

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21



THE COVA PROJECT LIMITED



ACCESS.
EDUCATION.
DIGNITY.

WHO IS THE COVA PROJECT?

The Cova Project provides menstrual cups and menstrual health education to menstruators in developing communities around the world, aiming to bridge the school attendance gap, caused by menstruation. We create and distribute educational materials, with accurate visual representation of the girls, to build confidence as they strengthen their knowledge around personal health and development.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

This year, The Cova Project brought its grand total of distributed cups to 10,920! Reaching girls all across the continent of Africa. The Cova Project used FY20/21 to support our partners and find ways to help them continue reaching at risk girls, while managing safety concerns from the pandemic. In Australia, The Cova Project brought on interns and strengthened support and brand recognition. We also continued to become a leader in the global menstrual health space through collaborations and partnerships.



OUR PURPOSE

The principal purpose of The Cova Project is:

To provide benevolent relief to girls and women of reproductive age across the world who are experiencing poverty, suffering, distress and disadvantage due to lack of financial resources and access to basic necessities.

Solely in furtherance of this purpose, The Cova Project may:

- a) Purchase and supply feminine hygiene products, including menstrual cups, to local community partners for distribution to girls and women who cannot afford these products
- b) Work with local community partners to provide menstrual health education materials tailored to cultural norms and language
- c) Work with donors and supporters to raise funds to conduct the above activities, and promote awareness of the suffering experienced by girls and women in impoverished communities caused by menstrual health related issues, and
- d) Do any other activities which will contribute to the achievement of the principal purpose.



CHAIR & CEO'S REPORT

Well, what an interesting 12 months FY20/21 has been... The mantra for this period had to be, 'throw out the book that tells you how things should be done and embrace critical and creative thinking'. That's what we had to do. No travel, no live events, impacted shipping timelines and of course the very real risk of a global pandemic on countries with vulnerable healthcare systems. But, periods don't stop for pandemics and neither do we. One of the fascinating things about The Cova Project is that when I built it, as a chronically ill person, I built it to sustain periods of disaster. This was in case I became very unwell and couldn't complete my duties for a period of time, there had to be enough money to keep everything going, enough hands on deck (in-country) for the work to continue and enough support from our community to keep momentum. Well, the disaster was not my health but a global pandemic and all of these things snapped into action for us during this year, allowing us to thrive during the most challenging of circumstances.

While funding began to dry up globally, our Leadership and Subscription donors held down the fort. We were able to take advantage of a gap between restrictions and host small in person screenings of our documentary for Leadership Donors and loyal supporters. Then, in February, we held our first ever Virtual Event and screened that documentary for a further 400...

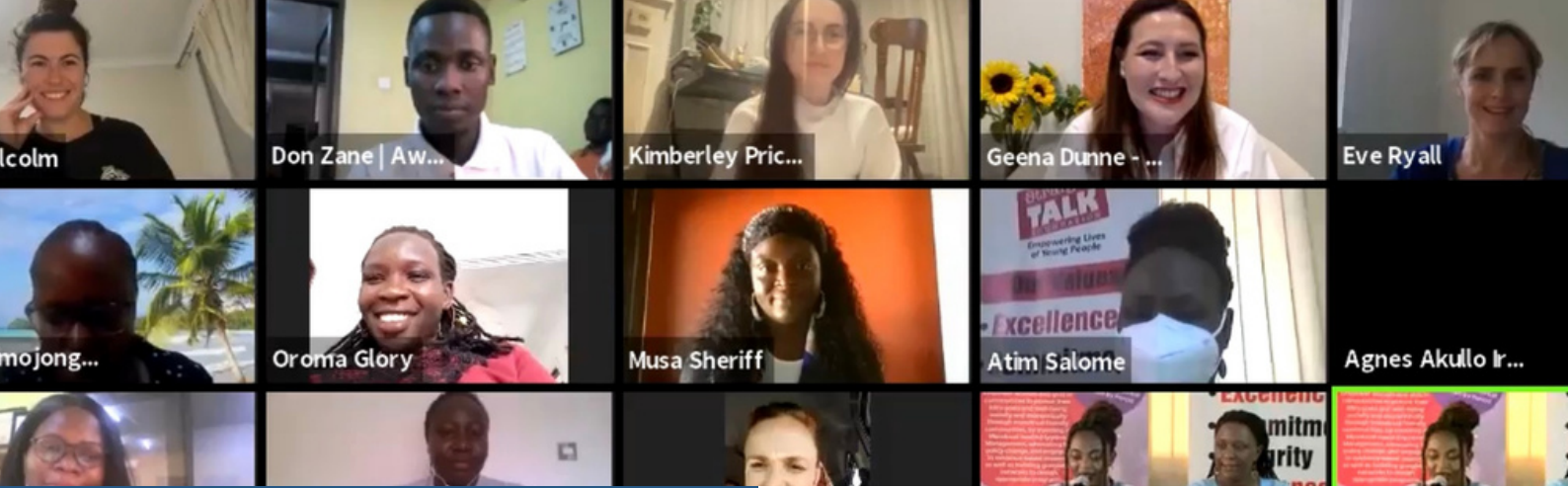
supporters, many of whom were new to our cause.

For me, creating our own documentary was a highlight of this year. Filmmaking has always been a passion of mine and by utilising existing skills and equipment, we filmed, edited, and produced a documentary for a total of \$0. Our final product was a beautiful 50-minute film that highlights the people working on The Cova Project all around the world, who are special individuals with unparalleled drive to improve women's health standards.

Our projects in Liberia, Ghana, Uganda and Malawi all managed the pandemic differently, with each organisation and region experiencing unique challenges. For example, Uganda had a ban on the use of all private vehicles for months and schools were restricted from gathering students, meaning not only could our partners not travel, but even if they could, they were challenged to find the girls in their individual homes.

Never more than this year, has it been clear why in-country partners are essential. Reliable, driven individuals and organisations who managed restrictions and kept everyone safe while continuing to distribute menstrual cups, which had become more valuable than ever. Our Ugandan project, in partnership with Irise Institute East Africa, found that 25% of girls believed the Covid-19 pandemic had contributed to challenges in managing their periods and of that 25%, 47% had lost the ability to access traditional sanitary items such as pads.

I must take this opportunity to thank our partners who worked tirelessly through this testing time to ensure our beneficiaries continued receiving the level of support necessary to have success with their cups. They are fearless, generous and determined.



CHAIR & CEO'S REPORT CONT.

In Australia, without the ability to travel, The Cova Project took the opportunity to expand our home base. We brought on three rounds of interns, who assisted in marketing tasks and improving our digital marketing SEO. Our interns were brilliant and provided further insights into how The Cova Project has cross generational appeal and how to make philanthropy accessible to all Australians.

We brought on a menstrual health consultant, Casey English, who had volunteered as The Cova Project Malawi's Project Supervisor since March 2019. Casey is a registered nurse in San Francisco and was a Nurse Lecturer at Mzuzu University in Malawi. Casey's incredible ability to communicate with partners and beneficiaries, and teach best practice for menstrual cup use in low-income settings (paired with her double vaccinated status and ability to travel) made her the perfect person to visit our project locations and check in on the our work.

We are especially grateful to Casey given she had been tasked with traveling during a pandemic and has coped with travel bans being put in place the day before she's due to arrive in country. Her ability to roll with the punches is second to none and aligns with The Cova Project's elite ability to pivot.



"IT IS A CREDIT TO EVERY MEMBER OF OUR TEAM THAT THE COVA PROJECT THRIVED IN FY20/21"

All in all, it's been a spectacular year. We have proudly achieved so much and tackled challenges head on with an enthusiastic spirit. Our partners have managed to continue the work on the ground, and we have managed to continue supporting the work over Zoom and WhatsApp. It is a credit to every member of our team that The Cova Project thrived in FY20/21. We were motivated by our beneficiaries and our supportive donors, who deserved to see their dollars hard at work where they were needed most. As always, this is just the beginning... Thank you all for staying on this journey with us.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE TEAM



GEENA DUNNE
CHAIR AND CEO



LOUISA BEALE
DIRECTOR



DR SAMANTHA MALCOLM
DIRECTOR



NELL ANDERSON
COMPANY SECRETARY

WHERE IS THE COVA PROJECT ACTIVE?



Liberia
West Point
3,300 cups



Ghana
800 cups



Uganda
Kampala
Nakivale
Jinja
3,120 cups



Malawi
1,200
cups



South Africa
Mobile clinics
2,500 cups

FUTURE EXPANSION

The Cova Project is just getting started. We are consolidating our pilot projects, focusing on projects that share our passion and unrelenting drive. We are resourcing successful pilots further and looking to grow. Our focus is on identifying those incredibly special individuals who share our love for this work and upskilling/promoting them.

However, perhaps the most exciting news is our upcoming Australian projects. We are workshopping two very different Australian based projects in collaboration with excellent Australian organisations and community advocates. More to come on this....



OUR PARTNERS



UGANDAN LOCAL PARTNER - IRISE INSTITUTE EAST AFRICA SARAH, JOYCE, SUSAN

Irise Institute East Africa (IIEA) is our proud Ugandan partner. IIEA has successfully distributed 2,000 menstrual cups and was asked by local government to provide vital support to the Jinja community during Uganda's lockdown. The Cova Project supported this by funding essential PPE for the team and 1,000 bars of soap for the community. Menstrual cups were more important than ever during this time and beneficiaries have given enormous thanks to Irise for their support during the challenges of 2020/21. The Cova Project and IIEA's partnership has extended past project work and into advocacy, with the organisations collaborating to change the menstrual health landscape across East Africa. This is just the beginning...

MALAWIAN LOCAL PARTNER

BETTI NLHANE, ELUBY SHABA AND CASEY ENGLISH

The Cova Project Malawi thrived in FY20/21. Betti and Eluby continued their successful distribution of cups and expanded into new territory. TCP Malawi piloted four new projects across the country and Eluby travelled to help train and support these projects with her knowledge and experience. TCP Malawi continues to find new opportunities, a partnership with a major Malawian company is on the horizon. We see the need everywhere and with Betti and Eluby on the ground as experienced menstrual cup trainers, growth is inevitable.



GHANAIA LOCAL PARTNER - THE YEVU FOUNDATION & THE KYEREH FOUNDATION NANA AKUA KYEREH, ANNA ROBERTSON

The Cova Project Ghana, Kyereh x Yevu, is our first project partnership pulled together entirely over Zoom and Whatsapp. Due to the pandemic, our Ghanaian project exclusively with Yevu was unable to go ahead, so we brought on a new partner with a track record of successful menstrual cup distributions. Distributing cups since early 2019, The Kyereh Foundation was a natural fit for partnership. Nana Akua leads a team that travels to rural communities on the Ivory Coast border to reach girls most in need of menstrual health solutions.

LIBERIAN LOCAL PARTNER - EDUCATE WEST POINT

MUSA, MARTINA, REBECCA AND CAROLYN

Educate West Point (EWP) is a well respected NGO in Liberia's largest slum, West Point. Started by changemaker, Musa Sheriff, Educate West Point was created to provide a safe space for young West Pointers to gain a pre primary education and to fund educational pathways for primary and high school students. Keeping students in school goes hand in hand with menstrual cups. Our longest partnership, EWP has newly assigned passionate and knowledge hungry trainers, Rebecca and Carolyn, to manage TCP Liberia. These young women are the future of Liberia.



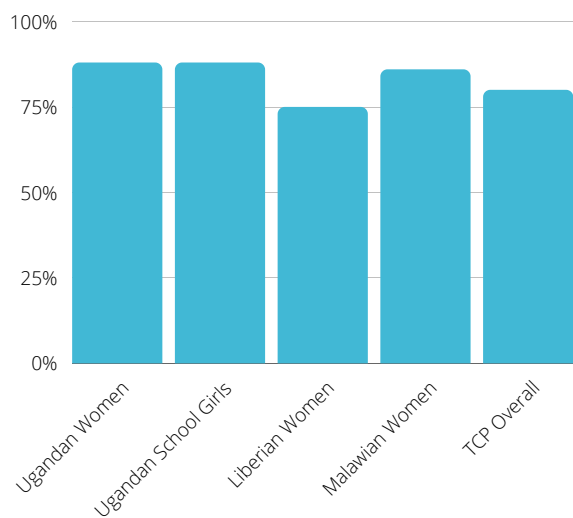
UGANDAN LOCAL PARTNER - PHAU & OPPORTUNIGEE DANIELLA, LILLIBET, FLORENCE

In partnership with Kampala based organisation, Public Health Ambassadors Uganda (PHAU) is Opportunigee, a refugee run organisation in Nakivale refugee settlement. Opportunigee is a wonderful organisation tackling many issues, one being the empowerment of women. Our efforts are headed up by a team of passionate women, who believes that access to sanitary products should be a human right and good hygiene practices are essential for women living in the settlement.

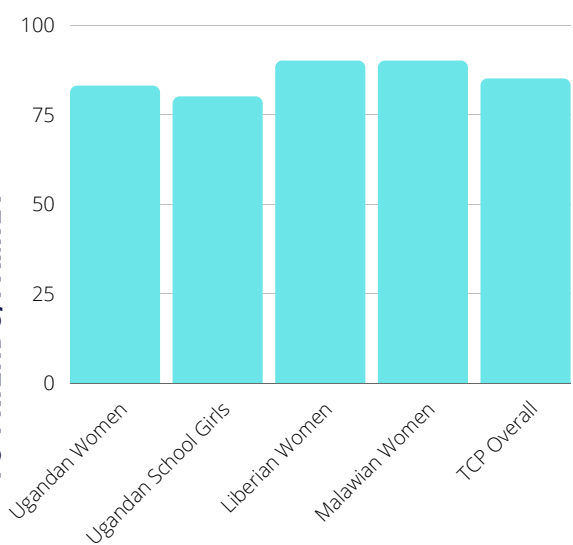
WHAT DO THE GIRLS THINK?

Presented below is summarised data collected from beneficiaries by local partners over the first 2 years of The Cova Project (mid 2019 – mid 2021). During this 2-year period, 10,920 cups have been distributed to local partners in Liberia, Malawi, Uganda and most recently Ghana. Data collection is mainly done about 4 months after the education/training session where a cup has been provided to a girl. This allows her time to have tried the cup several times because studies show that it takes up to 3 menstrual cycles for a woman to be comfortable with cup usage.

% OF BENEFICIARIES USING THE CUP



% OF BENEFICIARIES WHO WOULD RECOMMEND THE CUP TO FRIENDS/FAMILY



MALAWI

- 21% of girls stopped being absent from school, 44% felt more comfortable in class
- 97% of girls are comfortable with the cup
- 76% of girls are more confident with the cup
- 95% of girls could do more activities with the cup

LIBERIA

- 75% improved confidence
- 75% can do more activities
- 64% used to miss school but almost none miss school post cup usage

In summary, girls and women are clearly more confident and able to do more things in life with the cup than when they were using other sanitary items. Other key benefits include comfort, no leakage and hygienic. More data is required to better understand the impact on school attendance, which is very important, but data indicates school attendance is significantly improved.

THOUGHTS THE GIRLS WANTED TO SHARE WITH OUR DONORS....

Hear directly from the girls benefiting from our project with Irise Institute East Africa in Uganda. Simply click on the image [below](#)



FUTURE VISION

THE NEXT

12 MONTHS

The next 12 months will be a year of consolidation. We have now successfully piloted The Cova Project in five countries and have a proven method of implementation. Now it's time to tighten up our systems, identify what works and what doesn't and streamline our processes to ensure more girls can receive cups and menstrual health education. Every week, The Cova Project receives an appeal for cup project partnership from all over the world. We are hoping to implement a new model to assist these organisations in running their own projects with guidance from The Cova Project but no financial support. This model would assist in combating period poverty at a much faster pace. For the organisations that reach out with exceptional partnership plans and synergetic values, The Cova Project hopes to collaborate and make change together.

**TOTAL OF 20,000
CUPS DISTRIBUTED BY
2023**

The Cova Project also plans to increase its support in Australia. To date, The Cova Project has been run exclusively by CEO, Geena Dunne, on her \$18,000 salary. This has allowed The Cova Project to skyrocket ahead and channel all funding into project activities, making a difference on a scale that most charities struggle to achieve in their first few years. Now, with our momentum and loyal supporters, it's time to grab some helping hands and bring on some staff to help The Cova Project become a charity that all Australians want to support. It's time to strengthen our foundations.



FINANCE REPORT

20 - 21

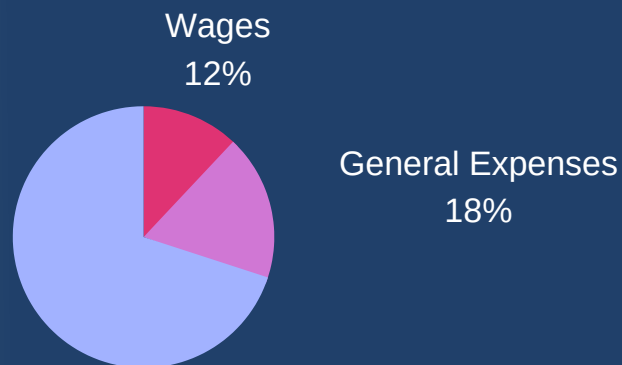
REVENUE

\$225,844

(DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING)



EXPENDITURE



Direct Project Costs
70%

Note: The Cova Project CEO's salary was increased as required for JobKeeper eligibility.

DIRECT PROJECT RELATED EXPENSES (\$141,113)

Distribution of cups	34%
Education and training	66%

GENERAL EXPENSES (\$37,565)

Marketing (including events and software subscriptions)	67%
Admin	13%
Insurances	20%

EXPENDITURE

\$202,067



STORIES OF CHANGE

Hear from the girls first hand how the cup has changed their lives

“

As a teacher a lot has changed in the lives of our girls as a result of menstrual flowcup distribution done in our school.

We have a challenge of parents not having funds to support girls with pads and since the girls accessed the flow cups, they have been reporting positive changes including; being more confident during their periods and demonstrating higher levels of concentration in class compared to before.

— MR. KAKONO JOEL
Kakira High School



“

With my Flowcup now, I can be very comfortable during my period and no longer miss school and other activities.

This cup is very good because I do not have to worry about my period. Like before I used to be embarrassed and even stayed away from school and regular activities during my period.

On my birthday of this year I went swimming in the pool with my cup in. This cup is amazing, which gives me comfort during my period.

— Agnes Liburd
Liberia



“

I am very happy to have this flowcup because it has relieved a burden off me as a female referee.

My name is Sarah Manston, I am 23 years old and I work with the Liberian Football Association as a female referee. Before having access to the flowcup, I had problems managing my period in my field of work. It was embarrassing running around the field when I received my period, but with this flowcup, I am fearless doing my job. Now that I have the cup, I am very confident to control and manage my period as a female.

— Sarah Manston
Liberia



“

This experience makes me feel so much for my siblings because they did not have the same chance I got.

When I received the flow cup, I was also taught how to use it. At first I was worried about the difficulty inserting. Now I am used to it and feel comfortable using it. This has saved my parents and I have been able to save some money to assist my 5 other sisters in accessing pads which are still expensive because of the family status.

— NAMUKABIRYE HALIMA
Kakira High School



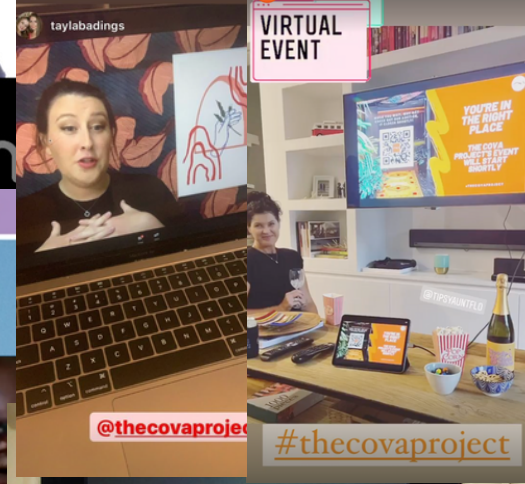
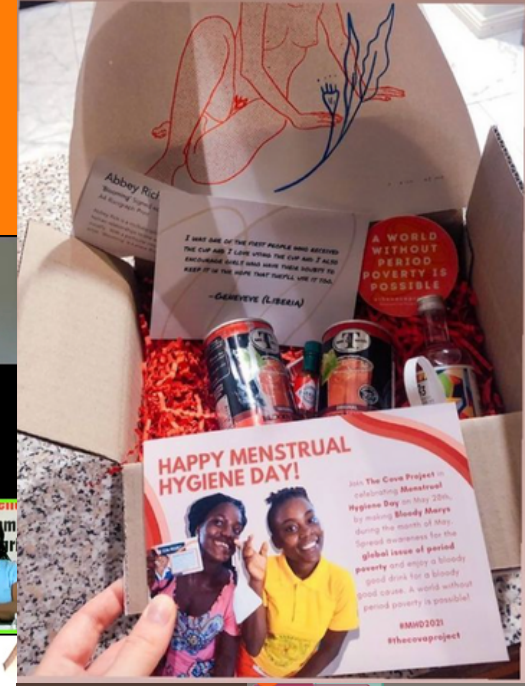
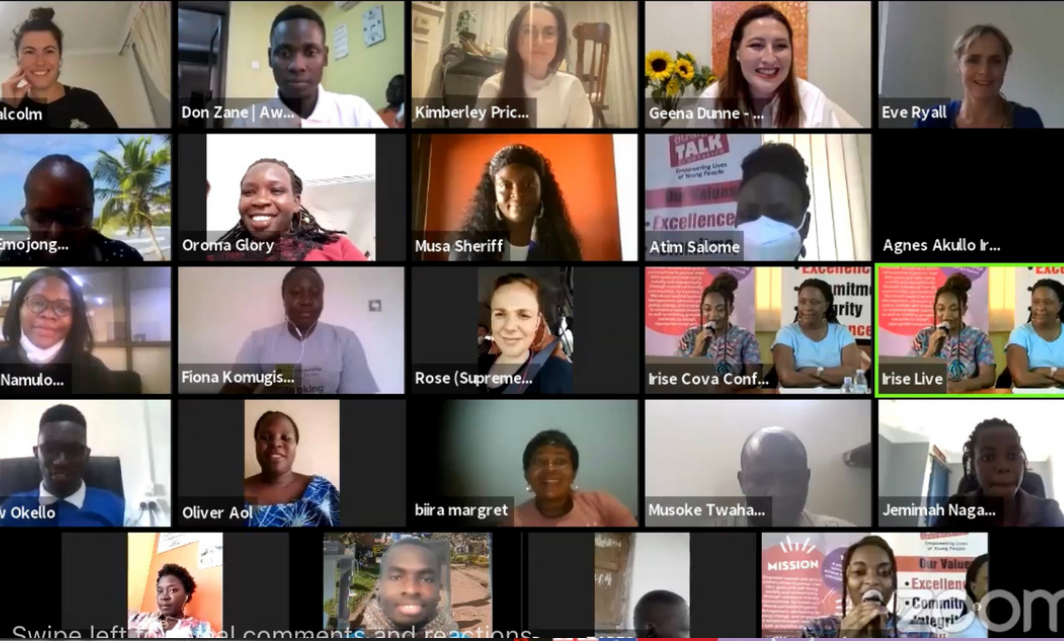


Happy world menstrual hygiene day @thecovaproject

@thecovaproject The Bloody Mary Campaign

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

Primarily online campaigns due to Covid restrictions. We look forward to seeing you all in person next year!



THE COVA CONFERENCE



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS



kin

ARCHIE ROSE
DISTILLING CO.

KING & WOOD
MALLESONS
金杜律师事务所



Topsy
Aunt Flo

SUNSTUDIOS

Given the challenges experienced by the Not For Profit sector this financial year, we would sincerely like to thank our generous donors and dedicated volunteers who have again worked so hard to ensure The Cova Project experienced another year of success. We would like to give special thanks to Kimberly Price, Kasey Syverson, Casey English, Gabriella Amini Chancelin and The Cova Project board of Directors, who always give their time, knowledge and energy to grow and better The Cova Project.

We would also like to give a special thanks to Kin Fertility, who this year came onboard as The Cova Project's most significant corporate partner, providing a sustainable source of revenue to our project.

The Cova Project relies heavily on the support of communities, be they in Australia or Africa. To those who consistently give their time and energy to help us help others, we are so appreciative.

If you're interested in supporting The Cova Project, you can find out how to get involved at thecovaproject.com/get-involved