



Irise International Annual Report 2021
For the Year ending 31st December 2021



"Thank you for seeing my capability"

Leilah, Ugandan School Girl

"Doing the work felt like actual positive change"

UK, Young Activist

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Legal and Administrative Information

Trustees:

Linda Baines (Chair)

Catherine Sullivan (The Treasurer- stepped down 4/2/21)

Rowena Collings (The Treasurer- appointed 4/2/21)

Falguni Raja (stepped down- 30/6/22)

Chloe Reeves

Joanne Nakakawa-Hampson

Cianne Jones (joined- 6/5/21)

Sophie Rowson

Kirstine Szifris (stepped down- 30/6/22)

Executive:

Emily Wilson (CEO)

Principal Address:

7 Castle Street

Sheffield

S3 8LT

Website: www.irise.org.uk

Contact: info@irise.org.uk

Registered charity number: 1157722

Objectives and Activities

Charity objectives (as stated in governing document): THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION, THE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF GOOD HEALTH AND THE PREVENTION OR RELIEF OF POVERTY AMONG WOMEN AND GIRLS BY WORKING TO IMPROVE SANITATION AND HEALTH EDUCATION IN THEIR COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOLS, WITH A FOCUS ON SUB SAHARAN AFRICA AND THE UK.

We're an award-winning global leader in period equality programming and advocacy. Our vision is a world where a female body is not a disadvantage. We bring together young people held back by their periods and their allies to create change in their own communities and in wider society. We work in the UK and in East Africa in partnership with our sister organisation, Irise Institute East Africa and together, use our experience and power to shape the global agenda on this issue.

At the start of the covid-19 pandemic, following a rapid consultation with our community, we launched an interim emergency strategy: Irise took action across 3 strands:

Ensuring Provision- immediate support for overlooked gender specific needs.

Providing Protection- safeguarding vulnerable young people.

Restoring Power- amplifying the experiences and priorities of those we support.

Our Annual Plan for 2021 combined our original 2019-2024 Strategy with our interim covid-19 strategy described above, and the learning gained from our experiences in 2020. It also aligned with and championed Irise's first Global Strategic Framework, created by Irise International and Irise Institute East Africa, to guide the Irise group into a new phase of growth and development.

- 1. Spearhead the creation and expansion of a global Irise community that can shape the global gender equality agenda.**
 - a. Establish structures for global community building.*
- 2. Support young people and their communities across the contexts where we work to recover from the covid-19 crisis and resume progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 5; Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls by 2030.**
 - a. Complete delivery of our emergency response*
 - b. Launch recovery initiatives in both contexts*
 - c. Launch our Needs Assessment reports and advocate for their recommendations to be addressed by relevant stakeholders*
- 3. Champion diverse leadership and enable more young women to realise their potential to lead and shape a more inclusive agenda.**
 - a. Launch Empower Period Award to celebrate and build community around transformational leadership*
 - b. Establish Irise Mentorship Circle*
 - c. Establish Equality Subcommittee at board level to champion and develop equality agenda within Irise*
 - d. Develop and fund young women's focused leadership initiatives across the contexts where we work*
- 4. Realise period equality across the contexts where we work through a combination of project delivery, learning focused work and advocacy- working to realise the UK**

government target of ending period poverty and shame in the UK by 2025 and globally by 2030.

- a. Run and support Empower Period Forum to undertake national advocacy towards period poverty and shame in the UK*
- b. Scale up period friendly schools in Uganda in partnership with IIEA*
- c. Build community of menstrual health programming best practice in East Africa*

Taking Stock

Our progress towards building the movement to end period inequality in the UK and East Africa since we started in 2014 is summarised below:



Directly supported over **100,000 young people** affected by period inequality and their communities



Raised over **1 million pounds** of investment to end period poverty and shame



Supported **287 organisations** to address period inequality in their work



Built a community of over **174 small organisations and grassroots groups** across 7 countries

Key Challenges of 2021

The charity experienced ongoing disruption due to the covid-19 pandemic in 2021- including further lockdowns in the UK and Uganda and prolonged school closures in Uganda. Abrupt cuts to UK Aid in April 2021, represented an immediate budget gap of £50k, with an estimated loss of income of £150k over the medium term. We also struggled with staff sickness as a result of the global pandemic- including significant illness in the Ugandan team and our CEO taking partial sick leave due to long-covid.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to all our donors and supporters, particularly the Dillingham family, who stepped up and stood with us during these unprecedented challenges, including enabling us to plug the immediate gap left by the UK Aid cuts within a matter of weeks.

Achievements and Performance

This section summarises progress against our strategic priorities, as outlined on pages 4 and 5.

1. Spearhead the creation and expansion of a global Irise community that can shape the global gender equality agenda.

Irise International worked with sister organisation, Irise Institute East Africa (IIEA), to develop Irise's first Global Strategic Framework. This framework was co-produced with our networks of young activists and community-based partners in both contexts and lays out the Irise group's shared values, vision and priorities. The boards of Irise International and Irise Institute East Africa both approved the framework and plan to develop it further in 2022. Irise International also successfully nominated Lillian Bagala, Regional Director at IIEA, to join the Core Group of the Global Menstrual Health Collective where she will represent the priorities of the East Africa based Period Equality Network, hosted by IIEA.

Some activities were delayed due to the unexpected challenges the team faced. This included expanding Irise's Global Advisory Group- which will now happen in 2022 should time and resources allow.

The first ever Empower Period Awards, designed to recognise the amazing work of young feminist leaders championing period equality in the UK and East Africa was postponed to early 2022.

2. Support young people and their communities across the contexts where we work to recover from the covid-19 crisis and resume progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 5; Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls by 2030.

POWER NOT JUST PADS

Irise's response to the global pandemic

March 2020-2021



Irise completed delivery and evaluation of covid-19 emergency responses in the communities where we work in the UK and Uganda.

We delivered "Empowerment Packs" to 3,000 vulnerable women in South Yorkshire in the first 3 months of the year (total of 6,800 throughout the response).

IIEA also worked with us to complete a 'Back to School' campaign in Uganda supporting 500 vulnerable households to get their girls back into school.

The full report on our pandemic response is available [here](#).

"It brought back life for us because I was stuck and stranded"

Beatrice, single mother Uganda

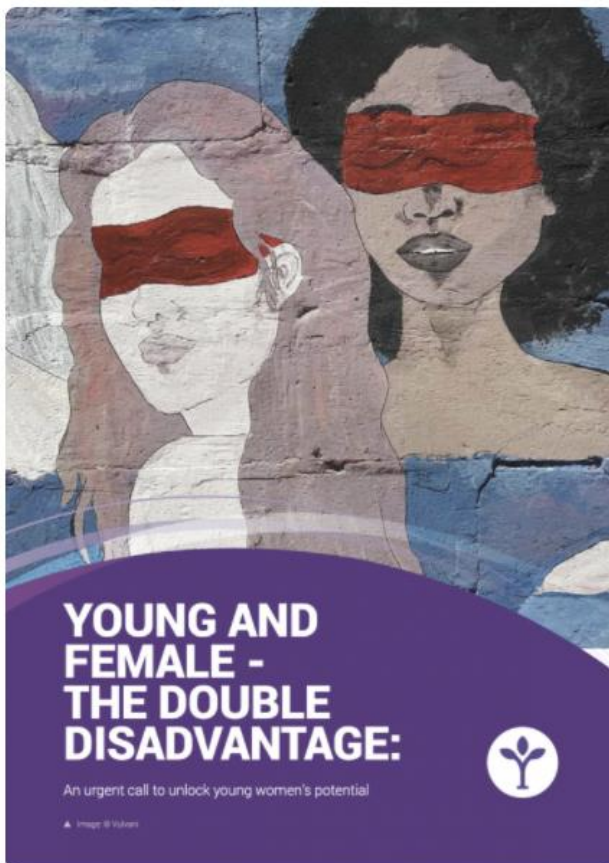
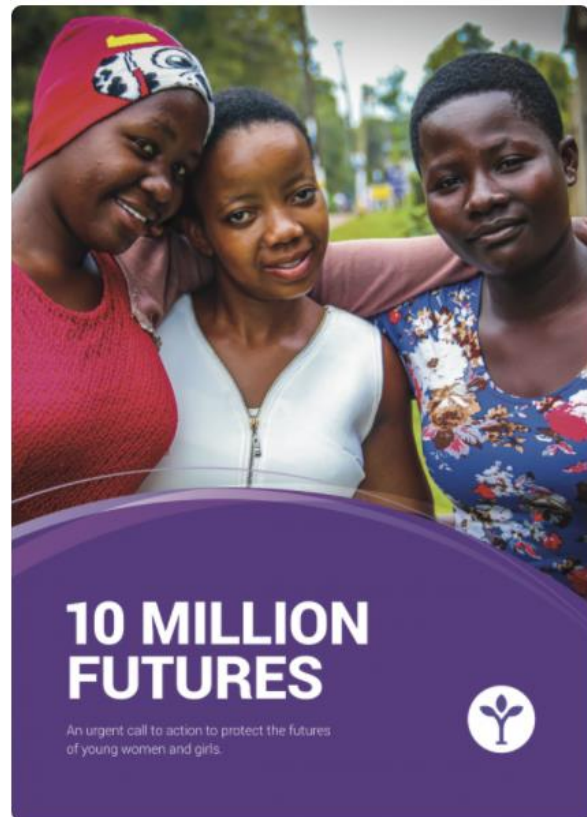
"I could never have imagined the impact of such kindness to my mental wellbeing."

Helen, Asylum seeker, UK



Irise also launched reports assessing the needs and priorities of young women and girls in the UK and East Africa:

The “10 Million Futures” report was launched on International Women’s Day including a twitter chat in Uganda engaging over 20 stakeholders and government officials. A podcast was launched in the UK along with merchandise people could buy to support girls. Irise International also supported staff from Irise Institute East Africa to talks about the impacts of the aid cuts in their own communities including coverage on ITV national news and BBC North.



The UK Needs Assessment “[Young and Female; the Double Disadvantage](#)” was launched as part of the Pledge for Period Equality Campaign and findings were shared with Ruth Cadbury MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Period Equality and Hannah Barham-Brown Deputy Leader of the Women’s Equality Party.

Irise then developed and funded recovery initiatives in both contexts.

In East Africa, we launched the Rise-up Initiative, in partnership with The Kulczyk Foundation, Evan Cornish Foundation and IIEA:

The initiative responded to the impacts of the pandemic and worsening economic crisis on girls' lives. Irise's needs assessment found that girls in the areas where we work were facing unthinkable choices just because they were female. 1 in 10 told us they'd had transactional sex in exchange for pads and toiletries since the start of the pandemic. 14% of young women and girls knew someone or had experienced violence themselves because they were using household finances to pay for period products. Rise-up aimed to support female-led social enterprises and businesses already tackling period poverty and shame in their communities to recover from the impacts of the pandemic and to pair entrepreneurs with schoolgirls to provide mentorship and start-up capital so they could start their own small businesses.

The initiative successfully:

- Supported 20 female led businesses tackling period poverty and shame to recover
- Provided entrepreneurship training and mentorship for 40 school girls
- Engaged local Members of Parliament in addressing period poverty and economic empowerment of women and girls.

The final activities, including a celebratory bootcamp to showcase successes and evaluation will be completed in 2022.

Quotes from Rise-Up Entrepreneurs and School Girls:

"Rise Up increased my insight into the challenges girls face in my community accessing their products and menstrual information. This helped me improve on our menstrual products so that I attracted more customers...I have [also] supported girls in my community. I now teach them about menstrual hygiene and management before selling them pads."

Lillian Alinda, entrepreneur, Moment Fashions and Film Ltd

"We have experienced many changes [thanks to Rise-Up] including, regular attendance of school, we have gained business skills, confidence in ourselves and business, engagement in pad making projects, and becoming a mentor to others. We have provided others with access to pads and information, encouraged them to be confident about their bodies and take periods as something normal, taught them how to make pads and inspired them with business ideas that have motivated some of them to start their own businesses."

Leilah, School Girl



Photos of Rise-Up Entrepreneur Training in Uganda

In the UK, Irise worked in partnership with Australian Period Pants company, Modi Bodi, to introduce reusable period pants to service users who had been receiving support during the pandemic. Period Pants provide a more sustainable and environmentally friendly option for long term delivery.

We provided training for 9 organisations on how to introduce period pants to their service users and supplied products to 11 organisations in South Yorkshire and across the UK, reaching 840 people including young carers, young refugees and survivors of domestic abuse.

We would like to thank Modi Bodi for their incredible support and the young volunteers who worked tirelessly with us to get period products out to the people that need them. We aim to continue and expand this initiative in 2022, alongside peer-led period education and support in communities.

Quotes from partners receiving Modi Bodi products:

"At the moment, we are supporting a lot of young women who have been survivors of sexual violence and domestic abuse, and being able to offer them reusables that are less invasive will be a huge help, as a lot of these women struggle to afford products every month."

"We have so many young ladies and their families who are receiving our support. Many are facing financial difficulties on top of disabilities and mental health problems. To be able to offer them the opportunity to lighten their financial burden and make life that bit easier every month might seem like a small thing but to our families, it's huge."

Quote from young person receiving the products:

"I would always have trouble sleeping at night because I would be scared that I'd leak but now I can sleep better because I no longer leak due to the underwear."



Photos of young activists packing period products and raising awareness in the UK

3. Champion diverse leadership and enable more young women to realise their potential to lead and shape a more inclusive agenda.

Our sister organisation Irise Institute East Africa has received independent funding from the African Women's Development Fund to support young feminist leaders working to end period inequality in Uganda- the largest independent investment they have received to date. We are really proud of this achievement and grateful to all our funders who have believed in and invested in East African leadership over the last few years.



With support from  AFRICAN WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT FUND

Project Launch!

Tomorrow is Different
Championing Policy Advocacy and
Building Young Women Feminist Leaders

Date: Wednesday , 24th November, 2021
Time: 7:30 am to 10:30 am
Venue: Protea Hotel Marriot
Hashtag #PromoteMenstrualHealth

Irise International won a £3000 award from the British and Foreign Schools Society for our youth leadership model. Young activists involved in our work in the UK and East Africa presented their work with Irise in a Dragon's Den style competition where the audience voted for the winners. This funding will be used to deliver the first ever Empower Period Awards in 2022- a celebration of young feminist leaders championing Period Equality in the UK and East Africa.

4. Realise period equality across the contexts where we work through a combination of project delivery, learning focused work and advocacy- working to realise the UK government target of ending period poverty and shame in the UK by 2025 and globally by 2030.

Empower Period Forum UK



In the UK, thanks to support from the Act for Change Fund, Irise set-up and hosted the Empower Period Network and Forum- designed to support young people working to end period poverty and shame in their own communities and enable them to advocate together for national change. Overall, 300 diverse young people were engaged in the network and forum and 115 were supported to deliver their own initiatives to end period poverty and shame.

Irise hosted the Empower Period Forum to enable young people in the network to undertake efforts to shape national dialogue.

They led a national consultation engaging 60 young people in identifying their priorities for ending period poverty and shame in the UK.

Champions from the forum then led a campaign with support from Irise staff that:

1. Launched the Pledge for Period Equality- a ten point list for realising young people's priorities- endorsed by 20+ organisations including Plan International UK and Girl Guiding and shared with policy makers including the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Period Equality
2. Reviewed existing menstrual health education resources creating a list of 'youth endorsed' resources that they felt met the needs of young people engaged in the consultation
3. Worked with advocates experiencing menstrual health disorders to generate and share their experiences and recommendations with healthcare professionals,

researchers and The Chief Medical Officer of one of the most popular Period Tracking Applications in the UK.

"I loved seeing the impact that the youth engagement had on professionals, it was incredible to see them be so affected by the stories we were telling." Young menstrual healthcare advocate on sharing her challenges accessing care with healthcare professionals

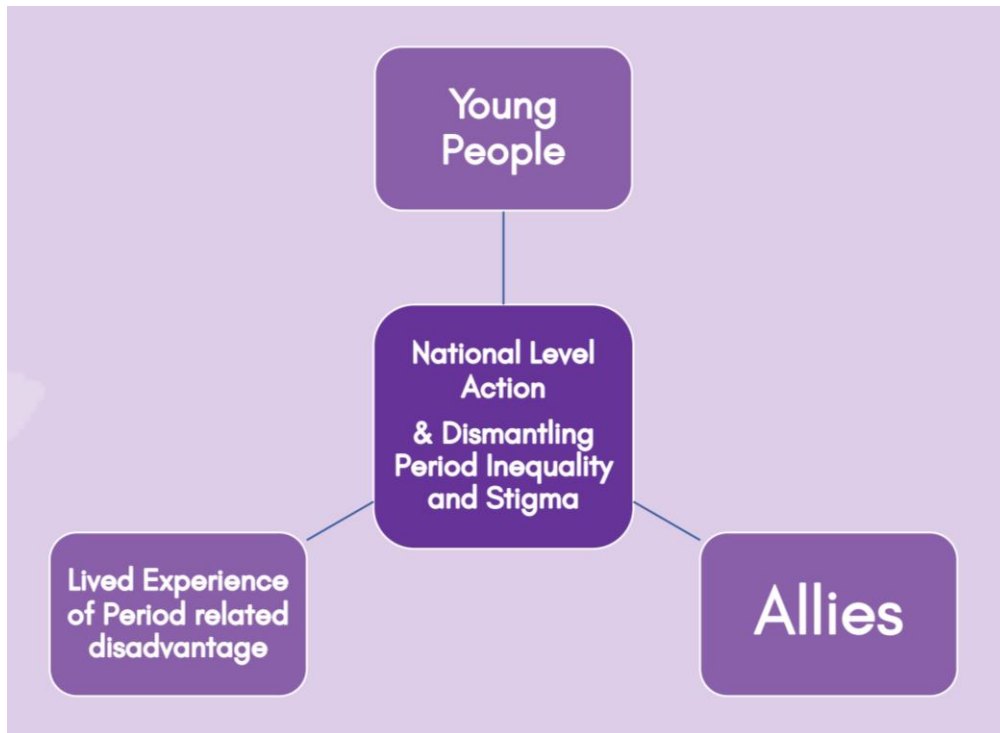


Diagram created by Forum Co-chair, Nketchi Adeboye, to demonstrate how the forum brought different groups together to create change

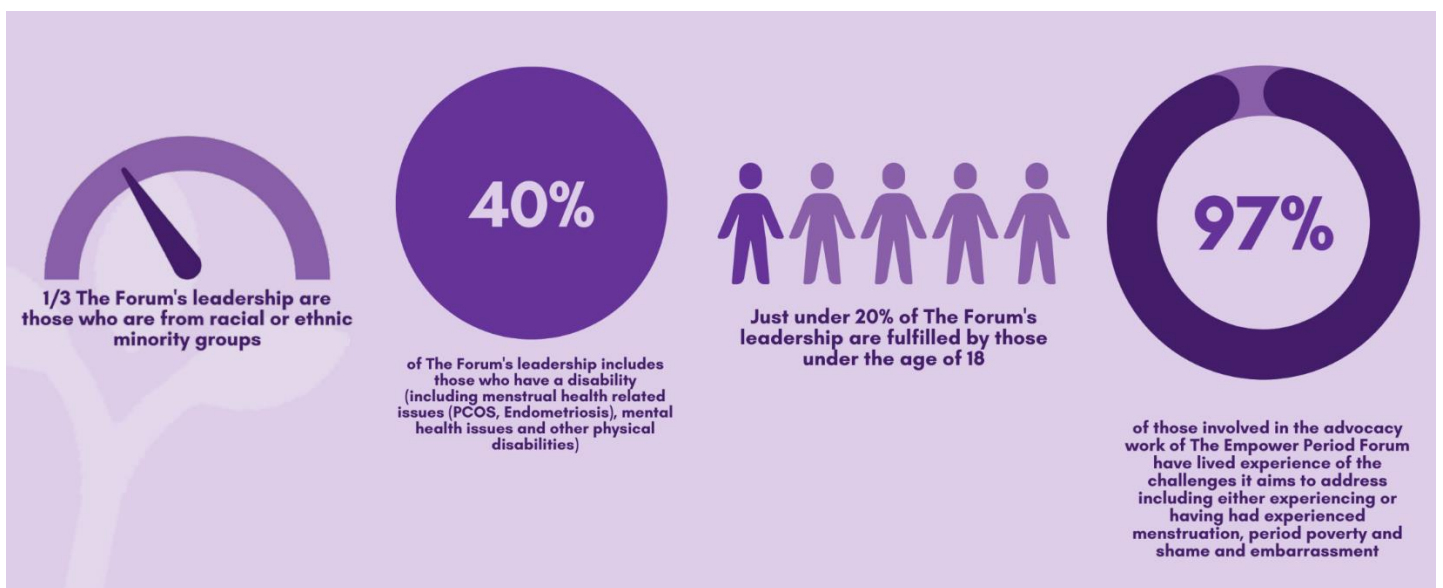


Diagram created by Forum Co-chair, Nketchi Adeboye, to demonstrate how lived experience and representation were considered in the leadership of the Forum.

PLEDGE FOR PERIOD EQUALITY MANIFESTO 2021

ABOUT THE MANIFESTO

As period poverty and shame continues to rage across the UK, young passionate period equality activists across the UK have come together to create the Empower Period Forum - a space for young advocates to catalyse national movement to end period poverty and shame.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the basic needs of girls, women and other young people with periods have not been met, and their voices unheard across the board.

The Empower Period Forum has developed a manifesto to achieve period equality, informed by young people with periods from varying backgrounds and circumstances across the UK.

We believe that by our local communities, wider society, institutions, and Government adopting the Empower Period Forum Manifesto on a national level, we can end period poverty and shame by 2025 in line with the UK Government's vision.



1. EMPOWER GIRLS, YOUNG WOMEN, & PEOPLE WITH PERIODS TO LEAD THE MOVEMENT TO PERIOD EQUALITY.

Young people who have periods must be at the forefront of the movement to realise period equality in the UK. Young people with lived experience of period poverty and shame are experts in the menstrual challenges they face and have a vested interest in a fairer future, and so their unique insights are vital to creating a world where period equality is realised for everyone.

2. CENTRE MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES.

The menstrual experience is vast and varied. To ensure the diverse needs of all people who have periods are met, we must centre marginalised communities at the heart of the movement towards period equality. Specifically, we must ensure that efforts and outcomes to better menstrual health education and related health services are accessible to ethnic minorities and those of all genders.

3. ENGAGE PEOPLE WHO DO NOT HAVE PERIODS.

Everyone, regardless of menstruating status, can enable period poverty and shame. To realise period equality for all, we must engage everyone in dismantling stigma and empowering those with periods to transform period fear into freedom.

4. PROVIDE MULTI-FACETED, ACCESSIBLE MENSTRUAL HEALTH EDUCATION FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE.

As well as understanding menstruation as a biological process, young people are empowered when they can explore all aspects of menstrual experience, including social, cultural, environmental and political implications. Nuanced menstrual health education must be accessible to all young people, regardless of background and circumstance and not limited to traditional educational environments.

5. COMMIT TO MENSTRUAL HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE IN SCHOOLS.

Young people of varied ages and genders experience menstruation. Adequate menstrual management facilities must be available for all those who have periods, regardless of identity.

6. EMPOWER HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS.

The average length of time to receive an endometriosis diagnosis in the UK is 7.5 years. GPs are often the first point of access for those experiencing menstrual health related issues; by empowering GPs to accurately diagnose and signpost sufferers to the correct supporting services, we can improve the healthcare experience for those experiencing menstrual health related issues.

7. FREE PERIOD PRODUCTS.

Periods are not a choice and can have a profound impact on one's ability to function without adequate provisions. Therefore, period products are essential to achieving period equity and enabling those with periods to thrive.

8. COMMIT TO MENSTRUAL HEALTH WITHIN THE UK GOVERNMENT'S WOMEN'S HEALTH STRATEGY.

The UK Government is currently developing a Women's Health Strategy - this must include dedicated space for improving health care for those experiencing menstrual health related issues.

9. TRANSFORM THE LEADERSHIP TABLE.

When the leadership table is inclusive and reflects the diversity of experience of people with periods, structures and stereotypes will change to identify and meet their needs. By restoring decision making power back to those who have periods, a more equal society can be created for everyone.

10. HONOUR EXISTING COMMITMENTS.

In 2019, the current UK Government launched the **Period Poverty Task Force** with **£250,000** of seed funding to end period poverty and shame in the UK for good. At the start of the pandemic the taskforce was suspended.

With period poverty and shame only worsening since the pandemic, we are asking the UK Government to honour their vision to end period poverty and shame in the UK by 2025.



ENDORSEMENTS

We invite individuals, organisations and groups to endorse the Empower Period Forum's Manifesto and by doing so make a commitment to put the voices, priorities and leadership of young people at the heart of work to end period poverty and shame in the UK.



For children and equality for girls



The Homeless Period
Wolverhampton



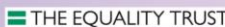
UNITED KINGDOM



THE REAL PERIOD PROJECT



FOR GIRLS FOR FRIENDSHIP FOR SOCIETY



Evaluation revealed significant benefits for the young people involved:

- 93% of young people involved in Empower Period said that since being involved in our work, they feel more able to break the stigma around menstruation when talking to others:

“A significant number of friends, quite a lot of male friends, actually, that would send me like a private message, or come up to me on a random day and [say] ‘I’m just looking at your stuff and you’ve actually made me think about this more and I’ve spoken to my girlfriend a bit more’, or like, ‘I didn’t realise this was a thing, or this was a thing, or this was a thing’, which I love when that happens, I think it’s so amazing.”

“Through Empower Period I have gained the confidence and expertise to talk about menstruation with these communities and have seen resultant shifts in their attitudes and/or interest in the topic of menstrual health and gendered health and empowerment more broadly.”

- 87% of young people said that since being involved in Empower Period, they feel able to talk about menstruation without shame:

“Being involved in Empower Period [has] given me... more confidence... to speak about periods, and menstrual health and stuff openly. I kind of thought I was open before and then I realised I wasn’t until being in this team.”

- 93% of young people said that since being involved in Empower Period, they have greater confidence in their own abilities, with 87% saying that they now have greater self-esteem:

“Developing self-confidence has been a big thing for me. I think before I started volunteering with Irise, I hadn’t even really done much volunteering at that point because I think I’d struggled a lot with social anxiety, which for me had been a barrier to getting involved in things that I wanted to get involved in. And so I was so lucky to find Irise and find this really supportive community that gradually helped build my confidence.”

- 100% of young people surveyed said since being involved in Empower Period, they had developed their advocacy, campaigning and organising skills, 80% of young people said being involved developed their leadership skills, and 87% of the young people said that Empower Period gave them opportunities that they wouldn’t have otherwise had.

“It’s really nice to be involved with something that I can be involved with it for as long as I want to, and hopefully, like a very long time, and I think that gives you a lot more opportunities to develop things slowly.”

- Young people involved also reflected on how opportunities from Empower Period have enabled them to pursue and obtain other opportunities in the workplace, with 87% reporting that Empower Period has nurtured their professional development. 93% reported they had learnt things that will help them in their employment and future prospects since being involved.

“Everything I’ve done with Irise is very helpful for being something I can put on my CV and I always talk about it as quite a big feature in cover letters and responses to job interview questions and things like that.”

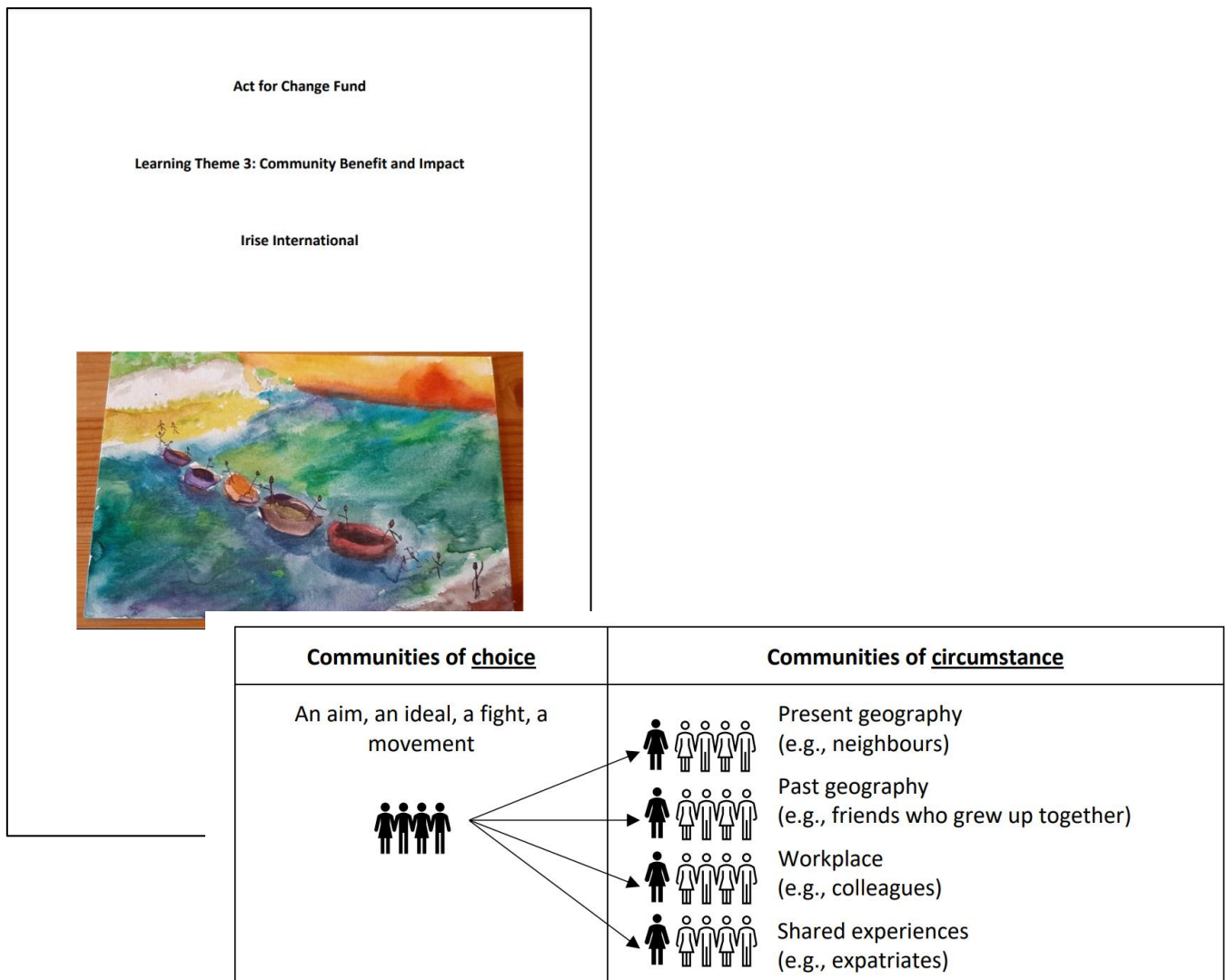
“I think I speak for myself and others in saying the Empower Period project has given me access to opportunities that I otherwise would not have had, which have pushed me out of my comfort zone and made me a more skilled, experienced, and confident person as a result (e.g. participating in a podcast with Magid Magid!).”

Creating communities of change

Irise also undertook a joint impact evaluation with FORWARD UK focused on our models for supporting young women to lead change in their communities. Key findings were that the following principles drive Irise’s approach to creating communities that can drive social change.

- 1) A diagnosis of the problem that focuses on the root cause of the challenge you seek to address. In the context of period inequality those affected don’t just need pads but more power so they can address the systematic neglect of menstrual health in how we structure our communities and society.
- 2) A theory of change that hinges upon connecting “positive social deviants”, i.e. those who already differ from dominant social norms, to create change.
- 3) Creating a culture where values come first. Values need to be institutionalised and explicit so that a shared identity can form amongst those involved.
- 4) A commitment to participatory leadership where everyone’s voice can be heard.
- 5) A commitment to the principle that everyone can be a leader and should play a role in shaping their communities and implementation of horizontal leadership structures to support this.
- 6) Institutionalized kindness and mentorship enables the community to show that every voice really does matter.

The full report can be accessed [here](#).



Evaluating Period Friendly schools in Uganda

Irise International commissioned an independent impact evaluation of the Period Friendly Schools Programme.

Key findings include:

- Menstrual related absenteeism was halved.
- Significantly improved the proportion of girls scoring highly in exams
- Reduced drop out rates from 1.2% to 0.2% i.e. 120 more girls in school as a result of the project
- Girls from low socioeconomic backgrounds or with disability benefitted the most
- Benefits were sustained throughout the pandemic thanks to community and government engagement model
- Developed a replicable and scalable package for doing the same elsewhere

Those leading the independent evaluation and final review of the project shared the following conclusions:

“The Menstruation Friendly Schools (MFS) project achieved its intended outcomes and provides a convincing model for effective school-based interventions. Despite the unprecedented disruption of the pandemic, the project demonstrated significant achievements in overall impact.”- Technical Reviewer from The UK’s Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office

“Overall, the project has demonstrated substantial improvements to educational attendance and attainment among schoolgirls, as well as understanding of and attitudes towards menstruation among schoolgirls and schoolboys. As such, the MFS project has achieved its intended outcome of reducing menstrual-related barriers to girls’ education and provides a compelling model for effective school-based interventions.” Heather Purshouse, Independent Evaluator

“...There is also remarkable improvement in knowledge and attitude towards menstruation and puberty among girls, boys and teachers. This has greatly contributed to the planned outcome of improved adolescent girls’ engagement and academic performance because they are more confident and better able to concentrate and attend lessons during their periods.

More still, majority of the project schools have been influenced to mainstream menstruation management and education into their school programmes and plans, and importantly in budgets, to ensure that schools provide at least emergency products to the girls. This indeed as indicated in the results has greatly contributed to the girls’ comfort, confidence and thriving in schools....Scaling up and replication of this project and approach would allow for consolidation of these gains and provide benefit to all Ugandan communities where menstruation is still treated with limited appreciation.” Elizabeth M. Asimwe, Independent Evaluator

Period Positive Schools Project- starting to scale in Uganda

We are extremely proud that this project was able to go ahead despite last minute funding cuts from the UK's Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office. A big thank you to our donors who stepped in to make sure that we didn't let down girls, their communities and local government.

Schools remained closed for the majority of 2021 so activities were pivoted to provide much needed support to girls in the community:

- A total of 1,180 girls have received community based menstrual health and puberty education and 900 girls have been supplied with menstrual products.
- 8 schools completed the Irise Period Positive Schools checklist, which helps schools assess policies and facilities and to make low-cost improvements to make schools more period positive.
- With schools closed, Community leaders, including the LC1 chairperson and other local government officials, organised for Menstrual Health education sessions to be delivered in collaboration with schools in community settings. For many, this was the only opportunity they'd had to engage with schooling since the start of the pandemic.

We conducted a survey with 194 out of school girls:

- 89% of girls want to return to school, but 12% of girls are either unsure they will be able to return or know they will not be able to return to school
- 11% of girls have experienced sexual harm since schools closed, with 84% knowing someone who has
- 6% of girls say they have got married under 18 since schools closed with 11% saying they have felt pressure to do so, 79% say they know someone this has happened to
- The vast majority (82%) say they have felt unsafe or know someone who has felt unsafe since schools closed

We will continue to work closely with local and national government in Uganda to get girls safely back into school in 2022.



Menstrual health education being delivered by a champion in the community

Power Together- strengthening the grassroots movement for Period Equality in East Africa



THE PERIOD EQUALITY NETWORK

Championing grassroots action to improve menstrual health.

Irise partnered with our longstanding funder and partner, The Waterloo Foundation, to start The Period Equality Network (TPEN). to increase co-ordination, mobilisation and co-operation among civil society organizations working on menstrual health and hygiene in East Africa and their UK partners. The rationale behind the initiative was that grassroots groups and community-based organisations are uniquely placed to facilitate the community social norm change and girls' leadership at the heart of sustainable and effective work to realise period equality. Organisations consulted prior to the launch of the initiative highlighted that sustainability of projects was a key challenge and that supporting local ownership was critical to achieving this. This only became more important in the context of swift and significant cuts to funding for global gender equality work.

Stakeholders involved in the conception of the initiative also identified a growing body of research and evidence to inform programming that was not accessible to grassroots and community-based organisations but that could increase their impact.

There was also growing but varied national efforts across the East African Community to address menstrual health within national curriculums and policy with significant opportunities for cross context learning.

The initiative was founded on the principle that we are more powerful when we work and act together and that localised funding models and joint agenda setting to Global North-south partnerships could catalyse a more resilient and impactful movement for period equality in East Africa.

Progress across the areas of building a community of best practice, bridging the gap and amplifying effective programming are summarised below.

Building a community of best practice:

- The East Africa network has 80 members spanning Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan, the UK mailing list has 34 subscribers and the facebook community has 842 members.
- A grassroots grant round was administered between April-May 2021 focused on Uganda and 5 grants were made to grassroots groups.
- Grant making decisions were made by a local committee combining lived and technical experience of menstrual health in the East African context, informed by Irise's funder assessment framework.

Bridging the Gap:

- Irise developed a Funder Assessment Framework to guide grant giving. The process combined a detailed review of evidence and best practice guidance that already existed and expert opinion from the network.
- Irise developed a Monitoring and Evaluation toolkit based on the Funder Assessment Framework. This combined tools that Irise has tried and tested in our programming with those that have been developed by others, refined based on feedback from the network and designed to meet their needs. A training video and manual and depository form were also created to aid easy use.
- Two training sessions were held for East Africa based organisations (compulsory for small grant holders) on how to use the Evaluation Toolkit and on safeguarding. The sessions were each attended by ~20 organisations and the Safeguarding Session was delivered in partnership with a safeguarding lead from the Ugandan Ministry of Education.
- A training session on how to develop and deliver effective menstrual health programming was delivered to ~20 UK charities in partnership with the UK's leading provider of training for small charities, the Foundation for Social Improvement and the Small International Development Charities Network. The session was jointly delivered by Irise International and IIEA staff members, attendees received access to the TPEN resources and the FSI received a ready made powerpoint that they could use to repeat the training in the future.
- Four learning briefings were drafted, informed by an online consultation about what TPEN members had learnt from their work and our original assessment of learning needs. These will be added and finalised based on experiences and learning with small grantees and partners during the next 12 months.
- IIEA also co-hosted a regional conference on the use of menstrual cups with the Uganda Ministry of Education, supported by another funder, The Cova Project. This engaged the whole TPEN network and created an opportunity for school girls using cups to speak with government ministers and cup manufacturers about their experiences. The conference was significantly more popular than anticipated with over 300 people signing up to attend from across East Africa.

Amplifying Effective Programming:

- Irise International worked with Dig Deep via tailored consultancy support to help them to integrate menstrual health into district government WASH strategy. Irise supported them to integrate menstrual health screening questions into their household WASH surveys, explored ways to develop a traffic light system to demonstrate to officials the areas most in need of support and supported them to undertake a qualitative assessment with members of the community to inform how menstrual health could be most effectively into Community Led Total Sanitation.

Advocacy:

- The TPEN community chose to undertake a series of advocacy related activities together, which Irise supported and facilitated. These were outside the original scope of activities but demonstrate the power of the growing community.

These included:

- IIEA supporting TPEN members to participate in relevant regional and national meetings e.g. the regional meeting on Child Rights, hosted by the East Africa Community, to enable partners to highlight issues that the African Union should be monitoring at country level when 'reporting committees' members' visit member states to evaluate performance.
- Seven Directors of Ugandan based TPEN members were recognised and received awards from the Ugandan Ministry of Education for being 'menstrual health champions' and 12 Period Equality Network Members were also received awards for their tremendous contributions to menstrual health within Uganda, including IIEA.
- During Uganda's second lockdown 50+ TPEN Uganda based members met virtually and produced a joint statement about the harmful impacts girls were experiencing that was then championed by UK members and shared with funders and other stakeholders to generate support.
- In the aftermath of the UK Aid cuts Irise International collected stories from TPEN members and supported IIEA's Regional Director to describe the impacts of cuts on ITV national news and on BBC Regional news. Irise International collated experiences and submitted them to the International Development Committee's Call for Evidence.



PRESENTS

BAHARA'S PRIDE PROJECT

25/09
2021



#Periodfriendlycommunities

Venue: Kibimba Kagote | Activities: Pad making free training • MHM sensitization and awareness • Girl talk

With support from:



Photos of Bahara's Pride, one of the TPEN small grant recipients

Financial Performance and Policies

Incoming Resources

Incoming resources for the year was £186,289. The distribution of the payments received is as follows: £31,058 from public donations and other income sources towards unrestricted funds and £152,691 in grants from trusts and foundations as well as £2,540 in public donations towards restricted funds.

Resources Expended

Total expenditure for the year was £259,908.

Reserves Policy

Irise International holds in reserves 3-6 months current running costs from unrestricted and eligible restricted sources provided restrictions allow for funds to be spent in this way. Irise International was within this reserves policy for the whole of 2021 & at the end of 2021 and at the time of writing, the trustees consider Irise International to be a going concern.

Grant making Policy

Irise International works with partner organisations that contribute specific expertise to the execution of its programmes. Grants payable to partner organisations are made in line with Irise's strategic objectives. The grants contribute directly towards the development of the charity's programmes by helping local organisations provide sustainable benefits for communities, and they are therefore considered part of furthering Irise International's own objectives. Irise International monitors all grants in accordance with the relevant grant agreement.

Structure, Governance and Management

Board of Trustees

Irise International is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered with the UK's Charity Commission. It is governed by a constitution. The Board of Trustees comprises 8 people who are responsible for the supervision of the management of all the affairs of Irisé International. Board meetings are held four times a year, at the end of every quarter. Trustee recruitment and appointment is done based on the specific skills required, the nomination of an existing trustee and is voted upon. No other organisation or body has the right to appoint trustees to the charity.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The board of trustees is responsible for ensuring that all the activities are within UK law and fall within the agreed charitable objectives. Its work includes setting strategic direction and agreeing the financial plan. The trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which reveal the financial position of the charity with reasonable accuracy at any given time. They are responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud or any other irregularities. The board delegates day to day running of the charity to the Executive Directors and acts on advice and information from regular meeting with members of the Executive Team.

Staff and Structure

Irise International has a strong commitment to young people's leadership, particularly the leadership of young women and girls. In the UK we created three paid opportunities as part of our youth-led advocacy work designed for young people entering the work force for the first time. These roles included mentorship, training and leadership development from senior staff. Irisé International aims to be a high impact, agile organisation and therefore aims to employ a small core team that can create opportunities, like the above, for emerging young leaders and that can work with a network of free lancers and consultants to achieve cost-effective high impact work. This model has helped us to be resilient to the impacts of the pandemic. In East Africa, we have a long-term commitment to supporting East African leadership, particularly young women's leadership, and continue to invest in supporting the growth and development of our sister organisation, Irisé Institute East Africa, including enabling them to build a diverse funding portfolio with international and African based funders- supporting their long-term independence and sustainability.

Risk Management

The trustees actively review the major risks that the charity faces on a regular basis, together with an annual review of the financial systems. The trustees have taken steps to put in place and regularly review a reserves policy as detailed in the financial statements. The trustees regularly review the risks the organisation faces through an organisational risk management process and have identified those risks which the charity faces and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate significant risks.

Equal Opportunities

Irise International is a charity committed to the promotion of equal opportunity. It takes affirmative action to ensure women and girls have equal access to education and employment. In carrying out this objective Irisé treats individuals with respect within the organisation and in the field. Wherever

possible we create a broad base for consultation and decision-making. To accomplish the overall objectives as expressed in the Constitution Irise will:

- Comply with all applicable laws and regulations governing employment in the UK and host country which include the Equal Pay Act 1970; Race Relations Act 1976; Sex Discrimination Acts 1975; Disability Discrimination Act 2005; Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 as amended from time to time;
- Provide equal opportunity to all employees and to all applicants for employment;
- In employment, prohibit unlawful discrimination or harassment because of race, colour, nationality, religion or religious beliefs, ethnic or national origin, age, gender, marital status, civil partnership or gender reassignment, sexual orientation or disability;
- Advise all employees or respective employees of Irise's Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Pay particular attention to recruitment procedures, probationary periods, terms and conditions of employment, dismissal, leave, promotion and deployment patterns;
- Develop mechanisms for resolving grievances about unfair discrimination and harassment;
- Review its Equal Opportunities Policy on a regular basis Liability of Members Irise International is a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation, limited by guarantee. The trustees have guaranteed the liabilities of the charity up to £1 each.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Commission in determining the activities undertaken by the Charity.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees,



Linda Baines,

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Statement of Financial Activities and Independent Examiner's Report Irise International CIO

Independent examiner's report for the year ended 31 December 2021

I report to the charity trustees on my examination accounts of Irise International ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the trustees of the Charity (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the consolidated accounts of the Group in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act') and the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act'). You are satisfied that the accounts for the Charity are not required by charity law to be audited and have chosen instead to have an independent examination. Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act.

In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act. Basis of independent examiner's report My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters.

The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the Charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity and its subsidiary as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or

4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached

C M Sullivan

Catherine Sullivan

Date: 31/10/22

FCA DipCha

5 Marneys Close,

Epsom

KT18 7HR

Irise International CIO

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021		2020	
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		£	£	£	£
Income					
Income from grants and donations	2	30,108	155,231	185,339	260,580
Other income		950		950	690
Total income		31,058	155,231	186,289	261,270
Expenditure					
Expenditure on generating funds	3	1,320	19,548	20,868	36,855
Expenditure on charitable activities	3	21,992	217,048	239,040	151,191
Total Expenditure		23,312	236,596	259,908	188,046
Net movement income for the year		7,746	(81,365)	(73,619)	73,224
Balance brought forward		8,596	149,894	158,490	85,267
Balance carried forward		16,342	68,530	84,872	158,490

These results all relate to on-going activities.

The notes on pages 31 to 36 form part of these financial statements

Irise International CIO

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2021

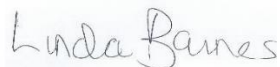
	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Cash at bank and in hand		86,207	159,036
Creditors	5	(1,335)	(545)
Total Net Assets		84,872	158,491
Unrestricted funds		16,342	8,596
Restricted funds		68,530	149,894
Total funds		84,872	158,491

For the year ended 31 December 2021 the company is exempt from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with s476. The directors acknowledge their responsibilities in complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

These financial statements were approved by the Trustees and authorised for issue on the 31st October 2021 and are signed on their behalf by:



Linda Baines,

Chair of Trustees

Irise International
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 31 December 2021

1. Accounting policies

1.1 Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with accounting and reporting by Charities' Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. Irise International meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

Assets and liabilities are wholly recognised at historical costs or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s). The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the Charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £. The financial statements have been under the historical cost convention.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The trustees have considered the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the charity. The trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Income

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donations are recognised when the charity has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. In the even that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

1.4 Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. All expenses including support costs and governance costs are allocated or apportioned to applicable expenditure headings.

Support and governance costs have been split between the fundraising and charitable activities based on staff time. Governance costs comprise all costs involving the public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice. These costs related to statutory compliance and legal fees on constitutional matters.

Staff costs are allocated to activities on the basis of staff time spent on those activities. Costs of charitable activities include governance costs and an apportionment of support costs (shown in note 4).

1.5 Fixed assets

Expenditure on equipment, fixtures and fittings that exceeds £1,000 is capitalised. All fixed assets are initially recorded at cost. Currently the charity has no fixed assets.

1.6 Financial instruments

The Charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments. Financial assets are recognised in the Charity's statement of financial position when the Charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Financial assets are classified into specified categories. The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the financial assets and is determined at the time of recognition.

1.7 Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include trade and other receivables and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Other financial assets classified as fair value through the statement of financial activities are measured at fair value.

1.8 Pension costs

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme for employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company. The annual contributions payable are charged to the statement of financial activities.

1.9 Taxation

No provision for taxation is included in the financial statements as the charitable company is entitled to exemption from tax on income and gains applied to wholly charitable activities

Irise International
Notes to the financial statements (continued)
For the year ended 31 December 2021

2. Grants	2021	2020
	£	£
Restricted funds		
FCDO UK Aid Direct	18,478	52,827
Sustain for Life		1,392
John Holmes Trust		7,541
Johns Hopkins University		2,988
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	12,000	50,000
The Waterloo Foundation TPEN		30,500
The Big Give Christmas Challenge 2019		7,294
University of Leeds		1,500
University of Sheffield RAG		1,378
Evan Cornish Foundation		10,000
The Circle of Women COVID response		7,500
Paul Hamlyn Foundation training support		5,000
Yorkshire Building Society		2,000
National Lottery Community Fund	10,000	10,000
South Yorkshire Community Development Foundation		5,000
The Waterloo Foundation COVID response		15,000
The Fore		5,000
British & Foreign Schools Society	32,001	10,000
The Circle of Women Soroti Project	15	8,500
Smallwood Trust	9,000	21,000
Postcode Neighbourhood Trust	20,000	
Joffe Charitable Trust	20,000	
The Kulczyk Foundation	22,499	
Modibodi	1,200	
The Circle of Women back to school	1,500	
The Big Give Christmas Challenge 2021	2,540	
Funderbirds	6,000	
Total restricted grant income	155,233	254,420
Unrestricted grants	30108	6160
Total unrestricted grants and donations	30108	6160
Total	185,341	260,580

Irise International
Notes to the financial statements (continued)
For the year ended 31 December 2021

3. Expenditure

	2021				2020			
	Staff costs	Direct costs	Support costs	Total	Staff costs	Direct costs	Support costs	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Generating Funds	16,487	2,784	1,597	20,868	26,056	5,873	4,926	36,855
Charitable Activities	135,447	90,477	13,116	239,040	93,069	40,526	17,596	151,191
	151,934	93,261	14,713	259,908	119,126	46,398	22,522	188,046

Support costs are allocated on the basis of staff cost

	2021	2020
Support Costs include	£	£
Rent and rates	3,691	6,027
Insurance	184	184
Governance	55	145
Other overheads	10,783	16,167
	14,713	22,522

4 Staff Costs	2021	2020
	£	£
UK net salaries	104,643	67,189
UK employers NI	3,632	479
UK staff pensions	2,391	1,182
Uganda staff costs	41,267	50,275
	151,934	119,126

The headcount of employees over the year was:

Uganda	10	10
UK	5	5
	15	15

The Uganda staff are all employed by Irise Institute East Africa, which is separately registered and independent to Irise International. All Uganda staff costs were covered by a grant from Irise International to Irise Institute East

5 Creditors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade Creditors	97	521
Payroll creditors	1,238	24
Relating to Irise Uganda		
	1,335	545

6 Analysis of Net Assets

	2021			2020		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	17,677	68,530	86,207	9,142	149,894	159,036
Creditors	(1,335)		(1,335)	(545)		(545)
	16,342	68,530	84,872	8,597	149,894	158,491

7 Analysis of Funds

	Balance B/fwd £	Received in year £	Spent in year £	Balance C/fwd £
Restricted Funds				
FCDO UK Aid Direct	- 2,397	18,478	21,189	- 5,109
Open Gate	44	-	-	44
Funderbirds	1	6,000	6,000	1
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	56,475	12,000	66,263	2,212
The Waterloo Foundation TPEN	42,999		35,972	7,027
The Big Give Christmas Challenge 2019	1			1
Evan Cornish Foundation	7,000	0	6,490	510
Paul Hamlyn Foundation training support	507	-	507	0
Yorkshire Building Society	1,389	0	1,389	-
National Lottery Community Fund	1,491	10,000	1,550	9,942
South Yorkshire Community Development Foundation	58			58
The Waterloo Foundation COVID response	3,202	-	3,202	-
The Fore	2,293	-	2,293	-
British & Foreign Schools Society	10,000	32,001	31,684	10,317
The Circle of Women Soroti Project	5,832	15	5,846	0
Smallwood Trust	21,000	9,000	29,583	417
The Kulczyk Foundation		22,499	15,492	7,007
Joffe Charitable Trust		20,000	4,960	15,040
Modibodi		1,200	428	772
The Circle of Women back to school		1,500	-	1,500
The Big Give Christmas Challenge 2021		2,540	-	2,540
Postcode Neighbourhood Trust		20,000	-	20,000
Total Restricted Funds	149,894	155,233	232,848	72,279
Unrestricted Funds	8,596	20,770	16,780	12,586
Total Funds	158,490	176,003	249,629	84,865

9 Comparative SOFA for year ended 31 December 2020

	2020		
	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Income			
Income from grants and donations	6,160	254,420	260,580
Other income	690		690
Total income	6,850	254,420	261,270
Expenditure			
Expenditure on generating funds	1,073	35,782	36,855
Expenditure on charitable activities		151,191	151,191
Total Expenditure	1,073	186,973	188,046
Net movement income for the year	5,777	67,447	73,224
Balance brought forward	2,819	82,447	85,267
Balance carried forward	8,596	149,894	158,490