

# ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19



THE COVA PROJECT LIMITED



ACCESS.  
EDUCATION.  
DIGNITY.



# 2018-19

## WHO IS THE COVA PROJECT?

The Cova Project provides menstrual cups to African girls and women, aiming to bridge the 50-day attendance gap between girls and boys, due to 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.

In 2018 The Cova Project was an initiative of Namibian NGO, The N/a'an ku sê Foundation and fundraised for the purchase of 3,000 cups. In early 2019, The Cova Project separated from The N/a'an ku sê Foundation and became an independent organisation and a registered Australian charity, initiating fundraising efforts in Australia. The first distribution of cups for The Cova Project was in April 2019, to Liberia and Malawi and was completed by CEO, Geena Dunne and Head of Marketing, Caillie Dunne.



## 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

My sister Caillie and I started The Cova Project in 2018 and to watch it grow in the last year has been overwhelming. In just 12 months we have provided menstrual cups and menstrual health education to over 3,000 girls in 4 countries. We work with a mother/daughter team in Malawi, accessing the villages in the north. We've supplied mobile clinics in rural South Africa which were able to reach the most isolated communities in the country. We support 12 Congolese girls in a refugee camp in Uganda and we are training a further 8 Ugandan girls to be project leaders in Kampala. Finally, and certainly not least, we work with a local NGO in the West Point township in Liberia, which is still recovering from the 2014/15 Ebola epidemic.

I am so proud of the projects we've established and the collaborative culture we've created. Our local partners are dedicated and excited for the future, Flowcup (our cup supplier) continues to provide unmatched generosity and we work as hard as possible to ensure success for all involved.

**"At The Cova Project we provide menstrual cups, or as I call them, little silicone scholarships."**  
**-Geena Dunne, CEO**

The feedback we've received since our distribution in April has been both positive and constructive and we continue to improve our projects. I can't wait to see the impact we can have in 2020 and the years that follow.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE TEAM



GEENA DUNNE  
CHAIR AND CEO



LOUISA BEALE  
DIRECTOR



SAMANTHA MALCOLM  
DIRECTOR



CAILLIE DUNNE  
HEAD OF MARKETING



NELL ANDERSON  
COMPANY SECRETARY



# WHERE IS THE COVA PROJECT ACTIVE?



Liberia  
West Point  
300 cups



Malawi  
Mzuzu  
200 cups



South Africa  
Mobile clinics  
2500 cups



Uganda  
Kampala  
20 cups

The Cova Project works to ensure success for girls receiving cups by running 4-hour training sessions, hosted by a Project Leader from the community, to ensure participants have a complete understanding of the product before they are given a menstrual cup. We then collect survey data on cup usage during the first 4 months, which allows participants to ask further questions and receive advice during their first few months using the cup. We also distribute educational instructions for the cup in the appropriate language (with illustrations for communities with low literacy) so the girls have something to refer to each month, in case they need a reminder for how to best care for their cup. The Cova Project's educational materials are currently available in three languages, English, Chichewa and French.





# WHO DO WE PARTNER WITH LOCALLY?



## **MALAWI LOCAL PARTNER**

### **BETTI NLHANE, ELUBY SHABA AND CASEY ENGLISH**

Betti and daughter, Eluby, are our amazing Malawian Project Leaders. Betti is a known matriarch of the community and hosts women's groups in her living room, where women can freely speak about their challenges. Eluby has stepped up, taking on the primary role of trainer, teaching girls about the cup in Chichewa and Tumbuka (the local languages). Casey, our Project Supervisor, is an American nurse and nurse lecturer who has lived in Malawi for many years. Together they are the dream team and passionate cup advocates.



## **LIBERIAN LOCAL PARTNER - EDUCATE WEST POINT**

### **MUSA SHERIFF AND MARTINA SYNUE**

Musa Sheriff was born in Liberia but fled with his family to Guinea during the civil war. While at a refugee camp in Guinea, Musa was educated by an NGO and there began his passion for Not For Profits and education. He is a pillar of the West Point community, where The Cova Project operates. Government officials and high profile Liberians have described him as "the future of Liberia" and at The Cova Project, we agree.

Martina assists in translation/communication and is responsible for managing the project and collection of data. Martina has a passion for the Not For Profit world and brings with her years of experience in the sector. Two top notch assets!



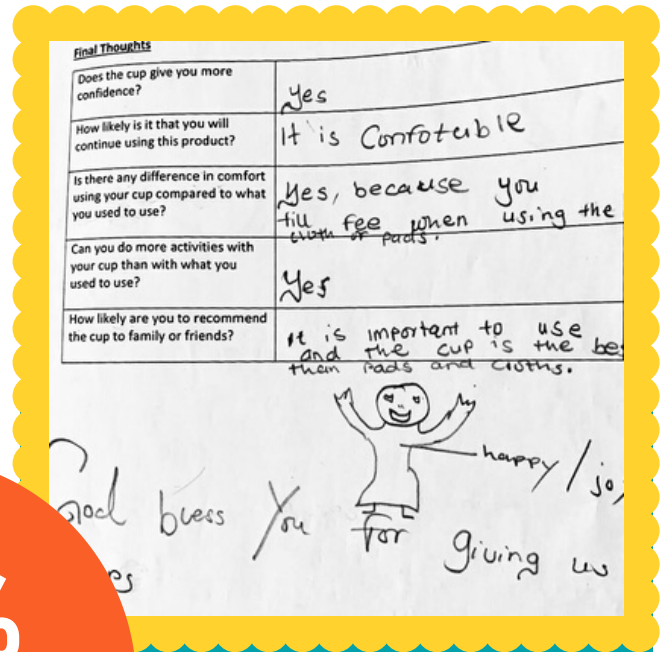
## **UGANDAN LOCAL PARTNER - PUBLIC HEALTH AMBASSADORS UGANDA (PHAU)**

### **CHLOE SIMPSON, LILLIBET AND DIANA**

Chloe Simpson is our Ugandan Project Supervisor. With years of experience with menstrual hygiene projects, Chloe has been a source of knowledge for The Cova Project since the beginning. In July, Chloe began a pilot project on behalf of The Cova Project in Uganda, alongside her PHAU colleagues, Lilibet and Diana. They are setting up relationships with potential cup advocates and leaders in Kampala and Nakivale Refugee Settlement. We can't wait to see how they progress the Ugandan project and are incredibly grateful for their knowledge and expertise.

# WHAT DO THE GIRLS THINK?

Surveys are collected by project leaders, one - four months after girls have had the opportunity to try the cup. Here are some highlights:



**73%**

of girls said the cup majorly improved their confidence when menstruating

**80%**

of participants had missed school or work because they did not have access to sanitary products

**75%**

of girls responded to surveys saying they were still using the cup after 3 months.

**64%**

had stopped missing school with the cup

**96% OF BENEFICIARIES DESCRIBED BEING EXCITED TO TRY THE CUP ON DAY 1!**

**MOST COMMONLY USED WORDS IN SURVEYS**  
**COMFORTABLE FREEING HAPPY**  
**IMPORTANT GOOD**





# FUTURE VISION THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

We are so excited for the future of The Cova Project. With our newest project, Uganda, we continue to expand our reach and prove that menstrual cups are a solution for girls without access to safe sanitary care. In 2020, we plan to distribute another 4,000 cups across Liberia, Malawi and Uganda. All of our local partners have had extensive discussions with their communities and girls using the cup and have put out the call for more! Incredibly we see all our pilot projects as a success and are preparing to establish them in a more permanent way. This means considering things as important as having educational materials printed locally.

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**4,000 CUPS IN 2020**

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We are well down the track of establishing our fourth project, which we will announce soon. We are regularly contacted to start projects all over the world and have developed an extensive 'local partner application' to identify the right project locations and partners.

As we work, we plan to continue collecting data to show that the cup is a solution to improving school attendance for girls in developing communities. We hope to give more girls and women the opportunity to participate fully in life and education, without the financial and physical burden of menstruation. 2020 here we come!



# FINANCE REPORT

## 18 - 19

### INCOME

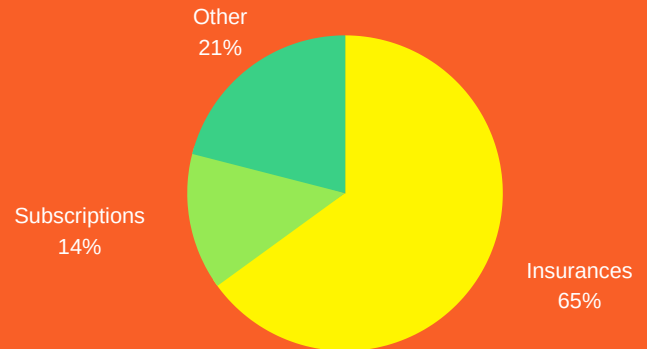
**\$45,904**

(DONATIONS)

### EXPENDITURE

**\$8,085**

### EXPENDITURE



Note: The Cova Project began operations in Australia in March 2019. No expenditure was made towards our International Aid and Development programs in the first four months of being an Australian charity as it was made while auspiced by the N/a'an ku sê Foundation.

## GOVERNANCE

After spending 2018 as an auspicee of Namibian NGO, The N/a'an ku sê Foundation, on February 15th 2019, The Cova Project became an independent registered company with ASIC. On February 27th The Cova Project became a registered charity with the ACNC and soon after received DGR1 status from the ATO. This independence saw The Cova Project establish it's own projects and board of directors.

The Cova Project board is made up of a team of young women with diverse skills and a mutual passion for philanthropy. The board meets quarterly and will be submitting their first Annual Information Statement to the ACNC. Recently, The Cova Project conducted an internal audit on the establishment of the company. This audit was voluntary, with the board wanting to ensure the highest standards of governance were being met.





# FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES







## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

We would like to thank our generous donors and dedicated volunteers who allowed the first year of The Cova Project to be so successful.

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.

We would also like to make a special thanks to our early Leadership Donors, whose significant donations at the beginning of The Cova Project, gave us the freedom to become an independent organisation and help so many.

If you're interested in supporting The Cova Project, you can find out how to get involved at [www.thecovaproject.com/get-involved](http://www.thecovaproject.com/get-involved)

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