



Irise International

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the Year ending 31st December 2018



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Legal and Administrative Information

Trustees

Elizabeth Gadd (Former Chair – Resigned from Board 25th May 2019)

Linda Baines (Current Chair – Appointed 25th May 2019)

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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.

Irise International's vision is a world where no one is held back by their period.

We deliver learning focused programmes and research in the UK and East Africa to support young people and their communities to address menstruation related barriers- working on issues young people tell us are ways that their periods hold them back.

We champion innovative approaches working with a wide range of partners and aim to disseminate learning and transition successful programmes to partners who can support long-term delivery.

We use our learning and research to advocate for policy and practice change.

The charity's 2014-2020 strategic plan was focused around the following objectives:

1. Developing and delivering high quality menstrual health education
2. Delivering affordable menstrual hygiene products in East Africa
3. Generating an evidence base to inform the development of Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) Programmes
4. Raising awareness nationally and internationally about MHM in the broader context of women's rights and empowerment

It outlined a three phase process for developing a model school based menstrual health intervention for the east African context that could improve girl's school attendance:

Phase 1: Developing and piloting a model solution (2014-2017)

Phase 2: Rolling out a model solution (2017-2019)

Phase 3: Disseminating our model and approach (2019-2020)

The strategy was reviewed earlier than anticipated because:

1. The charity decided to expand its work to the UK context in 2017 in response emerging evidence that Irise's learning from East Africa has relevance to the UK context.
2. Evidence from Irise's research and learning focused programming between 2014-17 prompted a review of the agreed strategy, in particular learning about:
 - a. The need to address negative social norms associated with menstruation to deliver effective interventions
 - b. Challenges measuring the impact of menstrual health interventions on girls' outcomes in east Africa

The charity's 2019-2024 strategic plan is focused around these objectives:

1. Test and promote evidence-based approaches to overcoming menstrual related challenges

2. Collaborate with academia to conduct and facilitate research to evidence impact and improve menstrual health interventions.
3. Disseminate learning and advocate for policy and practice change to improve young people's experience of menstruation in the UK and East Africa.
4. Expand our work to include the most marginalised and vulnerable groups

Irise's achievements and performance in 2018 will be presented against the objectives outlined in the 2019-2024 strategic plan.

Throughout 2018 the trustees have ensured that all charitable activities have been undertaken with regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Achievements and performance

Summary

In 2018 we continued to incorporate learning from our work between 2014-2017 into our programming, research and advocacy. Central to this has been advocating for increased recognition of the need for more, better quality evidence to inform menstrual health policies and programmes in the UK and east Africa. A key strategy has been building relationships with academics and practitioners to bridge the gap between research and practice in the menstrual health sector.

In our own implementation in east Africa we have focused on developing interventions that address the negative attitudes and stigma surrounding menstruation through community-led behaviour change approaches. This is in response to learning from our own work and wider research suggesting that menstrual stigma and shame need to be addressed if girls are to benefit long term from menstrual health programmes. We continue to share learning from our implementation through freely available resources and reports and through supporting other organisations to deliver high quality menstrual health programs via training, consultancy or partnership.

In the UK we have focused on working with young people to develop our understanding of how the issue is affecting them through small scale workshops in partnership with Agents of Change volunteers and research exploring their experiences of menstrual stigma. This exploratory work confirms the need for menstrual health work in the UK and suggests parallels between girls' experiences in the UK and east Africa. It will inform the development of our approach in the UK context in 2019.

Summary of reach

Number of girls supported to stay happy and healthy during their periods...

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Uganda	10,941	73,000	84,713	76,000
UK	-	-	345	1,150

Objective 1: Test and promote evidence-based approaches to overcoming menstrual related challenges

In Uganda...

Creating menstruation friendly schools...

Irise began implementing our UK Aid Direct funded project focused on creating menstruation friendly schools in Uganda. The project builds the capacity of schools and communities to provide menstrual products, make low cost improvements to school facilities and deliver menstrual health education. It incorporates learning from our previous work and pilots a community-led approach designed to address negative attitudes associated with menstruation and enable behaviour change.

At baseline:

- 30% of girls were using potentially harmful, improvised materials to manage their periods.
- Over half of girls were missing some school during their period

- Over half of girls experienced health related symptoms during menstruation including skin irritation, rashes in pelvic area, unpleasant odour or depression.
- 70% of girls demonstrated attitudes towards menstruation that had the potential to harm themselves or others.
- 75% of girls were embarrassed and fearful of menstrual related accidents during their periods.
- 78% of girls lacked basic information about their own body and what a period is.

The project supports 10 schools in 2 communities, aims to directly reach 6,000 boys and girls and develop resources that others can use to create a sustainable, menstruation friendly environment for school girls.

Over the last 12 months the Irise team have worked in partnership with the community to build a strong foundation for creating menstruation friendly schools year after year:

- We identified 19 community champions nominated by menstrual health educators working in the community. Each school also selected teacher champions who nominated parent champions.
- The local government was a key stakeholder throughout this process, endorsing the project and enabling the Community Development Officer and Youth Councillor to become champions.
- Teachers across all schools were trained to deliver menstrual health education in partnership with local government.
- Community events with a theme “Creating menstruation friendly schools” engaged 650 participants across both communities, including pupils, teachers, parents and local authority officials. As part of these events 5 schools were invited by beneficiary schools to learn about the project and received sanitary products and education.
- Girls, teachers and parents across all schools were involved in selecting the most suitable menstrual products for themselves, 348 girls chose reusable products and 83 girls chose disposable products. Alongside this, 11 entrepreneurs were trained to sell menstrual products in the community long term.

The excellence of the project has been recognised at the local and national level. Irise Uganda was invited by the Town Council in one of the community’s to take part in their Youth Day celebrations and participated in an invitation only national celebration of Day of the Girl Child hosted by Uganda’s first lady.

Comments from focus groups discussions with the community:

“The children have been exposed to the issue through the socialisation of Irise. They now discuss it [menstruation] freely... The girls lived in fear but now they are confident. It is becoming easy and they can perform well because they are comfortable.” Tabitha, Deputy Head Teacher

“Before Irise I didn’t know about pads but was just using rags which were hard to change outside the house.” Youth champion

“Elder sisters couldn’t tell me about it, my mother couldn’t tell me about it, not until Irise could I be free.” Youth champion

“I have given my daughter, who is in primary school, pads before she started her period thanks to sensitisation from Irise.” Parent champion

“Before Irise started selling pads the cheapest pad was at 3,000 but now they can buy for 1500.”
Community champion (retired doctor and father)

In 2019 we will continue to work with the community to institutionalise change and evaluate our progress so that by the end of the project we have a replicable approach and set of resources we can share with others.



A Deputy Major and local official launch a menstrual health event with a dance (left), a young woman investigates a reusable sanitary pad at a community education event (right)

Developing an approach to establishing local access to affordable menstrual products...

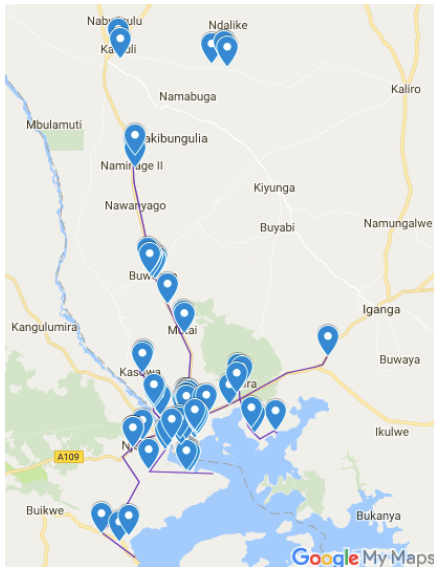
Our project to establish an entrepreneur network supplying women and girls with a choice of affordable menstrual products, funded by the Genesis Charitable Trust, entered its second year. The need for community engagement and behaviour change to create demand for new menstrual products and enable girls to use them comfortably and safely was a key learning from the first year of the project.

During the first part of 2018 we completed a pilot of “The Purple Matatu.” The aim was to develop a method of promoting new menstrual products and delivering education and behaviour change work through a branded vehicle travelling through the communities where we were working. The pilot demonstrated proof of concept reaching approximately 8,000 people and recruiting 37 entrepreneurs and 22 shops to the scheme over 26 days of operation.

For the remainder of the year the Purple Matatu ran for an average of 3 days a week, operating 9 different local routes. Alongside re-stocking and providing support to entrepreneurs, we have used the vehicle to offer education and training to community groups and at public gatherings, such as market days and public celebrations.

This initiative enabled us to build grassroots partnerships, increasing local support for the project, securing formal support from local government and influential local politicians.

A total of 224 entrepreneurs have taken part in the scheme this year with 199 active over the past 6 months. As a direct result of the demand side stimulus that Irise has been working with the community to create, many of our suppliers have begun working directly in the communities taking part in the project. As suppliers have become more involved in some of the communities we have worked in, we have begun to focus more on the harder to reach areas where there is not yet sufficient demand for other businesses to work directly.



Map showing the location of entrepreneurs (blue markers) supported by the Purple Matatu routes (purple lines) (left) entrepreneurs inspect a range of more affordable menstrual products (right)

Carol- supplying school girls with pads to keep her own children in school



“Thank god, that because of Irise you can afford to buy these products. Other shops are too expensive, now I have rid myself from having to buy from other retailers.”

“[Selling these products] helps pay for my children's primary school fees. I can buy for them some books; they don't even chase them from school because I pay in time out of those pads.”

Carol has a little pharmacy shop just outside of Jinja where locals from her area come to get their staples, including sanitary products. She has been an entrepreneur with Irise for just over a year and appreciates the reliable supply of affordable sanitary products. Selling these products gives Carol the extra income she needs to afford primary school fees and essential educational items such as books for her two young daughters and son. She also recognises the knock-on effect beyond her immediate family, with local school girls becoming regular customers, recognising the packaging of the pads and their affordability.

Community-enterprise to support access to affordable menstrual products...

Easy Pad, a local business manufacturing a washable, reusable sanitary pad, founded in partnership with the community in 2013, continues to create employment for 20 women and deliver a local, affordable option for Ugandan women and girls. Irise is completing the process of handing over ownership of the business to the women who work in it. They have required no additional financial support from Irise since 2017.

In the UK...

Three young people working with Irise as part of the Agents of Change program chose to work with schools in their local communities, building on Irise's work in the Young People in Control project in 2017. They engaged 1,150 young people in discussions about period poverty and stigma and how young people can help to create change. In one school the Agent of Change trained U6th students to become champions and teach the rest of the school.

At the end of 2018 Irise recruited a Young Trustee to lead and grow our grassroots network of young people advocating to end period poverty in the UK and beyond. In 2019 this network will be critical in shaping our response to period poverty in the UK over the next five years.

Objective 2: Collaborate with academia to conduct and facilitate research to evidence impact and improve menstrual health interventions.

Developing a community-led approach to menstrual health interventions...

Irise's UK Aid Direct project to create menstruation friendly schools includes an impact evaluation to explore the added benefit of a community-led approach based on the REPLACE model. The REPLACE model was developed to address Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in the European Union by a team of academics at Coventry University led by Professor Hazel Barrett. The team received funding from the European Commission to trial the approach in the UK, Netherlands, Italy, Portugal and Spain with FGM affected communities in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Senegal, Somalia and Sudan. The approach is unique because it combines individual and community level behaviour change theory in recognition that issues rooted in complex social norms required change at both the individual and the community level. In particular, the approach adapts the "Community Readiness to Change" approach which was originally developed to address the attitudes perpetuating domestic violence in the US. It is one of the only models that considers how change happens at the community level and allows interventions to be tailored to the community's readiness to change.

Irise was interested in adapting this approach to menstrual health because of research showing that the stigma and shame surrounding menstruation are rooted in societal attitudes towards women's sexual and reproductive health, the same attitudes leading communities to continue the practice of FGM.

In addition to adapting and testing this approach in our UK Aid Direct Project- creating menstruation friendly schools, we are working with Professor Hazel Barrett at Coventry University and Dr Dani Barrington at the University of Leeds to develop a research agenda to develop this work.

The East and Southern Africa Menstrual Health Research Network...

Irise collaborated with academics at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and academic institutions and learning focused practitioners in

east and southern Africa to set-up the East and Southern Africa Menstrual Health Research Network and now sits on the Steering Committee. We worked together to secure a Global Challenges Networking grant to support the network meeting and collaborating between October 2018 and August 2019. The key aims of the network during this period is to build the capacity of east African researchers working on menstrual health and to create a platform for future menstrual studies through building shared priorities and collaborations.

Irise was able to bring researchers with expertise in community level behaviour change and sociology to the network to help develop intervention packages that are responsive to local needs and cultural norms. This will help to address challenges around the cultural acceptability of interventions identified by local stakeholders.

The first meeting of the network took place in Entebbe, Uganda on 10th-12th October 2018 and established four virtual working groups to address four priorities identified by the network. Irise will support early career, east African researcher Mandi Tembo to lead the working group “Understanding and working with marginalized and vulnerable groups and their communities.” This support will include organising in-country training and capacity in Uganda in 2019 for east Africa based members of the network.

In 2019 the network will showcase its work to key stakeholders at a high profile event in London in July. We will also continue to work together to develop and fund collaborative research to build a strong evidence base for menstrual health in the region.

Irise’s Director was also invited to sit on the Study Advisory Committee for the Menstrual health interventions and School attendance among Ugandans study (MENISCUs-2) run by Professor Helen Weiss at London School of Tropical Medicine. Our Director was able to share learning from Irise’s work engaging the community in developing culturally acceptable interventions.



The GCRF East and Southern Africa Menstrual Health Research Network meeting in Entebbe 10th-12th October 2018

Understanding menstrual stigma in the UK and Uganda....

Irise began working with academics at the University of Leeds to develop a research agenda and network of academics committed to understanding how menstrual stigma is affecting girls in low and high income contexts.

Masters student Elizabeth Goolden completed a piece of research in partnership with Irise International for her final dissertation project on the MA Global Development programme in the School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS). Her dissertation "Hidden yet Shared: An investigation into the experiences of menstrual taboos across higher and lower income contexts," was awarded the POLIS MA Dissertation Prize for the highest grade achieved in 2017-18.

Elizabeth interviewed young women involved in Irise's work or similar projects run by other organisations in the UK and Uganda about their experiences. She found parallels between their stories, including feeling intense embarrassment at school.

"I remember I was at school and a male form tutor was teaching us about periods...we were all so embarrassed..." (UK key informant)

"the girls feel embarrassed, and especially if they have a male teacher in class. They feel so much embarrassment they will not participate." (Ugandan key informant)

Participants from both contexts also highlighted the role of the older generation in perpetuating myths.

"mum never let me wash my hair...and I've since asked her why? And she said oh I don't know but that's just what my mum told me" (UK key informant)

"we grow up listening to what the elders tell us, we think what they tell us is the truth so when they tell you a menstruating women is dirty you probably believe it... you don't know if it is true or not because in the end, you don't understand what the menstrual blood is" (Ugandan key informant)

This work suggested that understanding menstrual taboos as a phenomenon transcending the traditional developed vs developing country divides may help to address the root causes of the issue. As one UK participant noted, *"In the UK, most people look at East Africa and would say that we are far more developed, but we are in exactly the same position as most of the countries in East Africa and we're supposed to be the more developed country. How can you take the moral high ground when you also don't have a solution."*

In 2019 Irise will continue this work to understand and address menstrual stigma so that girls can access the menstrual products and information they need and feel comfortable and confident during their periods.

Developing menstrual health measures....

A key challenge that emerged from our work in Uganda between 2014-2017 was capturing girls' menstrual related absenteeism. Our research study, "Does Menstruation Matter?" in partnership with the University of Sheffield found that school registers, often considered a gold standard for measuring school attendance, were inaccurate with large amounts of missing data. On a typical day, checking entries for 803 pupils across 10 schools, 1 school was keeping no registers and for the remaining 9 schools 44% of pupils had no data recorded and 7% of entries were

inaccurate. This study also highlighted that the relationship between menstruation and girls' participation in school was more complex than previously thought. For example, girls may be in school but not in class because of their periods or they may be in class but unable to concentrate because of feelings of discomfort.

Our UK Aid Direct Project to create menstruation friendly schools trialled different ways of capturing the effect of menstruation on girls' school attendance including register data, self-reported survey data and menstrual diaries where girls can record their periods, school attendance and mood. Irise is working with a statistician at the University of Sheffield to compare the reliability of these different approaches in order to produce guidance for others wishing to monitor menstrual related absenteeism. The project also captures measures of girls' concentration, self-esteem and school performance which will be used to build a better understanding of how menstruation is affecting girls' participation in school.

Irise also became an implementing partner on a project with John Hopkins University, funded by The Case For Her, to develop a tool for measuring girls' menstrual perceptions and practices.

Objective 3: Disseminate learning and advocate for policy and practice change to improve young people's experience of menstruation in the UK and East Africa.

Disseminating learning...

Irise continues to share learning through creating resources and reports that other organisations can use, working with academia to publish research and supporting other organisations to deliver high quality menstrual health programmes.

Irise's learning and resources continues to be accessed by an increasing number of individuals and organisations. A total of 60 organisations accessed our Menstrual Health Education and Training Resources this year; 33 organisations downloaded Irise's resources with 60% reporting they intended to use them to deliver training or plan a project and 27 received copies as part of showcasing our work at the First East and Southern Africa Regional Symposium.

Our research continues to inform the work of others. Irise's pilot study, published in a peer reviewed journal, has been cited in 8 peer reviewed papers and is scoring in the top 25% of all research outputs scored by Altmetric which tracks a range of sources to capture the attention surrounding a piece of research. The associated report has been downloaded 6,430 times since it was published (1,363 times in the last year) and cited 9 times. In 2016 it was combined with a study from the University of Oxford as part of an analysis to combine existing data on the effect of menstrual health interventions on school attendance. This paper has been read by over 22,000 people and cited 24 times. A paper documenting girls' baseline experiences of menstruation in Rukungiri district in Uganda, written by a Master's student as part of her involvement in Irise's baseline data collection in 2013/14 has also been published in a peer reviewed journal and cited 24 times.

Irise continues to support other organisations to deliver and evaluate high quality menstrual health programmes. In 2018 we completed the delivery and evaluation of the menstrual health component of a Water and Sanitation Project in 6 schools in Eastern Uganda, funded by Just A Drop. We trained 46 teachers, directly taught 208 girls and 170 girls and provided 250 girls with reusable pads. Teachers mean confidence score increased from 44% to 88% following training, mean

knowledge scores increased from 48% to 84% and mean attitude scores increased from 20% to 90%. Girls and boys knowledge of menstruation also improved.

Irise shared learning and connected the community business, Easy Pad, to menstrual health projects run by The Cotton On Foundation and African Revival, reaching 3,838 and 4,600 girls with education and Easy Pad kits respectively. A Menstrual Health training course was delivered to 22 team members at Joanita International Assistance who went on to work in 5 schools reaching an estimated 500 girls.

Advocacy...

Irise's advocacy has focused on:

1. The urgent need for more high quality evidence to inform menstrual health programmes and policy
2. The need for menstrual health interventions that are community-led and address negative social norms associated with menstruation.

Irise has shared these calls to action in national and regional meetings of academics, policy makers, funders and practitioners. This advocacy has:

1. Established dialogue between practitioners and academics through the East and Southern Africa Menstrual Health Research Network, leading to the development of research that is responsive to needs of girls and their communities. For example, academics and practitioners who are part of this network have started to submit collaborative funding bids for projects to address shared priorities.
2. Created a platform for shared advocacy through the East and Southern Africa Research Network that will culminate in a high profile event to engage key stakeholders in 2019, including DFID, the World Health Organisation, UNICEF and the Wellcome Trust.
3. Led to the establishment of a network of researchers committed to understanding and dismantling menstrual stigma: <https://wash.leeds.ac.uk/stop-the-taboo/>
4. Contributed to the UK government's announcement in 2019 to end period poverty by 2030, which was announced by UK Aid Direct using pictures from Irise's projects. Irise will continue to participate in meetings to shape this emerging agenda in 2019.
5. Led to other Non-Government Organisations working in east Africa learning from and using Irise's approaches and tools.

As a result of this advocacy Irise will be part of the UK government's Period Poverty Taskforce in 2019 and will co-convene the Evidence and Data workstream. We will use this opportunity to catalyse menstrual health learning and research in the UK.

Notable engagements are summarised below:

- Irise's Director presented at the First East and Southern Africa Regional Symposium organised by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) under the theme Menstrual Health Management Education; protecting, enabling and empowering. She shared Irise's learning from developing Menstrual Health Education and Training Resources highlighting that a) social norms need to be shifted for the cycle of misinformation and myths to be broken; and b) the community (and community champions) needs to be enabled to break the cycle. She also showcased Irise's Education and Training Resources and shared copies with 27 organisations.

- Irise Uganda participated in national Menstrual Hygiene Day preparatory meetings and the National Symposium on Menstrual Hygiene Management organised by the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of Gender. The symposium was attended by 129 stakeholders representing National Ministries, local government representatives, members of parliament, UN agencies, development partners, civil society organisations, private sector, members of the Inter-Religious Council, District Education Officials, School representatives and youth representatives. During the session ten thematic Menstrual Health Research areas were introduced and participants were then asked to select 5 key research priorities, either from the overall themes or specific research priorities and questions. This exercise informed the first meeting of the East and Southern Africa Menstrual Health Research Network later in the year.
- Irise's Director responded to a Menstrual Hygiene Day editorial in The Lancet with other menstrual health experts highlighting how menstrual stigma and taboos are driving the neglect of girls' needs during menstruation and if addressed, could help to catalyse broader progress towards gender equality.

“Normalising menstruation is part of a broader agenda to normalise being a girl. The role of menstrual taboos in contributing to on-going gender inequality cannot be underestimated. Dismantling such taboos is essential to ensure safe access to products, sanitation facilities, and information. Beyond this, ending the secrecy and changing such negative social norms can simultaneously build girls' confidence and agency and create a more enabling environment for their increased autonomy.”

- Our Director also spoke at a Festival of Social Sciences event at the International Development School about the need to demystify menstruation. She spoke alongside Mandu Reid, founder of The Cup Effect and interim Leader of the Women's Equality Party and academic Dr Catherine Dolan from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS).
- Irise's work featured in two new books about menstruation. Both authors spent time visiting Irise's projects and interviewing staff in 2014. In “It's Only Blood”, Anna Dahlqvist uses Irise's work as an example of how people and organisations are fighting back against the global shame that surrounds periods. Meanwhile, “The Managed Body” by Professor Chris Bobel calls for less emphasis on product distribution and more recognition of the role of social stigma in preventing women and girls experiencing menstruation with dignity. She praises Irise's holistic, evidence based approach; “Irise provides a model of evidence-based practice, and we certainly need more projects to emulate that model.”
- Our Director was also invited to speak to DFID's Period Poverty Group about Irise's approach and priorities.



Irise Director, Emily Wilson, speaks about the importance of demystifying menstruation at an event at the International Development School

Objective 4: Expand our work to include the most marginalised and vulnerable groups

Serving the “poorest of the poor”...

Our project with Sustain for Life has enabled us to pilot our menstruation friendly school approach in Soroti District, one of the poorest parts of Uganda. Many of the girls served by our “Girls in Control” project are vulnerable to drop out and engaging in transactional sex to meet basic needs is common. This project is helping the team understand how our approach can be adapted to this context and potentially be used to support vulnerable girls at a critical window in their lives.

The project serves 13 primary schools, training 27 teachers and directly reaching 644 girls and 358 boys. Initial evaluation has shown that girls in this area require more intense support to achieve the same improvements in knowledge and confidence seen in other projects.

Case studies from the Girls in Control Project:

Susie is normalising menstruation for all girls...



“Now I feel like someone.”

Being part of Irise’s program has increased Susan’s knowledge of menstruation and her confidence. She now has “no worries” during menstruation and is grateful for Irise’s efforts to lower the price of pads and make them more accessible in her school. She laughs now, as she recalls the advice she was given before she started her first period although at the time it made her feel confused and anxious. Her increased awareness of the challenges girls face during menstruation has given her a sense of purpose because she is able to help her friends who go to schools that did not participate in the program. She has also tried to normalise the topic of menstruation at home by talking to her younger sisters about menstruation so that they will be better prepared than she was. She is adamant that her community “need to continue talking about it” so that girls get the support they need to stay in school. With Susan on the case it seems likely that the conversation will continue!

Meet Alfred is challenging myths and supporting his sisters...



“I remember when I was at primary school, there was a girl and it [menstruation] happened. People laughed and eventually she dropped out of school”.

Alfred used to get his knowledge of puberty and menstruation from his friends at home. He was told that blood from periods was dangerous and it was common for boys to laugh and humiliate young girls going through changes that the girls themselves didn’t really understand. Irise’s lessons have changed this- and made him and his friends realise that menstrual blood is not dangerous.

One of his sisters is going through puberty, and he has helped her feel comfortable about the changes she is going through- it feels good to be a supportive big brother!

Fundraising and Grassroots Advocacy

We are extremely grateful to everyone who raised funds to support us in 2018.

This year we focused on enabling the young people involved in grassroots fundraising and advocacy to lead and grow our networks. This culminated in the recruitment of a Young Trustee and Advocacy Committee in early 2019 who will take increased control of our grassroots fundraising and advocacy over the coming months.

Highlights of the year:

- Five students took part in our Agents of Change program and organised fundraisers as part of their involvement. This included cocktail nights with period themed party games and a 268 mile 3 week hike that raised funds and awareness about the negative impact of menstrual stigma.



“Alongside the physical and mental challenge we’re both undertaking, I also have to think about changing my menstrual cup - it’s not easy to do in privacy when I’m outside all day on one of the UK’s most popular walking routes! Walking across fields from our tent to the campsite toilet block in the middle of the night has also reminded me of the fact that the stigma around periods means some girls are unable to even sleep in their own homes during menstruation. This is why I want to support Irise’s brilliant work in educating and empowering women, girls and their communities around the issue of menstruation”

Sophie

- Irise’s student network, Friends of Irise, had active branches at the University of Sheffield, the University of Leeds and the University of Birmingham. Students raised funds through the Moon Rise Club night, Be Wise for Irise Pub Quizzes and the Irising Up Kinder Scout sponsored hike.



Irising up Kinder Scout (left), Moon Rise club night (right)

- We were thrilled to receive support from the Circle NGO, founded by Annie Lennox and inspired by the notion that when women come together and organise, they can be a powerful force for change. Our Director met members of the Circle at their Summer Gathering to thank them for their support.
- We raised £7,804 in the UK's largest matched funding campaign, The Christmas Big Give. Thank you to all our pledgers and supporters who helped make the campaign a success.

Staff and volunteers

The total staff count for Irise internationally at the end of 2018 was 2 full time staff in the UK and 13 full time staff in Uganda. The Ugandan team was made up entirely of Ugandan nationals.



Irise's Country Manager addresses team members and community champions

Financial Performance and Policies

Incoming Resources

Incoming resources for the year was £144,861. The distribution of the payments received is as follows: £15,871 from public donations and other income sources towards unrestricted funds and £128,990 in grants from trusts and foundations as well as £3,765 in public donations towards restricted funds.

Resources Expended

Total expenditure for the year was £121,276.

Financial Policies

Reserves Policies

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.

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 7 people who are responsible for the supervision of the management of all the affairs of Irise 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.

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 Irise 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,



28/10/2019

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF IRISE INTERNATIONAL CIO

I report on the accounts of the Irise International CIO for the period 1 January until 31 December 2018, which are set out on page 25 under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

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 next statement.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met or:

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached

Derek R. Tyler

Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales. Membership Number 7409928

Anglo Secretaries, The Great House, 1 St Peter Street, Tiverton, Devon EX16 6NY

25 October 2019



Irise International Financial Statement Jan-Dec 2018

All figures to nearest whole £

	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total	2017
Receipts				
Donations	3,765	12,105	15,871	31,675
Grants	128,990	-	128,990	21,231
Other Income	-	-	-	680
Total Receipts	132,756	12,105	144,861	53,585
Payments				
Organisational Overheads				
IT	681	120	802	90
Insurance	144	40	184	186
Rent	1,852	551	2,403	1,171
Meetings	-	376	376	180
Office Supplies	-	19	19	105
Accommodation	-	-	-	81
Core Staff	-	14,552	14,552	14,905
Transport	-	287	287	1,077
Total organisational Overheads	2,677	15,946	18,623	17,795
Fundraising	-	925	925	1,212
Project Spending				
Grants	56,681	539	57,220	48,581
Staff	37,958	-	37,958	20,809
Other project Spending	5,571	-	5,571	400
Total Project Spending	100,210	539	100,749	69,790
Computer Equipment	979	-	979	246
Other equipment	-	-	-	44
Total Payments	103,867	17,409	121,276	89,087
Net of Receipts	28,889	-5,304	23,585	-35,501
Cash funds last year end	6,192	7,941	14,133	49,634
Cash funds this year end	35,081	2,637	37,718	14,133