

2021 ANNUAL REVIEW

Inspiring communities
worldwide through
faith in action



WHO WE ARE

Mothers' Union is a global family committed to sharing God's love through practical action, spiritual sustenance and compassion.

As an international Christian movement, our 4 million members across 84 countries work together to help transform lives in the world's hardest-to-reach families and communities.

With kindness, courage and compassionate action, we will not stop until we live in a world free of violence, poverty and injustice, where everyone can thrive.

We work with people of all faiths and none. We welcome people from all walks of life to join us, and we offer whatever help is needed, to whoever needs it, whenever it is needed. We believe that when people come together to solve challenges, amazing things can happen.



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"Mothers' Union representatives, in the UK and over 80 countries worldwide, are beacons of hope for so many in the communities they serve. They spread the good news of Jesus Christ, helping with a myriad of practical tasks and being generous with their time and gifts, all to improve the lives of others. I pray that the Mothers' Union will grow in strength and membership; may its work flourish at the grassroots, national and international level."

The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby



HOW WE WORK

For nearly 150 years Mothers' Union has worked with communities in the UK and around the world to tackle poverty, violence and social injustice. We believe that faith and compassion have the power to change lives. We work in three core areas to help communities transform:

Stopping Violence – through Peace & Safety

Stopping Injustice – through Gender Justice

Stopping Hunger and Increasing Self-Reliance

We are led by people's needs, wherever they reside. We listen first, understand their circumstances and then act, together with them, offering practical support supported by advocacy to overcome their challenges and deliver long-lasting change.

Our members, as volunteers, support survivors of domestic abuse, refugees, prisoners and any other individuals and families in need.

We also run programmes with communities to help them transform their lives sustainably – for example, through literacy and savings programmes, parenting and resilience training.

We are driven by our faith yet work with people of all beliefs and none, partnering with churches, other organisations, and governments to increase our impact.

**Stopping Hunger and
Increasing Self-Reliance**



**Stopping
Violence**

through Peace
& Safety

**Stopping
Injustice**

through Gender
Justice

**In 2021, we
supported**

1.94 million
people worldwide.

In 2021, we marked the 145 year anniversary of our founding and 100 years since the death of Mary Sumner, with a service of thanksgiving in August.

WORLDWIDE PRESIDENT'S

2021 was, in many ways, a pivotal time for the MU, like many charitable organisations. In one way we settled into new ways of being, supporting others or working together more closely as we embraced the virtual world, but for many the slow vaccine roll out has meant that daily life remained far from normal whilst the 'shadow pandemic' of a reported rise in domestic abuse continued and continues to cast a cloud over women's daily lives.

Women have lost their livelihoods, their children are hungry, they are anxious and fearful and some have lost homes or livelihoods as a result of ongoing environmental challenges or social unrest. Many are seeing a dramatic downward spiral in their living conditions which, if global instability continues, is likely to be exacerbated.

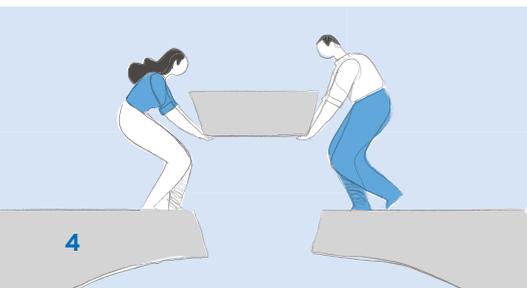
To address this, the MU believes that building bridges and networking are of paramount importance to the advancement of an inclusive and just world where all women and girls are respected in society. We call on global leaders, NGOs and other organisation to work in partnership with us – and other faith-based organisations - to help overturn culturally embedded gender injustices and facilitate transformation, so that women, children and their communities thrive.



We need to
look at life
through a
new lens

There is much to rejoice in. We can take pride that we have made great inroads in helping redress the gender imbalance in sub-Saharan Africa, that our literacy and financial programmes are lifting women and their families out of poverty and, that MU has been effective in the heart of communities in continuing to counter Covid misinformation and building trust with those in greatest need.

We continue to break down global barriers and unite women in causes that matter to them like mental health,



WELCOME



parenting, gender inequality, disaster risk reduction and the environment, tackling them together. For example, our flagship project addressing mental health in Kenya is being well received.

Women and girls have a central role to play in caring for our beautiful world and those who live in it and, thanks to our vast network of volunteers across five continents, MU members can help bring about positive change in the hardest-to-reach communities like no other organisation can.

I am delighted to have the opportunity to serve Mothers' Union for the next three years as Worldwide President adhering to Mary Sumner's vision of women supporting each other fuelled by Christian values. Together, we are empowered to face the future with renewed vigour and optimism.

With God's blessing, as always.

Sheran Harper, Worldwide President

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

Surviving and Thriving

The theme for Mothers' Union for 2021, as we came through the most critical phase of the pandemic, was "survive and thrive" – to refocus our work and resources, to make the most of a reduced central team (reduced from 40 to 25 to survive the acute phase) and support the membership in the UK and around the world as they adjusted to both further waves of COVID and living with the disease.

It was also the second year of our Strategic Plan, created by the worldwide membership at the end of 2019. Whilst it was necessary to make some adjustments for timing (for example, some programme work was unable to advance as expected due to sickness and inability to travel), circumstances forced us to progress much faster than would otherwise have been possible in connecting digitally, strengthening the bonds of Christian fellowship around the world. Our members, many of whom had been trained as facilitators through programme work, and were known and trusted in their communities, were able to be active in combatting misinformation about COVID and vaccinations, as well as providing ongoing education, for example, on hand hygiene and mask-wearing.

Transforming Lives

The 3 key pillars in our strategic plan established in 2019 are: stopping hunger, stopping injustice and stopping violence. All programme work and central support, and the myriad of small acts undertaken by members in their communities every day, is oriented towards these ultimate goals, based on listening and responding to need in each community.

Nearly 450,000 lives were directly impacted by members around the world whilst we also supported 1.4 million indirectly through our grassroots initiatives – working in prisons, building resilience against climate change, supporting families, and educating about health.

In addition, the new, monthly video calls with leaders from across the world have meant that MU has been able to respond fast to issues (for example, providing feedback to the WHO on grassroots issues, and sourcing information from them to "myth-bust" about vaccinations) – and also to prioritise new development programmes. The new "MU Live" approach to data capture has meant that our ability to capture and share stories around the world has greatly improved.

The "shadow pandemic" of Gender Based Violence (GBV)

Sadly, around the world, a consequence of the pandemic was an increase in gender based violence. MU has always been active in speaking out against GBV, and in 2021 we moved towards campaigning against the issue for 365 days a year, beyond the traditional UN 16 Days of Activism.

In the UK, with others, MU continued to campaign for the Domestic Abuse Bill to be as inclusive as possible and called for the Government to ratify the Istanbul Convention, also providing input to the government consultation on Violence against Women and Girls. Members also continued to provide support to refugees across the UK.

In addition, based on insights on the global call about the impact of the pandemic on domestic abuse, for example resulting in an increase in teenage pregnancies and single mothers, a 3-country programme of awareness, support and prevention was prepared to start in 2022 in South Africa, Uganda and Kenya.

Building resilience and responding to need

In Madagascar, which has been badly affected by drought and hurricanes, MU members have worked with communities to build resilience, for example helping to create a pipeline to bring water to an area which enabled the community to harvest sweet potato for the first time in 10 years. In a number of countries, Mothers' Union works through literacy and savings and credit programmes to enable women to earn a sustainable living to support their families, often resulting in them taking on leadership roles in their communities. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, practical agricultural skills training have been added to MU programmes, so that women can feed their families and also sell produce to local markets.

As conflict and climate change increasingly cause forced migration, MU members focus on supporting those forced to leave their homes. In the UK, for example, working with others in their communities to support refugees from Syria and Afghanistan.

Nurturing Membership

MU is a global community inspired by their Christian faith to take action – and nurturing and supporting one another is a key part of what we do.

In 2021, a new membership publication was launched, Connected, sent directly to the doormats of all members and supporters in Britain and Ireland, telling stories from around the corner and around the world, helping members to stay in touch, and including topics for local action and worship

As well as the regular global video-calls, there were on-line services for key events, such as Thy Kingdom Come and a service to mark the 100th Anniversary of our founder, Mary Sumner. Furthermore, everyday members come together for on-line Facebook live midday prayers, each of which, over time, reach thousands of members and their families and friends.





Building Firm Foundations

In the strategic plan, we committed to strengthening all aspects of support for the movement, and in 2021 significant progress was made in improving the current database to enhance communications, and preparing for the implementation of a new Finance System in 2022.

There was an increased focus on safeguarding across all areas of work, and the decision taken to invite external experts to join the Safeguarding Committee, and to appoint a dedicated Safeguarding Officer in 2022.

Staff moved towards hybrid working after lockdown, with 2 days per week in the office and effective use of laptops, Teams and Zoom for agile working, also enhancing staff wellbeing. IT support was outsourced, to facilitate ongoing modernisation and enhance cyber security.

In 2021, the 3-yearly (“triennial”) elections for the Worldwide Board were held for the first time through an external specialist platform, which improved governance. We are delighted that the Worldwide President and all those Trustees who were eligible, were elected for a second 3-year term.

We are also delighted that planning permission was granted for the renovation of our headquarters, Mary Sumner House.

Accessing Necessary Resources

We are pleased that we were able to deliver a surplus on operations in 2021, enabling us to build resilience for the future. This was, however, largely achieved through excellent cost management. Our income was £2.24m, a decline of 33% from 2019, due to the connected challenges of a continuing slow decline in the UK membership, fundraising events continuing to be limited by pandemic restrictions, and a major loss of income from our premises, through meeting room hire. On the positive side, our partnership work, for example with Five Talents and ERD, increased, enabling critical development programme work to be undertaken.

In 2022 and beyond, strengthening revenue and increasing partnerships will be a priority. The options for ensuring that Mary Sumner House as an asset can generate sustainable net income for the Charity will also be revisited, as the market adjusts to a new normal post pandemic, and we will be recruiting a Head of Membership to refresh and transform our membership offering, as we move to the theme for the next 3 years of “Transformation – now!”

*With thanks for your ongoing prayers and support -
Bev Jullien*

OUR GLOBAL CAMPAIGNING WORK

MAKING OUR VOICES HEARD

The Mothers' Union has a history of speaking out on important issues affecting women worldwide such as gender violence and inequality and oppression. 2021 was no exception with a number of new initiatives rising to prominence:

Standing Against Domestic Abuse

Members were encouraged to write to their MPs and Dioceses to their Bishops to emphasise the Mothers' Union support for the Domestic Abuse Bill.

An estimated 2.3 million adults aged 16-74 years in the UK experienced domestic abuse in the year to March 2020 (1.6 million women and 757,000 men) according to government figures.

The Bill emphasised that domestic abuse is not just physical violence but can also be emotional, controlling, coercive or economic and set out to protect and support victims and their families, transform the justice process, effectively deal with perpetrators and improve responses across all agencies to domestic abuse. For the first time, children were recognised as survivors

Our template letter was downloaded over 600 times from our website and MU and other agencies obviously had an impact with the landmark bill passing into legislation on 29th April 2021. Our thanks go to Victoria Atkins, Minister for Safeguarding for driving through the bill.

Our work is continuing to ensure that resource is provided to implement the Bill, especially services in the community and ensuring protections are extended to all victims, regardless of their immigration status. We are also calling with others for our government to ratify the Istanbul Convention in June 2022 which sets out standards for countering violence against women worldwide.

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Mothers' UNION **#NoMore1in3**

End abuse and violence now

No More 1 in 3

This year we held our Global Day on Saturday 27th November advocating for 'No more 1 in 3', as part of our participation in 16 days of Activism against gender-based violence.



1 in 3 women worldwide continue to experience domestic or sexual abuse which we believe is abhorrent and must be urgently addressed. With global lockdowns sometimes referred to as a shadow pandemic, with increasing levels of domestic violence reported, this campaign is as critical as ever.

This year, from Auckland to Angola, 90% of MU overseas participated in their communities alongside MU UK members in cathedrals, branches and their own homes who marked the day by wearing a purple scarf, saying prayers and many also holding a three minute silence at 1.03pm, calling for action nationally and internationally.

90% of MU overseas participated in their communities alongside MU UK members



standing against domestic abuse



Global Day Auckland

Anti-Slavery Day

To mark Anti-Slavery Day in the UK, a number of MU members from Bristol, Chester, Oxford and Manchester dioceses, knitted giant crochet chains to symbolise and remember the unseen victims of modern day slavery.

Bristol's giant chain contained 951 chain links representing the estimated 951 victims of modern slavery in Bristol today and was unveiled during an anti-slavery day service at Bristol Cathedral on Sunday 17th October. Manchester, Chester and Oxford had 112, 947 and 752 links respectively in their chains.

The idea stemmed from a close partnership with The Clewer initiative, both united in the goal to raise awareness of modern day slavery and end the practice.

UNCSW

In March, 26 MU members from nine different countries attended the virtual United National Commission on the Status of Women conference with its focus on gender equality and women's rights. A chance to contribute to discussions alongside government ministers, other NGOs and UN delegates regarding issues affecting the rights of women and girls, we called for improved financial backing and the need to implement international agreements, emphasising how we help by transforming culturally embedded gender injustices and facilitating change.



Matito Lechoano, member of the Diocese of the Free State, South Africa, attended

"I recognised that we need to use the 'time travel method' to address the challenges of today by using the experiences of the past, giving people a safe space to reflect and move forward. We need to nurture young girls and give them access to education to drive forward change."

Global Outreach

Our president, Sheran Harper, spoke at the **'Building Fraternity, Defending Justice'** conference last summer which looked at the challenges facing the Island people in the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Oceans. A joint project between the Anglican Centre in Rome and the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, Sheran spoke of the need to take seven steps to instigate change, in cooperation with governments, NGOs and society: Creating stable Livelihoods; Generating reconciliation and peace; giving voice and influence to women and girls; promoting literacy and education; sharing positive gender roles; taking action against gender-based violence and protecting the environment.



Marie-Pierrette Bezara a Mothers' Union member from the Indian Ocean said,

"Life is a huge struggle so it is important for us to collaborate with the Church and other Organisations to uplift the lives of Island people. It would be effective if there are strong relationships existing between Insular States so that bridges could be built for regional cooperation."

GENDER JUSTICE IN ACTION



According to the World Health Organisation, one in three women world-wide has experienced domestic, physical and sexual violence – a shocking statistic that is reported to have increased following mandatory lockdowns - ‘the shadow pandemic’ as highlighted by the UN and other organisations.

We continue to campaign vociferously to end abuse and violence directed at women and girls. This takes all form from tackling cultural taboos and long-held traditions in close-knit communities to promoting women’s rights and equal division of labour, encouraging literacy and numeracy amongst women, improving women’s self-esteem and reducing isolation and running projects such as safeguarding and trauma healing to help those who have been affected. These are always with the full-consent of women affected and led by their requirements, putting in the right measures to break the cycle of gender-based abuse.

Breaking the Chains of Silence

The MU Diocese of Saldanha Bay in Southern Africa partnered with the TAMAR ministry which uses biblical study, of **2 Samuel: 13** to break the silence and educate men, women and children about gender based violence.

Action needed to be taken as the local Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital in Cape town reported 226 cases of child abuse in early 2020. The MU members and TAMAR group decided to use puppetry to help parents and children understand gender-based violence. Both the children and adults engaged with the appealing characters and, through them, observed imaginative role play and were able to ask pertinent questions relating to GBV. The initiative has given community members the tools to question violence in their midst and is expected to reduce incidents going-forward.

Domestic Abuse – supporting survivors

MU branches continue to support women affected by domestic violence by providing support for those trying to build new lives in and beyond refuges. In Northern Ireland in Armagh and Down and Dromore, MU members collected many essential items including saucepans, pots, cutlery, groceries, toiletries, toys, teddies bedding and nightdresses – the latter were new from a member’s own shop.

MU Manchester President, Christine Sharp, who ran a similar initiative said,

‘I’m so pleased and feel humbled that we can bring a little light into people’s lives and keep a family unit together.’

Meanwhile, Bolton MU donates items to the Fortalice refuge which houses over 60 women and children, whilst also creating positivity packs which contain activities for mums and children to complete together.





Thursdays in Black Campaign

This campaign, again in South Africa, promotes awareness-raising about GBV and supports victims of both abuse and violence, supporting them and, if necessary helping them start a new life.

“Victims are stigmatised”, said Thembsie Mchunu, MU zonal trustee and MU member since 1978.

The campaign, supported by the Archbishop of South Africa, **Thabo Makgoba** and his bishops, is helping to educate members about the different signs of abuse and in the future will set up support groups and counsel those who are ready to speak out.

Most cases of sexual abuse take place by relatives and the majority of GBV by partners. MU members are drawing attention to this by going into schools to educate children and encourage them to speak out and seek support if they are affected.

On Thursdays, Thembsie and MU members symbolically dress in black and visit community groups to find out what they might need whilst often supporting women with provision of toiletries or sanitary items. They also help women who have suffered to establish a new life.

Saturday group for girls in Ethiopia to prevent early marriage

Awar Othow Odol, an MU coordinator and graduate of the local Anglican theological college, is running groups each Saturday morning across Gambella town, Ethiopia to help young girls build a bright future. The group discuss ways to prevent early marriage and learn all about puberty, menstruation and sex. Traditional culture tells girls they shouldn't leave their houses when on their periods and this is discussed and challenged whilst underwear and sanitary pads are provided to help the girls take more control of their wellbeing. Early marriage can increase the risk of death in childbirth and also leads to girls dropping out of school especially if they are pregnant.

Awar herself was forced to marry at 17 and so is keen to pass on her knowledge

“If I had training like this, my life would have been very different.” I give Saturdays to the girls so they have the best future and a good life and avoid experiencing all that I did.

Nuch, 17, said

“I thank God for this opportunity to learn as I didn't get it in school. I want to give thanks to Awar - the training she has given me I didn't ever receive from my mum. I want it to continue and I want more for my life.”



RALLYING INTO ACTION TO PROMOTE PEACE AND SAFETY

Ensuring women and girls live in a community where they can feel safe remains a pressing concern of MU. Too many females still live in places, in both emerging and developed countries, where conflict is part of their everyday existence – from violence in the home to conflicts over land or resources to tribal warfare.

Abuse is often linked to traditions, poor education or financial insecurity, and MU members are there to support women to recover and equip themselves for the future. Tactics include talking therapies, praying, conflict resolution workshops and trauma healing groups to help rebuild trust.



Opening Arms to Afghan Refugees

Norwich MU has partnered with other charities and faith organisations to campaign for Norwich to be a City of Sanctuary promoting a culture of welcome for refugees and asylum seekers. The Diocese worked with the County Council to 'Make up the beds.'

Initially, the group supported Syrian refugees but in Summer 2021, they chose to help families escaping from Afghanistan. The team helps get properties ready for refugees making them as homely as possible, buying bedding and making up beds so the recipients can relax when they arrive and feel safe.

The care includes thoughtful touches such as good quality waterproof mattresses in case children wet the bed, prayer mats provided by the local mosque and teddies for the children, all paid for through fundraising by the MU branch.

'What is appropriate. What is helpful. We need to show them love and welcome,'

says Jenny Holcombe, MU member for 35 years and Project Development Trustee

'Be aware, pray, read the news, ask God what he thinks we could do,' Suggests Jenny.

Members of Manchester and Leeds Diocese also assisted Afghan refugees providing outdoor toys, games and warm coats for the children.

Julian of Norwich says,

"God is our mother." We are looking to support families in difficulties. When we see families in difficulties, our heart, prompted by God, bleeds but it also says, "what can I do". We look for where people are doing the work and where it fits with what we might be able to do.'



'They didn't see me as a stranger, they saw me as somebody who has come here to add on to the work that they are doing, in terms of working with families. I view Mothers' Union members as my friends and sisters we all pray together and work together to make Norfolk a welcoming and special place for new people who arrive and settle here.'

Marie Lyse Numuhoza MBE, herself a Rwandan refugee who arrived in England after the Rwandan civil war in 1994 and is now instrumental in the Norwich refugee resettlement programme, part sponsored by the MU.

"It is such a privilege to play a small part in welcoming Afghan people to the UK. We pray for them."

Prison Work

MU members continued to support prisoners in 2021, many of whom suffered terribly in the Covid pandemic which forced increased isolation through confinement to cells and visiting restrictions. Beanie hats were knitted to guard against the cold of the cells, baby boxes provided to mother and baby units, regular supplies of toiletries and packs for those being released passed on alongside many members sending seasonal cards to let prisoners know they are loved.



Shipping our Support

For over 15 years, the Diocese of Birmingham has sent a container of equipment and supplies to Malawi annually. The items include children's clothing, cooking utensils, shoes, basic first aid items, handmade blankets, second-hand sewing machines (to avoid customs' duty) and haberdashery – plus PPE items like face masks, aprons and bed linen in response to the Covid pandemic. The container is usually packed in the field of a friendly farmer! After three months and, on arrival the DP of the Malawi Diocese and the gifts are distributed to those most in need.

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

Matthew 25: 35-40.



Hearts of Love

Coxheath Area crafted hearts to hang around the village on Valentine's Day, which were much appreciated by those who found them.



Our membership movement provides strong connections through fellowship and worship and friends online and in person – around the corner and around the world.

An average of over **1,000** watch our **midday prayers**, every day, on Facebook.

Projects led by our membership movement and centrally funded global programmes directly supported **440k people in 2021.**



90% of MU overseas participated in our Global Day of Activism in November



1 in 3 women worldwide are affected by domestic violence or abuse – and MU is engaging with partners around the world to address this scourge

The MU made a difference to the lives of over

1.94 million people worldwide



Our Summer of Hope campaign raised over

£80,000

Over **7,000 members** participated in our Thy Kingdom Come Service in May.

We indirectly supported nearly **1.5 million** people last year.

BUILDING RESILIENCE AND SELF RELIANCE

Despite Covid curtailing some projects, MU centrally-funded literacy, savings and credit and business mentoring programmes continued in 2021, with their focus on boosting self-reliance and bolstering financial independence, particularly amongst women. In turn, women are better able to feed and provide for their families and feel empowered to speak out as role models in their communities, leading to lasting change.

Tea for All

Jane Sida in South Sudan was helped by an MU supported literacy and savings scheme to set up a tea stall, using the income raised to support herself and her three children after her husband left her.

The MU supports the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) and Literacy and Financial Education Programme (LFEP) here, empowering women to learn business skills and giving them the confidence to become entrepreneurs to increase self-reliance and wellbeing.

Jane started with a loan of SSP 10,000 (£25) to set up a tea stall selling black tea, hibiscus tea and coffee now making profit of SSP 6,000 (£15). She uses half the profit to feed her children.

“We are healthy and have enough to eat, due to my income.” Jane said.



Monica from Tanzania has expanded her food sales business to make it more economically viable, developing a second income for her family reducing financial pressure and reducing conflict in her marriage. She makes regular payments into her savings' group social fund which is accessed in emergencies like sickness or death and also has enough to pay her children's school fees and buy medication.

Our Christmas appeal in 2020 resulted in generous donations from MU members totalling £124k which funded important literacy and agricultural training projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Reaching over 1,200 vulnerable and illiterate women and nearly 200 men, the project has already exceeded its planned participant numbers with more expected to join the groups as they continue into 2022.

The groups are working towards improving literacy skills in the context of agricultural knowledge and techniques relevant to people's day to day lives. Nearly half of all learners can now trade via telephone and 80% can send and receive money via their mobiles, with many now thinking about saving for their futures.

Led by 48 community facilitators, the project also helps to encourage discussion and the need to promote gender balance, with many of the participants now talking openly about social norms in a society that dictates male superiority and can perpetuate gender based violence. Nearly 60% of the project's beneficiaries now believe that men/boys and women/girls are equal and should be treated equally. Similar projects took place in South Sudan during 2021.

Antoinette Kavira, Beni Diocese

'Because of this learning I looked at my land and built a pond because I saw I had water there. I then started to grow fish in it. Now I can count and read a little I have started using my mobile and Facebook to sell my fish. I take a photo of the fish and people contact me to buy. This project has really helped me to have this business, it is helping me raise up and help my family.'



Mentoring Mental Health in Kenya

In Kenya, we are leading on a programme to promote mental well-being and better relationships within the family and society.

This involves raising awareness of mental health issues in churches and communities and supporting those with health problems through counselling helping to reduce stigma, improve wellbeing and instigate lasting change.





NURTURING MEMBERSHIP

Our members are the beating heart of the Mothers' Union, leading responses to need in their own communities. A new centralised database and the growth of our virtual connections have enabled us to be even more united in sharing ideas and closer together spiritually than ever before.

Over 7,000 members watched our Thy Kingdom Come service in May 2021, broadcast online, providing a renewed opportunity to share in fellowship and faith together.

Our Metamorphosis course translated successfully to be 'pandemic proof' with an eight module course combining personal study, small group discussion and live sessions, with bible study and prayer and its heart. 56% of participants in 2021 said the course led to them taking new actions in their branches, churches and communities.



Fundraising in fellowship 'Summer of Hope walks'

During summer 2021, we combined MU on the Move in Britain and Ireland, with our Summer of Hope. Encouraging members together with families and friends to get active, keep Covid-safe and raise funds to support our work. Over £80,000 was raised through our Summer of Hope campaign and walks across Britain and Ireland.



The Wickford and Runwell MU branch walked 14.5km past every members' home planting a laminate flower with the MU logo in every garden, marking 145 years of the MU, even singing happy birthday to one member's husband! The branch raised over £470. Meanwhile, over in the SE Derbyshire deanery, members walked in August, sharing chatter and laughter and raising over £2k for MU work.



Overseas, Malta and Gozo walked 5km over a number of days, raising 1046 E which was used to support families at refuges in the local community with food parcels, plus support for the MU international fund.



Connected launch

We launched our Members' magazine, Connected, in the Spring with a mix of faith articles, project updates, news from Dioceses, policy articles and thought-provoking features to keep everyone up-to-date with the wider movement. The magazine was warmly received. The launch followed an extensive period of consultation and is now distributed twice annually in March and October.

"It really made me feel connected to all our movement".

MU member



Rodriguez Islands Joins the MU

Our overseas dioceses continue to attract new women keen to be trailblazers in their own communities and unite with others, through the love of God. We were delighted to launch a new branch in the Rodriguez Islands (located off the coast of Mauritius and housing a population of over 40,000).



Resources for those stuck at home in Covid

As the world moved into the second year of the Covid pandemic, its effects continued to be felt across many communities affecting many projects, impacting financial resources and preventing face-to-face gatherings.

However, MU teams have worked hard to turn this into a positive by putting the charity's values at the heart of their response and supporting information-sharing and helping to protect the most vulnerable from the virus. MU members helped to encourage vaccination uptake, crafted face masks, led church services and peer support activities online, provided support and counselling for those who had lost loved ones, distributed food and emergency supply parcels to those in need, undertook socially-distanced home visits, used radio programmes to share valuable insights with communities and instigated kitchen gardens to help communities become self-sufficient.

OUR FINANCES

INCOME & EXPENDITURE

Whilst 2021 was another challenging year, with key income generating streams such as event income and trading activities continuing to be impacted by Covid related disruption, we were able to adapt our operations to ensure that Mothers' Union ran sustainably.

One of the biggest impacts of the pandemic has been the loss of income generation from our primary asset, Mary Sumner House, following periods of enforced lockdown and the shift towards home working and virtual meetings.

Fortunately, some of our costs have been significantly reduced which included a dramatic reconfiguration of the scale of the staff team, which concluded in 2021, and a series of other efficiency savings. Regrettably, ongoing disruption to global travel and localised movement also hugely impacted our MU project work around the world, reducing our outward project spending.

Taken together, our total income for 2021 was £2.25m whilst expenditure stood at £2.22m, achieving an operational surplus of £28,071, which was slightly ahead of budgeted expectations. Fortunately, this was supplemented by market value

gains from our investment portfolio resulting in a total surplus for the year of £385,516, a slight increase on 2020 (£347,079).

Whilst our income and expenditure is down significantly since 2020 (£3.33m and £2.76m respectively), we have been able to strengthen our free reserves position, building on progress made in recent years, and sitting at the lower end of our target range. This leaves the charity well placed to ride out what we hope will be a relatively short-lived period of inflationary and economic challenges.

Our financial recovery, to a position of tentative financial stability, is welcome news and we give thanks to the grace of God and commitment of the membership and staff team for collectively making sacrifices to make this happen.

Our task now is to build upon our leaner foundations and continue our transformation to ensure the MU movement can remain sustainable over the longer term. Whilst this approach may see a slight weakening of our financial position during 2022 as we invest for the future of the charity it will help achieve genuine long-term stability.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2021

INCOME

SUBSCRIPTIONS	840,792	37%	
DONATIONS & EVENTS	969,325	43%	
GRANTS	221,668	10%	
INVESTMENTS AND RENTAL	110,186	5%	
TRADING OUTCOME	110,186	5%	
TOTAL	2,253,045		

EXPENDITURE

PROGRAMME WORK	1,043,493	47%	
FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP	247,556	11%	
CAMPAIGNING & POLICY	270,273	12%	
EMERGENCY RELIEF	15,914	1%	
MEMBERSHIP	445,171	20%	
GOVERNANCE	69,018	3%	
FUNDRAISING	133,549	6%	
TOTAL	2,224,974		
Outcome from operations	28,071		

A full copy of the Annual Accounts can be obtained online at www.mothersunion.org or by contacting us at the address on the reverse.

THE TEDDY VEAN PROJECT

run by the Mawnan MU branch, Cornwall is colourful way to communicate inclusivity to local primary school children that, while every human being is different, God values us and loves us just the same.



THANK YOU!

to everyone who helped support our vital work during 2021.

Please get in touch and get involved

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