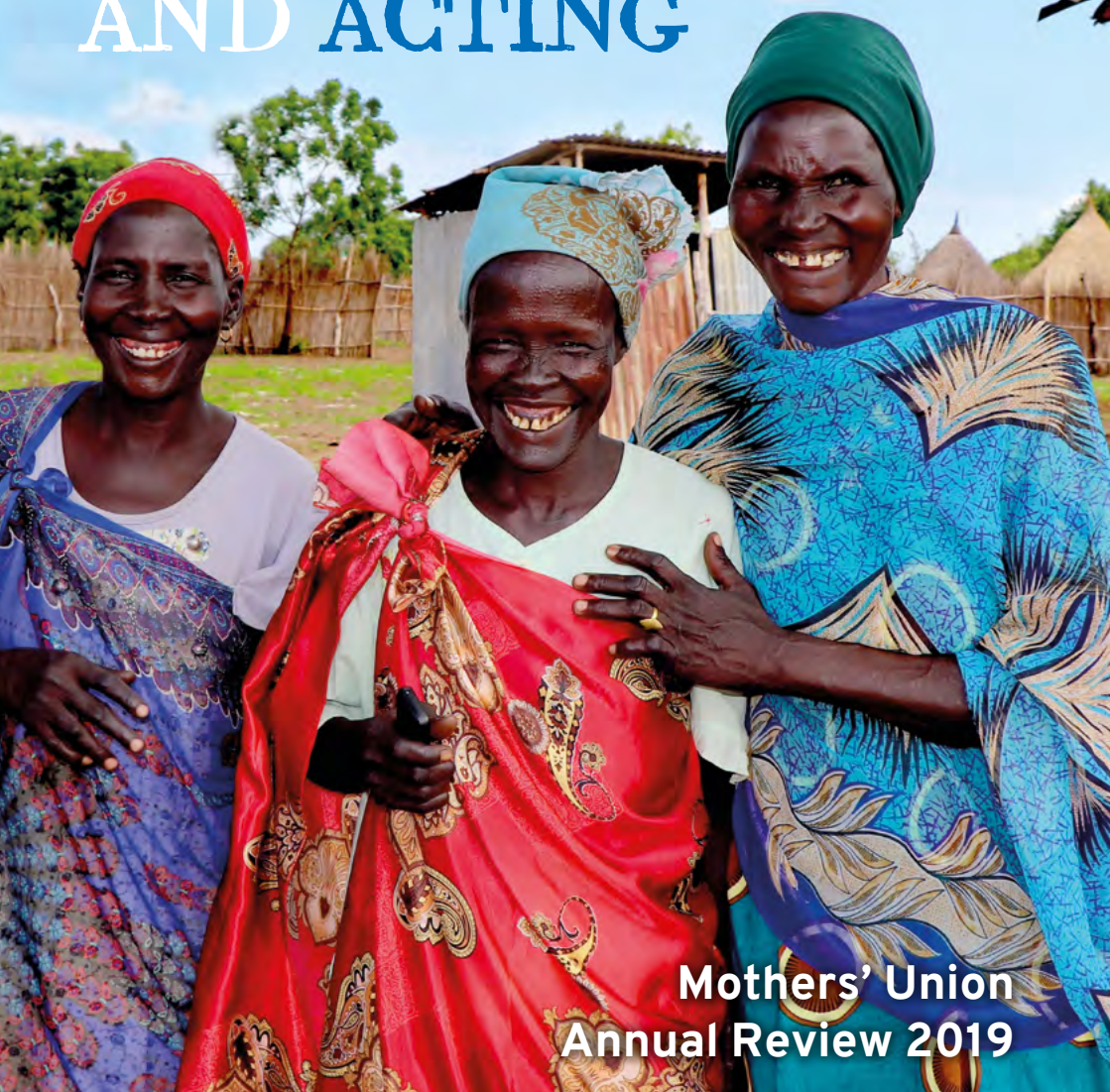


LISTENING, OBSERVING AND ACTING



**Mothers' Union
Annual Review 2019**

WHO WE ARE

Mothers' Union is a global Christian movement brought together in care and compassion.

We are 4 million members in 84 countries who help the world's hardest to reach communities to transform their lives.

Because we believe that when people come together to solve local challenges, amazing things can happen.

OUR VALUES

Throughout our work, we are:

- non-judgemental
- loving and compassionate
- persevering
- bold

We work with people of all faiths and none, often reaching people who others cannot. Our door is always open. We welcome people from all walks of life and offer whatever help is needed, to whoever needs it, whenever it is needed.

Her Majesty the Queen is our Royal Patron.

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It's like throwing a stone in the water and seeing the ripples. I've gone from feeling I can't do anything to realising that although my "stone" is small, it is creating ripples as I use my skills to help others.'

Mothers' Union member
Karen from Portsmouth



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HOW WE WORK

Our members work in their local communities to support marginalised people. We work with people to help build their hope and confidence, solve their problems and transform their lives in lasting ways.

Our approach is led by people's needs. We listen to them, observe their circumstances and then we take action together to overcome their challenges.

Our members also contribute to our global movement to do God's work and bring about positive change, through practical support and advocacy. We partner with churches, leaders, other organisations and governments to increase our impact.

We're helping build a future where everyone thrives. To help achieve that, we strive to stop violence, injustice and hunger, and help people increase their self-reliance.

We focus our work on three inter-linked areas:

- Stopping violence through peace & safety
- Stopping injustice through gender justice
- Stopping hunger and increasing self-reliance



I see Mothers' Union doing so much in the UK and beyond for people who are most in need. You are wonderful servants of Jesus Christ, and I rejoice in your work.

The worse the crisis, the more the light of Mothers' Union shines. Your work is essential and you have shown for many decades your capacity to adapt and evolve. May God be with you and encourage you to flourish.'

The Most Revd And Right Hon Lord
Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this review of Mothers' Union worldwide in 2019. During this historic year, we 'walked in the footsteps' of our founder, Mary Sumner, and completed a two-year, global process of listening to God, the

communities where we live, and over 200,000 fellow members. This process helped us to renew our purpose for the 21st century, while remaining inspired by our founder's vision 140 years ago.

The highlight was in June when, under the leadership of our first ever Worldwide President from outside the UK, Sheran Harper from Guyana, 76 Mothers' Union leaders from 30 countries came together in Rwanda to set the future direction for our movement. Reflecting the approach that our members take in their communities, this process was based on listening to our members, observing and then acting.

We looked at how we should work together, and our strategic plan for 2019–2026.

Together, we affirmed three main goals for the future – to transform lives by creating an environment that is peaceful and safe for all, where livelihoods are secure and where gender justice is a reality.



And we identified ways to transform lives around the world, nurture our global family of members, strengthen our governance, and reinforce our worldwide network of mutual support and learning.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, these foundations built and bonds strengthened in 2019 are already helping our members to work together and with others to ensure that we 'build back better'.

**Thank you for your
interest in our work.**

Sheran Harper
Worldwide President

Bev Jullien
CEO

OUR IMPACT IN 2019



1.1m people worldwide

were helped to improved their lives in 2019



2,490 people

from the UK and Ireland enjoyed one of our Away From It All breaks, to support families under stress

77,988 people



are currently learning to read and write in Burundi

29,751 vulnerable people

received a gift from us to meet an urgent need, such as clothing for a refugee or supplies for a new baby



Our work reached almost **8,000 prisoners**

and their families in Britain and Ireland in 2019, providing a listening ear, safe spaces and resources for families, and practical support

831 is the number of Saving groups we have in Rwanda with over £322,000 saved



80% of our 187 savings groups

in Tanzania with 3,900 members already give to their community or plan to do so

11 the age of our youngest branch co-leader, 'Mini MU' in Liverpool

15 members

of the Mothers' Union branch based in a Durham prison

STOPPING VIOLENCE AND BUILDING PEACE

Mothers' Union members are helping to decrease gender-based violence around the world. This includes:

- tackling domestic violence and violence against children
- helping to protect people from harmful practices
- facilitating conflict resolution and healing from trauma

In 2019, 58% of our members felt that people they assisted benefited from less conflict in their family, home or community. And 59% felt the people they supported experienced less violence or harmful practices towards women and children.



Building peace & safety in South Sudan

South Sudan has experienced years of civil war and ethnic conflict, leading to around 400,000 deaths and over 4 million people fleeing to new areas or even neighbouring countries. This conflict and displacement has increased violence against women.

In South Sudan, women and girls are traditionally involved in collecting water and firewood, and growing food. Many are scared to do these essential tasks because of the risk of being attacked. Less cultivation means that some previously self-supporting communities now require food aid.

'We briefed the Bishop and archdeacons about our time in Arua. We then put a plan together to help them with their challenges. We are really seeing the result. There is now some hope.'

Tereza, Rejaf Diocese

In February, we held a two-week workshop in Arua for 160 Mothers' Union leaders and community coordinators from across South Sudan. The event aimed to help these women build a peaceful future by facilitating healing, building reconciliation between conflicting tribes and strengthening their ministry.

Through group activities, Bible studies and sharing their experiences, workshop participants built relationships and devised community action plans to build peace and reduce gender-based violence.

Now, these plans are being put into action in churches and communities across South Sudan. To reinforce this, we will train 36 Mothers' Union leaders – three from each province – so they can pass on skills locally.

'Now, all the tribes are meeting. Women bring peace together. Peace is now there. Men see women are strong now. MULOA [our Mothers' Union Listens, Observes and Acts approach] has taught us to come together and do good things in our community.'

Adut, Twic East Diocese

Case study: Women peacekeepers in Kenya

In Sarah's* remote region of Kenya, seven main tribes – predominately nomadic – face daily challenges in accessing food and water, and regularly experience violent conflict over scarce resources. The government struggles to intervene.

Sarah and her fellow Mothers' Union members come from the different tribes and are striving to bring peace

to their communities. They discuss important issues, build relationships between tribes and promote reconciliation. They act as mediators and help to diffuse tensions. Through Mothers' Union and the Church, these inspirational women are building peace and hope for the future.

**Not her real name*





STOPPING GENDER INJUSTICE

We all know that women and girls face many injustices. Mothers' Union plays a unique role in helping to overcome this across the world. We work with women and men to instil more respect for women and girls, and more equal relationships between the sexes. We also empower women and girls, help them enhance their skills, and enable them to have more influence.

Making women's voices heard at the UN



As well as working in communities, we also represent women's concerns at the highest levels. In 2019, Mothers' Union staff and our All Ireland

President June Butler MBE attended the latest UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York, to contribute to influential debates on women's empowerment and its links to sustainable development.

Campaigning to end gender-based violence

Around the world, we work with other organisations and groups to increase our effectiveness. Each year, our members contribute to the international campaign 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. In 2019, members in seven countries joined in this campaign, raising vital awareness of gender-based violence and our work to tackle this problem. In Barbados, our members marched for change. In the UK, dioceses such as Sheffield and Birmingham held vigils and ran information stands to raise awareness.

Literacy and financial education

Challenges including discrimination, poverty, early marriage and gender-based violence mean that many women do not receive a full education. Even today, 132 million girls are missing out on school.

Poor literacy is one of the biggest hurdles women and girls face in escaping poverty and gender-based violence. Linked to low self-esteem and status, poor literacy means that women and girls in many countries are excluded from key decisions that affect their lives. For example, they may not have a say in how household income is spent or who should represent their community. This creates a vicious cycle that limits women's lives.

That's why we run literacy and financial education programmes for women and girls. These focus on building business skills and establishing community savings groups. This helps women to gain personal and financial independence, and the confidence to speak out. As women gain knowledge, income and status through these initiatives, men and women both value women more, helping to improve equality.

Case study: women's literacy in Ethiopia

Our literacy programme in Ethiopia has empowered women in multiple ways, transforming their lives. For example, 25 female literacy trainees have used their new skills and confidence to become lay readers.

This increases women's influence in the church, and shows men, women, girls and boys what women can achieve.

Rebecca explains the impact of her new literacy skills:

I can read the Bible now. I can also lead the worship and liturgy. I feel happy and proud. Before, it was just a dream. [The training] is not only about literacy. We learn about relationships, nutrition and hygiene. It has really reduced illness and sickness of our children. We also learn about cultivation and keeping our children strong.'





'I was not able to educate my child because I had no money. Group members [gave] me a loan to pay the fees, buy uniform, exercise books, pens. The group helped me to educate my child.'

Agnes, Central Tanganyika diocese

STOPPING HUNGER AND INCREASING SELF-RELIANCE

Mothers' Union equips people with knowledge and life skills so they can access their rights, protect their health, earn an income and make positive choices to support themselves and their families.

Savings groups

Since 2014, Mothers' Union has enabled over 32,500 people around the world to join community saving and loan groups to improve their financial security.

In June, we held four-day refresher training for our savings and credit groups across Tanzania, which have achieved inspiring results.

As of July 2019, the 187 groups had 3,900 members and total savings of 602 million Tanzanian shillings (around £209,000). 80% already give to the community or plan to do so.

One group donated money to build a new classroom at a local school, and bought essential supplies for an orphanage and a special needs centre.

Savings groups mean their members can start or expand small businesses and livelihoods through savings or affordable loans. A group in Tanga started a chair hire enterprise, members in Kiteto established a soap business and a farmer from Ruaha was able to purchase more land. As a result, many more people can educate their children or feed their families regular nutritious meals.

Metamorphosis

Our community transformation programme Metamorphosis uses participatory activities, including prayer and Bible study, to help people make positive changes in their communities.

Starting in Oxford and Ely dioceses with funding from the Church of England's Strategic Development Fund, Metamorphosis expanded to Portsmouth Diocese in 2019. This has increased individuals' skills and confidence, strengthened community togetherness and improved people's wellbeing. It has also boosted Mothers' Union and church membership locally.

In Oxford, the programme has strengthened relationships between several village churches and with the wider community. In Wisbech, new or expanded services arising from Metamorphosis include family fun days and care groups to look after lonely and elderly people.

These activities are based on local needs. For example, coffee mornings were started so that parents and carers could socialise cheaply and provide mutual support. In

the weekly meetings, people have discussed issues such as how they can escape poverty.

'We're not the same group of people we were when we started we're now filled with hope and excitement.'

Wisbech Metamorphosis participant

Mothers' Union members Elizabeth, Karen and Carol established the holiday hunger project. Elizabeth explains,

'If I hadn't been to the [Metamorphosis] workshops, I would never have got this project up and running. The workshops gave me the confidence to give it a go.'

Carol adds, 'I love meeting the mums and their children, and thinking together how we can help each other.'



Case study: Transforming lives in Portsmouth

Within weeks of starting Metamorphosis, Portsmouth Diocese created a new winter night shelter and a holiday hunger scheme for vulnerable families with school-age children.

NURTURING MEMBERSHIP

No one should face challenges alone. Fellowship inspires us to help others. By joining together, we can share strength and skills to help create a world free of hunger, violence and injustice.

Over 4 million members in 84 countries use their time and resources so that people now and in future generations can flourish. We continue to work with, and for, our members to increase their numbers, reach and impact.

‘We must all move together, not leaving behind any member.’

Former Provincial President Mary Vunagi, celebrating 100 years of Mothers’ Union in the Pacific Ocean region Melanesia

Worldwide Council

From February 2017 to June 2019, over 200,000 members from across the world took part in Mothers’ Union Listens Observes and Acts (MULOA) workshops. This process clarified our identity, purpose and processes. At our Worldwide Council in Rwanda, leaders from 30 countries reviewed MULOA findings and other data to develop our global 2019–2026 strategy. This will help us move forward as a single movement, connected by faith.



Thy Kingdom Come

We were delighted to be a part of the global wave of prayer Thy Kingdom Come. This centred around a service at Coventry Cathedral that brought together 1,600 members from across the world, either in person or online.

Case study: Mini MU

When Liverpool-based Mothers’ Union leader Dianne set up a craft corner to entertain children during meetings. This inspired the children to set up their very own ‘Mini MU’.

Mini MU’s launch event featured a dance routine choreographed and performed by the children. Dianne comments, ‘It was wonderful to see the children work together and look after one another. Our hopes are that Mini MU and the adult branch create a real family movement.’

Under branch leaders Rosa (12) and Ella (11), Mini MU has many plans, including an environmental campaign.

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Built on firm foundations

Our central Mothers' Union charity supports and coordinates our members' work around the world. Led by our Global Trustee Board, a small staff team based in London provides expertise in fundraising, communications, finance, policy and programme management.

Strengthening our systems

We are committed to high standards of financial management, governance and quality control in everything we do.

In 2019, we invested in systems to support our members and improve the strength, effectiveness and impact of their work. This will bear fruit in years to come.

We started to modernise our IT infrastructure to facilitate communication across our movement. And we initiated a common approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning. This will help our members to learn from their peers across the world.

At our Worldwide Council, we approved a safeguarding statement that will apply in all countries in contextually appropriate ways.

Deepening relationships within the Anglican Communion

Through our practical ministry and compassionate care, we work closely with clergy and lay members to help connect people to God, faith and church.

In 2019, we continued to strengthen our partnerships within the Anglican Communion. We were delighted that our Worldwide President Sheran Harper was invited to deliver the opening address at General Synod, the national assembly of the Church of England, reaching a huge audience and receiving a standing ovation. Sheran also contributed to two General Synod debates, emphasising the commitment of our members and the importance of lay volunteers.

Our CEO Bev Jullien and a small team of staff and trustees supported Sheran at General Synod. They networked with clergy and laity, building valuable relationships and increasing awareness of our work. Our Fringe Meeting on our 'Metamorphosis' programme (see page 11) attracted a full house and positive feedback.



ACCESSING NECESSARY RESOURCES



For the second year running, 2019 saw the movement achieve an underlying operational surplus. Whilst £11,129 is not enormous, it was a pleasing result in line with budgeted expectations and was achieved despite a challenging fundraising environment. The result therefore stands as a testament to the ability of the charity to respond to unforeseen circumstances and maintain financial viability.

This operational surplus was accompanied by significant positive movements in investment asset values, resulting in an overall reported surplus of £454,043. Whilst this surplus served to strengthen the financial position of the charity, continued investment in strategically vital projects, like the Mary Sumner House plans, has placed continued pressure on reserves and cashflow.

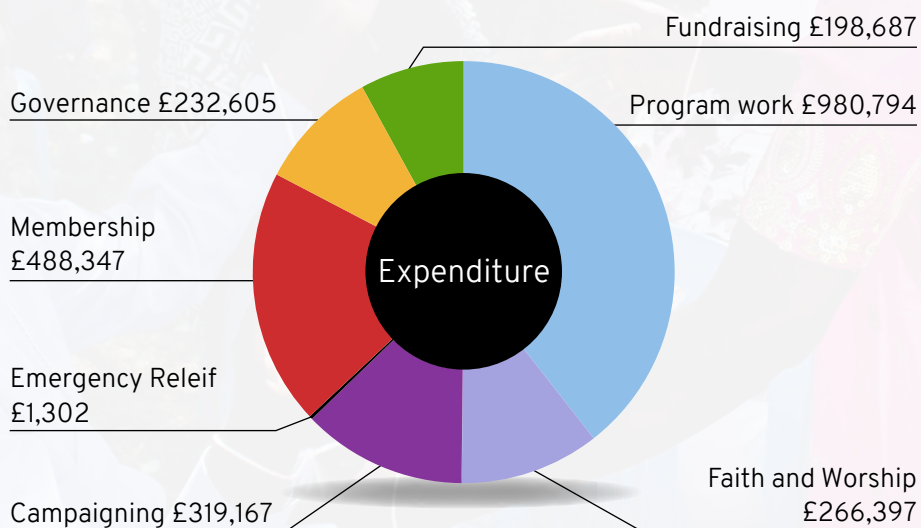
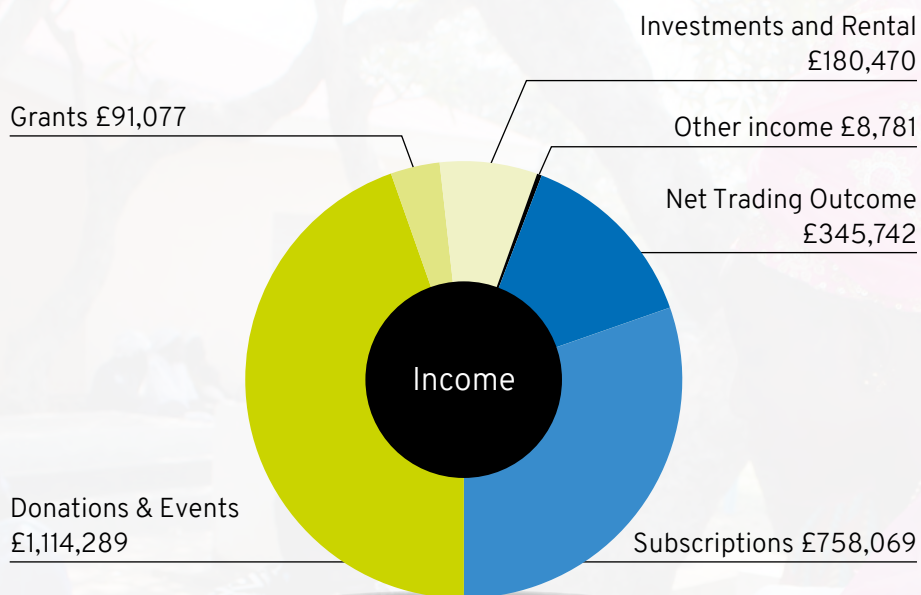
Contributions of various forms of member generated income including subs and, most notably, donations and legacies were approximately 19% down in total compared to 2018.

This is only partly related to member number declines of approximately 6%. Challenging conditions in these areas were offset by improved performance from our conferencing operations, evidence of our ongoing development of non-member driven revenue streams.

The income shortfalls referenced above necessitated reductions in expenditure to ensure ongoing sustainability. Despite the cuts, over £980K was spent supporting programme work around the world, £319k on campaigning and policy and over £750k supporting our membership and providing faith and fellowship support. The impact of this spending is self-evident elsewhere in this review.

Spending on emergency Relief activities was temporarily paused to enable the Development Committee to perform a detailed review of that fund. Following this review spending in this area will now recommence but the restricted fund will now be closed to new donations by the end of 2020.

The Movement can once again be rightly proud of the efficiency with which these impacts have been achieved. Support, Governance and Fundraising costs continue to compare favourably with other similar global organisations.



Outcome from operations £11,129



THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who supported our work around the world in any way in 2019.

Particular thanks to our donors and funding partners, who enable our members to help people transform their lives.

Our heartfelt thanks to all of our members and supporters. You are central to our movement and everything we achieve.

Please get in touch and get involved

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