

JOHN BARU

Phone: +254 726 509 360 | **Email:** johnbaru003@gmail.com | **Address:** Nairobi, Kenya

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/baru-john/>

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Visionary Chief Financial & Operations Officer (CFO/COO) with 25+ years of experience directing \$150M+ global health and development portfolios. Expert in resource allocation strategy, cost recovery, and institutional resilience within complex donor-funded environments. Proven track record in navigating high-inflation markets, driving digital transformation (40% efficiency gains), and securing 98%+ compliance across CDC, USAID, and Global Fund frameworks. Strengthened financial governance, optimised treasury and working capital structures, and improved audit readiness through robust internal controls and standardised reporting systems. Expert in navigating restricted vs. unrestricted funding structures and optimising cost allocation frameworks within complex donor-funded environments. Seeking to leverage deep expertise in strategic finance, multi-country operations, and institutional strengthening to deliver value in a senior finance leadership role.

EDUCATION

- **Master of Business Administration (MBA), Strategic Management** - Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya | Ongoing
- **Master of Science (MSc), Computer-Based Information Systems** - Strathmore University, Nairobi, Kenya | 2012
- **Bachelor of Science, International Business Administration (Finance)** - United States International University - Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

SKILLS

Financial Strategy, Strategic Planning, Financial Governance, Treasury Management, Multi-Country Operations, Donor Compliance, FP&A, Grant Management, Risk Management, Internal Controls, Audit Readiness, Statutory Reporting, Working Capital, Asset Management, Fleet Management, Digital Transformation, Business Partnering, Executive Leadership, Change Management, Team Development, Procurement Strategy, Vendor Management, Contract Negotiation, Budget Development, Variance Analysis, Performance Management, Cost Optimisation, Fiduciary Oversight, Capacity Building, Project Management, Stakeholder Relations, Cross-Border Operations.

EXPERIENCES

Director of Operations / Finance & Operations Lead | Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation | Nairobi, Kenya (Hybrid) | Jul 2019 – Sep 2025

Roles And Responsibilities:

EGPAF Kenya (Core Country Responsibilities)

- Led financial strategy and resource allocation for EGPAF Kenya's \$20M annual portfolio, strengthening cost recovery by aligning project budgets with full-cost principles and ensuring optimal allocation of direct and indirect costs across multi-country grants.
- Secured a 98% donor compliance rate by redesigning internal audit and statutory reporting cycles, ensuring that funding from CDC, USAID, and the Global Fund remained uninterrupted and fully transparent.
- Hardened the oversight of a \$12M asset inventory by rolling out a rigorous capitalisation and disposal policy for our 100-vehicle fleet, significantly reducing regional risk and maintenance leakage.
- Mentored a 40-person cross-border team to move beyond basic accounting and toward strategic partnership, using unit-cost analysis to give program leads the data they needed to scale interventions effectively.

Cross-Border / Regional Support (Other Countries)

- Architected the operational blueprint for EGPAF Nigeria from the ground up, establishing the first \$1M program portfolio by setting up the entire financial, ICT, and HR infrastructure in a new jurisdiction.

- Navigated financial complexity across five countries by building a custom multi-currency treasury framework that protected purchasing power despite high regional inflation.
- Recovered 15% in operational costs through high-stakes renegotiation of regional supplier contracts, shifting from fragmented local buying to a consolidated model for medical equipment and logistics.
- Transformed a heavy, paper-based culture into a digital-first operation by implementing SharePoint and ERP modules, cutting transaction cycles by 40% and removing administrative bottlenecks that stalled field programs.
- Partnered with senior leadership to align financial planning with institutional strategy and funding priorities across multi-country operations.

Cooperative Agreement Specialist / Grants Manager | Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) | Nairobi, Kenya | Mar 2009 – Jun 2019

Roles And Responsibilities:

- Stewardship of a \$36M annual PEPFAR portfolio by providing end-to-end financial oversight for 40+ implementing partners, ensuring every dollar is aligned with both Federal regulations and local health goals.
- Stepped in as Acting Branch Chief during critical transition periods, maintaining operational stability and leadership continuity for the entire grants management department without disrupting funding cycles.
- Boosted partner audit readiness by 30% by designing and leading targeted capacity-building workshops that translated complex USG Federal Appropriation Law into practical, daily financial workflows.
- Eliminated funding bottlenecks by streamlining the budget review process for the Country Operational Plan (COP), achieving a 100% on-time approval rate for partner work plans and renewals.
- Aggressively mitigated fiduciary risk for high-priority grants by conducting deep-dive financial forensic reviews and joint field site visits to verify that reported expenditures matched actual program delivery.
- Standardised the proposal and budget review framework to catch inaccuracies early, ensuring that partner submissions were 100% compliant with CDC budget guidance before they ever reached the final approval stage.
- Brokered high-level compliance reviews between USG stakeholders and local partners, resolving financial irregularities through corrective action plans that protected the agency from disallowed costs.

Budget Analyst | Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) | Nairobi, Kenya | Jan 2008 – Feb 2009

Roles And Responsibilities:

- Synchronized \$10M in program funding by acting as the primary budget liaison between CDC Kenya and the U.S. Embassy, ensuring all financial reporting met the rigid standards of both institutions.
- Eliminated manual tracking errors by co-developing a custom budget and financial module within the FileMaker database, which automated how we monitored partner spending across the mission.
- Fixed a major reporting gap by designing a project-status template for 10+ distinct CDC programs, giving leadership a clear, real-time view of where funds were sitting versus where they were needed.
- Prevented year-end funding lapses by building a forecasting model based on historical burn rates, allowing us to reallocate underutilised funds to high-priority health initiatives before deadlines.
- Guided program leads through complex variance analysis, breaking down technical financial data into actionable advice so they could stay on budget without stalling their field activities.
- Strengthened financial accountability for a portfolio of implementing partners by standardising how they reported monthly expenditures, which simplified the reconciliation process for the entire office.

Head of Finance | Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) | Nairobi, Kenya | Jan 2007 – Dec 2007

Roles And Responsibilities:

- Stabilised the financial oversight for \$24M in annual research funding, managing the conflicting reporting requirements of 10+ global donors to ensure clinical trials remained fully funded and compliant.
- Resolved long-standing audit bottlenecks by executing a comprehensive action plan that cleared prior findings from 2004, fundamentally shifting the institute's reputation for financial integrity.
- Modernised the institute's technical backbone as a key member of the Navision ERP working group, defining the specific requirements that turned a manual accounting department into an automated operation.

- Protected research continuity by designing a unified internal control framework that standardised how diverse research units handled procurement and payroll across multiple grant cycles.
- Guided principal investigators through complex budget management, providing the financial clarity they needed to focus on clinical outcomes rather than administrative red tape.
- Standardised donor reporting workflows for high-stakes medical projects, ensuring that even with different regulations, all 10 programs stayed ahead of their respective fiscal deadlines.

Senior Accountant | Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) | Kisumu, Kenya | Apr 2004 – Dec 2006

Roles And Responsibilities:

- Supervised a finance team of seven, including three Senior Accountants, to manage the daily accounting operations and high-volume reporting requirements of multiple donor-funded clinical trials.
- Eliminated a 15% discrepancy in budget forecasting by building a custom commitment tracking template that accounted for pending obligations instead of just cash-on-hand, giving project leads a true view of available funds.
- Recovered 60% of outstanding staff debt within the first year by implementing an ageing advances report and a rigorous follow-up system that shifted the culture toward faster financial recovery.
- Secured 100% accuracy in monthly bank reconciliations across all organisation accounts, providing a clear, audit-ready financial trail during a period of rapid institutional growth and increased donor scrutiny.
- Minimised cash handling leakage to near-zero by enforcing strict petty cash protocols and conducting unannounced surprise counts, which tightened internal controls across the entire research site.
- Accelerated vendor payment cycles by 25% through a new reconciliation workflow, ensuring that critical medical and laboratory suppliers were paid on time and remained willing to support urgent research needs.
- Standardised the monthly reporting package for 10+ distinct projects, ensuring that all donor submissions were 100% compliant with international regulations and reducing the time spent on year-end audit corrections.

OTHER EXPERIENCES

- **Plant Accountant** | Unga Feeds Limited | Nairobi, Kenya | January 2000 – November 2003

CERTIFICATIONS & TRAININGS

- **Certified Public Accountant (CPA) K** - Strathmore University, Nairobi, Kenya
- **Certified Public Accountant (CPA)** - ICPAK (Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya)
- **Certification in Project Management** - PMD Pro (Project Management Professional)
- **Certification in Grants Management** - Specialised Training in Federal Grants Administration
- **Federal Appropriation Law Training** - Advanced Training in U.S. Federal Financial Regulations
- **Coaching for Performance** - CDI-Africa Coaching Group

TOOLS

Unit4 ERP, BaaN ERP, Navision ERP, FileMaker, SharePoint, Power BI, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, OneDrive, Skype for Business

LANGUAGES

- English – Fluent
- Swahili – Fluent
- French – Basic

REFEREES

Available upon request.