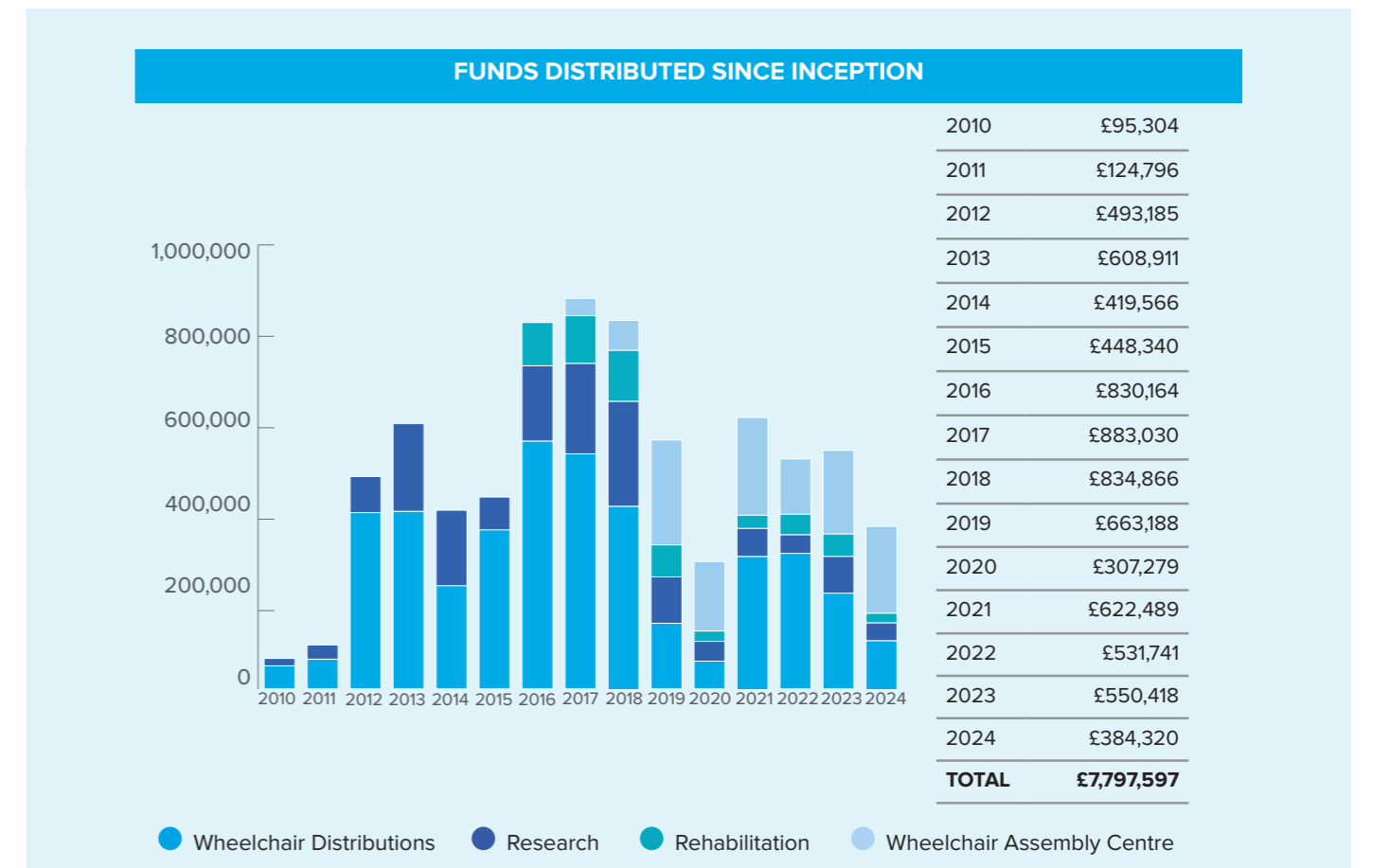
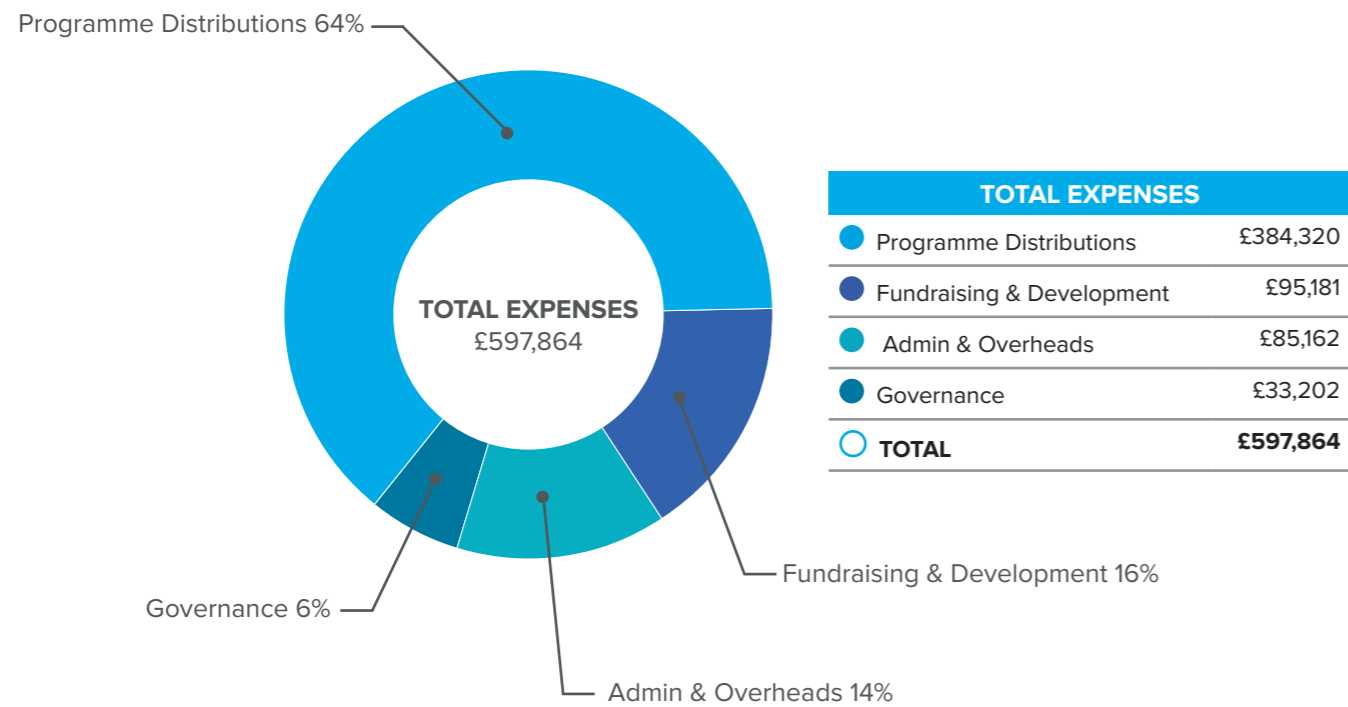
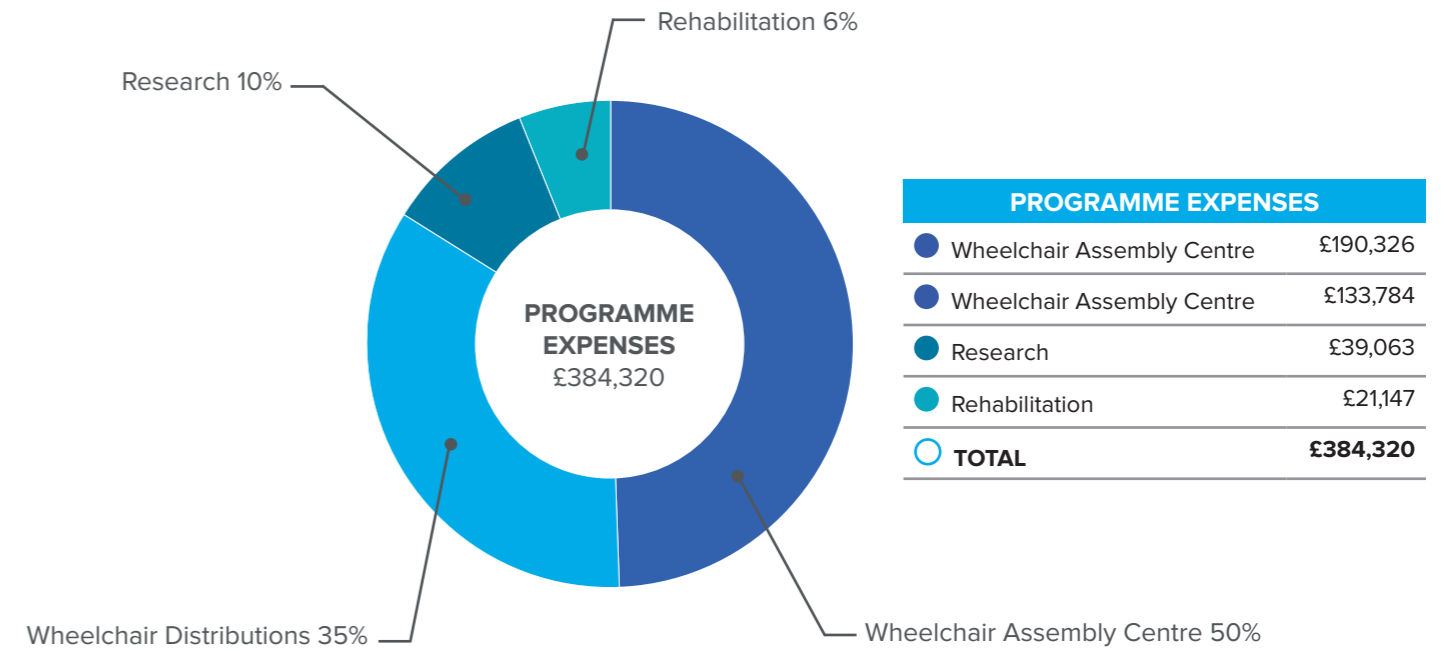
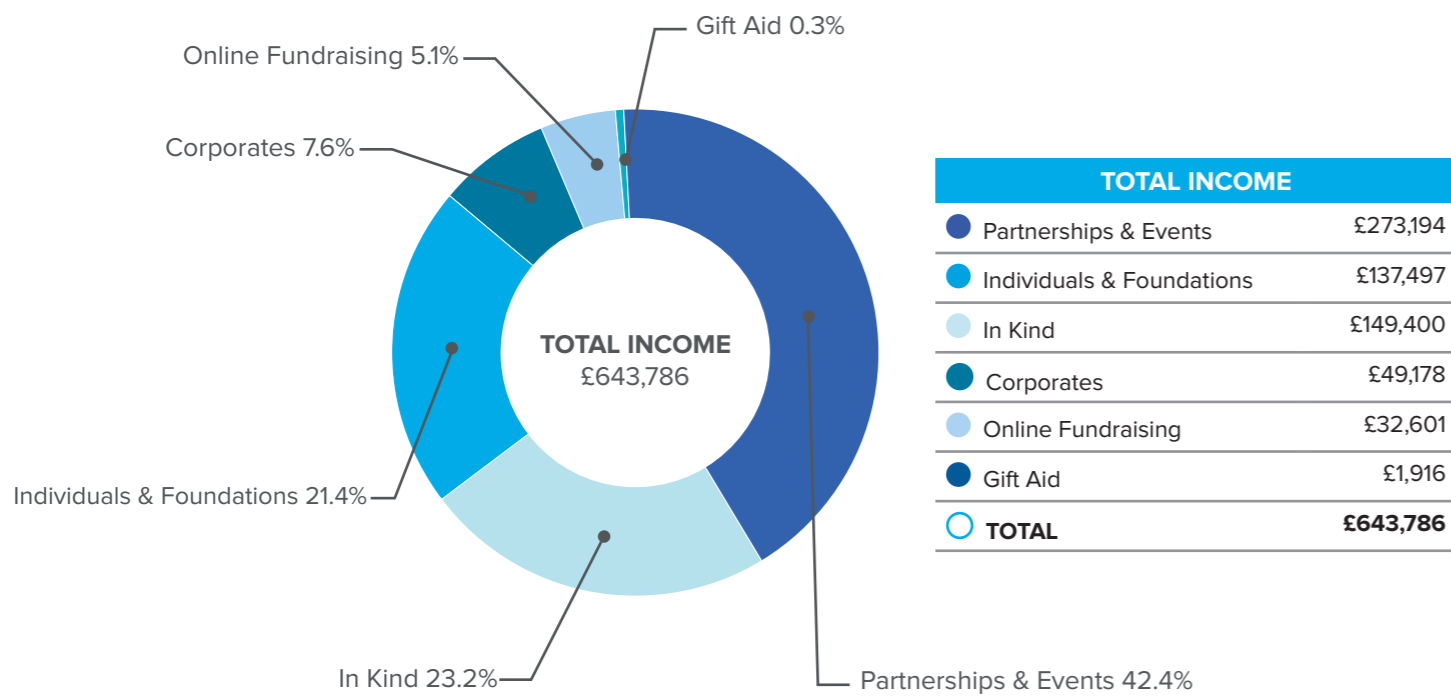


**HANNAH WANGUI**  
OCCUPATIONAL  
THERAPY ASSISTANT



# FINANCIALS

# 2024 FINANCIALS







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Walkabout Foundation



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Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals.