



Media Matters
for Women

ANNUAL REPORT

2023



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Letter from the Chair

Media Matters for Women (MMW) is proud to present our annual report for 2023, highlighting a decade of service to the vulnerable women and girls of rural Sierra Leone. This past year has been marked by significant achievements, despite the challenges posed by political unrest, economic instability, and the loss of key personnel.

Our unwavering commitment to empowering women and girls through access to information and education has yielded tangible results. We have expanded our reach, deepened our impact, and strengthened our financial position. This letter outlines our key accomplishments, financial performance, and strategic direction for the coming year. MMW's work is essential to creating a more equitable and just society for women and girls in Sierra Leone.

In 2023, MMW made significant strides in empowering women and girls in rural Sierra Leone. Our key achievements were:

- **Period Power Project (PPP):** Expanded to reach over 1,000 students in 30 schools, fostering positive behavioural change around menstruation and reducing stigma associated with FGM.
- **Media and Advocacy:** Produced 192 podcasts covering critical issues affecting women and girls, providing a vital source of information in underserved communities. MMW's advocacy efforts led to participation in the UN Commission on the Status of Women 67 and the Paris Peace Forum, elevating the voices of rural women on the international stage.
- **Community Development:** Successfully completed the construction of a bore-hole well in Rogbom, improving access to clean water for hundreds of community members.
- **Team Building and Capacity Development:** Invested in staff development through fellowships and conferences, enhancing MMW's expertise and leadership.

We are particularly proud of the increased financial stability achieved in 2023, more than doubling our income through grants and donations. This growth has enabled us to expand our programs and increase staff compensation.

MMW's programs have had a profound impact on the lives of countless women and girls in rural Sierra Leone.

- **Empowerment:** By providing access to information and education, MMW has empowered women and girls to make informed decisions about their health, rights, and futures. Our podcasts are a trusted source of information on critical issues, leading to increased awareness and advocacy.
- **Community Development:** The bore-hole well project in Rogbom has significantly improved the health and well-being of the community by providing access to clean water, reducing the burden of water collection on women and girls.
- **Education:** The Period Power Project has challenged harmful gender norms and improved school attendance for girls by addressing menstrual health management.
- **Leadership:** MMW's staff have emerged as leaders in their field, representing the voices of rural women on national and international platforms.

Letter from the Chair Continued:

By investing in the potential of women and girls, MMW continues to contribute to a more equitable and sustainable future for Sierra Leone.

In 2023, MMW maintains a strong governance structure to ensure accountability, transparency, and effective decision-making. The Board of Directors, comprised of dedicated individuals with diverse expertise, provides strategic oversight and guidance. Regular board meetings are held to review progress, financial performance, and risk management. We are committed to adhering to all relevant laws, regulations, and ethical standards. We maintain transparent financial records and conduct regular audits to ensure compliance.

Building upon our successes in 2023, MMW is excited to embark on an ambitious agenda for the coming year. Our focus will be on:

- **Expanding our Reach:** Increasing the number of communities served by our programs, with a particular emphasis on reaching the most marginalized women and girls.
- **Strengthening Impact:** Developing innovative approaches to address complex challenges faced by rural women, such as climate change and economic inequality.
- **Sustainability:** Diversifying our funding sources and building sustainable income streams to ensure the long-term viability of MMW.
- **Capacity Building:** Continuing to invest in the professional development of our staff to enhance their skills and leadership capabilities.
- **Advocacy:** Amplifying the voices of rural women and girls on national and international platforms, advocating for policies that promote gender equality and social justice.

We believe that by focusing on these key areas, MMW can continue to have a lasting impact on the lives of women and girls in Sierra Leone.

We believe this report demonstrates MMW's unwavering commitment to empowering women and girls in rural Sierra Leone. Through our programs, advocacy, and partnerships, we have made significant strides in improving the lives of countless individuals. We are grateful for the support of our donors, volunteers, and partners, whose contributions have been instrumental to our success.

As we look to the future, we are excited about the opportunities to expand our impact and create a more equitable society for all.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,
Peta Barrett
Board Chair - Media Matters for Women UK

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The Trustees present their report and independently examined accounts of the charity for the period ended 31 December 2023. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered charity name Media Matters for Women UK

Charity registration number 1185508

Registered office
Sable Lodge
Pine Walk East
Horsley KT24 5AG

Trustees
Peta Barrett: *Appointed Chair of board in January 2024*
Katie Faulds: *Stepped down as chair in January 2024 but continues as trustee*
Gaimin Nonyane
Anthony Skinner: *Appointment in January 2023*
Anton Mifsud-Bonnici: *Resignation in January 2023*

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

The Board of Trustees consists of four Trustees who continue in office until retirement or death. New Trustees are selected by existing Trustees and are people who have specific interest in the charity and a range of skills to enhance its development. New trustees undergo an orientation to brief them of their legal obligations under charity law, the committee and decision-making process and recent financial activities of the charity.

Media Matters for Women UK is a charitable incorporated organization (CIO). It was established under a CIO Foundation Constitution which governs its activities, objectives and powers. MMW UK was registered in the United Kingdom with the UK registration number of 1185508 on 26 September 2019.

Media Matters for Women UK partners with Media Matters for Women Sierra Leone, (MMW SL) a registered NGO located in Freetown, Sierra Leone, and MMW US, a 501(c)(3) organization registered in Bellevue, Washington, USA, whose mission and operations are aligned with MMW UK. MMW SL is overseen by the Board of Trustees of MMW UK.

A woman with a vibrant, multi-colored headwrap (red, yellow, blue, and white patterns) is smiling and holding a young child. The child is wearing a white sleeveless top and a beaded necklace. They are surrounded by other people in a crowd, with a person in a pink shirt visible on the left. The background is slightly blurred, showing more people in a community setting.

OUR MISSION

We equip the **hardest-to-reach women and girls in rural Sierra Leone** with the knowledge and skills they need to **create the social change they seek.**

WHO WE ARE

Media Matters for Women envisions a world where women and girls **are in control of their rights** and possess the tools to make **informed decisions** about their own well-being.

We use **media** to amplify the visibility, appeal and reach of women's rights agendas and the role of **women's movements** in advancing democracy and justice.

MMW strategies weave together women's **leadership** development, **activism**, gender awareness, and intersectional organizing to ensure that women, feminist perspectives, and agendas link to broader **social justice movements**.





Our Work in 2023

**Access to
Information**

**Preventing
Gender-
Based
Violence**

**Sexual and
Reproductive
Health &
Rights**

**Strengthening
Rural
Communities**

**Improving
Women's
Economic
Power**



Access to Information

We believe that access to reliable, trustworthy information is a fundamental human right and in many of the communities we serve, MMW podcasts are the only source of fact-based information on these topics that are regularly available to women and girls.

MMW was honored to share its work at the UN Commission on the Status of Women 67 NGO Forum in March, presenting “Addressing the Unmet Information Needs of Africa’s Hardest-to-Reach Communities.”

192 podcasts were produced this year covering women’s rights, the 2023 elections, the Gender Empowerment and Women’s Equality Act, harmful traditional practices, the economy, sexual and reproductive health, climate change and more.



Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

MMW's **Period Power Project** reaches over 1000 students in 30 schools across Sierra Leone each year. In 2023, information on menstrual health and teaching skills to sew environmentally-friendly reusable sanitary pads was supplemented with discussions to lift the secrecy and taboo surrounding the practice of **female genital mutilation** during Bondo Society initiation, including a special focus to train boys (who will be future heads of households and decision-makers) on the risks to their sisters and friends from FGM and empowering girls with an understanding of their right to say no to this practice.

During our surveys in communities surrounding the participating schools, we heard over and over both that the program has broken the taboo around menstruation and that attitudes toward FGM are changing, with more women seeing the practice as a hollow and costly tradition rather than a benefit of any kind. These are the first steps toward changing behaviors.


Preventing Gender-Based Violence

Collaboration is key in fighting SGBV. MMW partners with like-minded local coalitions and works within the local power structures in order to bring about changes in behaviors and attitudes, reducing the impact of harmful traditional beliefs and practices.

Despite political unrest and a coup attempt, MMW led communities in the global **16 Days of Activism** campaign in December, bringing activists, traditional and religious leaders, and rural women and men together to raise awareness and advocate against violence toward women and children. We recognized 30 local rural leaders through the MMW Community Influencer Awards, shining a spotlight on the important actions that the grassroots movement can achieve.



Strengthening Rural Communities



Through a generous private donation, MMW was able to facilitate the building of a desperately needed bore-hole well for the Rogbom community in rural Bombali District, improving the health and safety of women who would otherwise have to travel by foot for hours to obtain needed water. This is just one example of how MMW can work to quickly connect rural community needs with available resources.

Women's Financial Empowerment

In November, we traveled to Paris at the invitation of the Paris Peace Forum to present our female aquaculture project, "Fishing for Empowerment in Sierra Leone."

We were honored to bring the story of the villagers of Kamalenka, in one of the poorest districts of the country, to the global stage, sharing how they now have increased food security and a new income stream made possible by MMW's work in conjunction with the Sierra Leone Skills Development Office and the World Bank.





Celebrating our 10 Year Anniversary

2023 marked 10 years of MMW working to improve the lives of rural women and girls. We celebrated in style with a cocktail evening, featuring the new Minister of Gender, Dr. Isata Mahoi, as keynote speaker and honoring Africell Sierra Leone, with our first-ever “Local Hero Award.” Africell SL has shown true dedication and commitment to supporting women and girls in rural Sierra Leone.



MMW By the Numbers

- **3 active fish ponds serving the Kamalenka community**
- **6 provinces served by MMW projects**
- **30 local rural citizens honored as “MMW Community Influencers”**
- **150 Peace Ambassadors trained on violence prevention during national elections**
- **192 podcasts produced in 2023**
- **60,000 average podcast listens per month**

A note of thanks

Our thanks goes out to Sebastien Boettcher for the generous donation of his time and talent to help MMW tell its stories through his amazing photography. We are grateful to call Sebastien a true friend of MMW.

Physical Health Education
First Term Test one
Answer four questions
Q2a. Name the types of teeth.
2b. List down three (3) caring for teeth.
Q3. Name the organs
any two (2) you like
Q4 Briefly explain
and give the main part
Q5a. Fully draw
parts.
5b. List down (1)





Looking Ahead With Gratitude

As we move forward in 2024, with new opportunities to raise the status of rural women and girls through continued development of our rural communications network and implementation of the Ditruck Salone project, we are grateful for the wisdom and support that we received in 2023. Thank you to everyone who has worked to strengthen this small but mighty organization and the group of women behind it who have dedicated their lives to advocating for vulnerable women and girls in rural Sierra Leone. We could not achieve such impact without the support and encouragement from our donors and volunteers.

Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities and setting grant making policy for the year.

Our Objectives

- (A) To advance the education of socially and economically disadvantaged women and girls in Africa (initially in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo) for the public benefit, in particular, but not exclusively by, the provision of grants, training and equipment to facilitate the dissemination in remote geographic areas of information relating to:
 - women's rights (for example, as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and subsequent United Nations conventions and declarations, and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms);
 - women's health (for example, sexual and reproductive health, family planning and gender based violence);
 - financial education; and
 - public or community health (for example, best practices and procedures to deal with communicable diseases such as Ebola and COVID-19).
- (A) To develop the capacity and skills of socially and economically disadvantaged women and girls in rural areas of Africa (initially in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo) in such a way that they are better able to identify and help meet their needs and to participate more fully in society.

Our Activities:

During 2023, MMW UK supported MMW Sierra Leone, through grant funding and mentorship, on the following projects:

- Operational Expenses, and the Period Power Project
- Media and Advocacy: Produced 192 podcasts, participation in the UN Commission on the Status of Women 67 and the Paris Peace Forum
- Construction of a bore-hole well in Rogbom
- Advancing civic education and information during the 2023 national elections in Sierra Leone
- The Kamalenka fish farm project
- 16 Days of Activism (building a women's movement)
- Core support for MMW Sierra Leone operations - including Team Building and Capacity Development.

Financial Review

MMW UK is grateful for the support received from individuals and foundations for the important work being done by our partners in Sierra Leone.

During 2023, we were pleased and extremely grateful to have received further significant contributions in the MMW UK arm from Oak Foundation, as well as private donors – funds which were used to further our cause, and which have had measurable impact in broadening our reach through a number of impactful initiatives.

As at the end of 2023, we remain in a strong position financially, and look forward to using the funds to continue our efforts in 2024.

In FY 2023, MMW UK raised a total of income £57,419.05 (2022: £73,519).

At the end of 2023 MMW UK held £19,058.66 worth of funds in the MMW UK bank account (2022: £7645). £14,430 was restricted funding at year end, and £4623 was unrestricted funding.

Reserves Policy

Reliant on donors and grants, the charity intends to maintain low reserves, but reserves that provide a sufficient safety net. The charity reserves policy aims to have the equivalent of one month's operating expenses (circa £4,000) available at all times.

Statement of Trustee Responsibility

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102; The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Trustees are required to prepare accounts for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, of the charitable company for the year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:


- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operations.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable entity. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report.

Signed on behalf of the charity's Trustees

Peta Barrett
Chair of the Board of Trustees



05/09/24



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
Media Matters for Women UK

On accounts for the year
ended

31st December 2023

Charity no
(if any)

1185508

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 / 12 / 2023.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of CIMA (Chartered Institute of Management Accountants).

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date:

19 / 09 / 2024

Name:

Louise Alexander

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (Member in Practice).

Address:

3 Upper High Street, Ipswich, IP1 3NE



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Media Matters for Women UK

No (if any)

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

January 1 2023

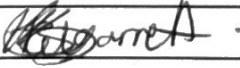
To

December 31 2023

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants	-	53,143	-	53,143	64,848
Donations	4,199	-	-	4,199	8,856
Bank Interest	77	-	-	77	15
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	4,276	53,143	-	57,419	73,519
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	4,276	53,143	-	57,419	73,519
A3 Payments					
Transfers to Sierra Leone	-	40,054	-	40,054	61,209
Consultants	-	3,460	-	3,460	3,200
Software Subscriptions	94	-	-	94	58
Bank Charges	116	-	-	116	237
Travel (for Sebastian Boettcher)	-	1,290	-	1,290	2,122
Computer for SL	-	382	-	382	-
Memberships	60	-	-	60	-
Independent Examination 2022	550	-	-	550	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	820	45,186	-	46,006	66,826
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	820	45,186	-	46,006	66,826
Net of receipts/(payments)	3,457	7,957	-	11,414	6,693
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	1,172	6,473	-	7,645	952
Cash funds this year end	4,629	14,430	-	19,059	7,645

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	CAF Bank	4,629	14,430	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	4,629	14,430	-
(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
	Consultant fees	Oak Foundation	1,440	31 January 2024
	Independent Examiner's fee	Unrestricted	550	31 October 2024
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
			PETA BARRETT	05/09/24

Notes to the Accounts – For the period ended 31 December 2023

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), effective 1 January 2015 and the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

Going concern

The trustees have reviewed the finances for MMW UK and confirm that the charity has sufficient funds for the following 18 months and is a going concern.

Accounting period

The reporting period is 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023.

Donated goods and services

Donated goods and services are recognized as income when;

- The charity has entitlement over the economic benefits that flow from the donation;
- It is probable the associated economic benefits will flow to the entity; and
- Their value can be measured reliably.

Fair value is determined on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity. For example, the amount the charity would be willing to pay in the open market for such goods and services. A corresponding amount is recognized in expenditure within the relevant expense category.

Related Party Transactions:

Trustee Anthony Skinner donated £50 to MMW UK (2022: £0). There were no other Related Party Transactions in 2023.

Grants:

In 2023 MMW UK received £53,142.90 in grants (2022: £64,848).

The grants in 2023 were from The Oak Foundation, as part of their ongoing commitment to supporting MMW.

Donations:

In 2023 MMW received £4,198.69 in donations (2022: £8,656). The donations were as follows:

- £4,148.69 from Sharon Bylenga
- £50 from Anthony Skinner

Restricted Funds:

In 2023, there were restricted funds of £53,143.