RELEASE INTERNATIONAL

England & Wales · Charity number 280577

Details

Other names	CHRISTIAN MISSION TO THE COMMUNIST WORLD, RELEASE INTERNATIONAL, Voice of Persecuted Christians
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	01506576
Registered	1980-08-19
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Release International PO Box 54 Orpington Kent BR5 4RT
Phone	01689823491
Email	info@releaseinternational.org
Website	www.releaseinternational.org

Activities

Objects: To advance the Christian faith in accordance with the Statement of Faith and Ethos Statement; The relief of poverty and other hardship, need or distress, for those who are suffering persecution or marginalisation for their Christian beliefs, and their families, by providing support and assistance; To further the charitable work of the Charity by the advancement of such other charitable purposes as the trustees shall from time to time decide, provided such purposes are consistent with the Statement of Faith and Ethos Statement.

Activities: To provide practical and spiritual support to persecuted Christians overseas.To inform and educate the UK Church about the persecution of Christians overseas.

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Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** Other Defined Groups

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Geography

- **Area of benefit:** WORLDWIDE
- Afghanistan
- Azerbaijan
- Bhutan
- Burkina Faso
- China
- Egypt
- Eritrea
- India
- Iran
- Iraq
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Kyrgyzstan
- Laos
- Lebanon
- Malaysia
- Nigeria
- North Korea
- Northern Ireland
- Pakistan
- Scotland
- Somalia
- Sri Lanka
- Tajikistan
- Turkmenistan
- Ukraine
- Uzbekistan
- Throughout England And Wales

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Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-12-31	£3,728,590	£3,158,662	£1,855,405	27
2024-12-31	£3,098,198	£3,292,630	£1,285,476	29
2023-12-31	£3,461,382	£3,705,409	£1,479,910	31
2022-12-31	£3,084,500	£3,270,081	£1,723,934	29
2021-12-31	£3,123,885	£2,865,591	£1,909,513	28
2020-12-31	£2,978,186	£2,670,432	£1,651,219	26

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
ANDREW WAYLAND		2016-12-07
Christopher Perkins		2025-06-19
Danielle Face		2022-10-13
David John Bentley		2020-06-26
Dr Berhane Asmelash		2018-04-10
Elizabeth Ann Saunders		2025-09-17
MARTIN HENRY PRINT		2024-03-14
Rev Robert Karami		2023-07-03

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RELEASE INTERNATIONAL

England & Wales - Charity number 280577

Accounts

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL

Voice of Persecuted Christians

Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements For the year ended 31 December 2025

Company Limited by Guarantee (01506576)

Registered Charity in England and Wales (280577)

Registered Charity in Scotland (SCO40456)

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

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COMPANY INFORMATION

The trustees of the Charity are also the Company's directors for the purposes of company law.

Trustees/Directors

David Armond CBE QPM	Chair of trustees (Resigned 20 June 2025)
David Bentley	Chair of trustees (Appointed 20 June 2025)
Rev Dr Berhane Asmelash	
Janet Crick	(resigned 1 April 2025)
Danielle Face	
Robert Karami	
Martin Print	
Sarah Shearer FCA	Vice-chair of trustees (resigned 13 March 2025)
Andrew Wayland	
Christopher Perkins	Appointed 19 June 2025
Ann Saunders	Appointed 17 September 2025

Executive leadership:

Christopher Badley	Director of International Ministries
Lynnette Feist	Director of Personnel & Internal Operations (To 30 April 2025)
Paul Robinson	Chief Executive Officer
Nick Bending	Chief Operating Officer (Appointed 17 March 2025)

Charity registration number:	280577
Company registration number:	01506576
Scottish Charity registration number:	SCO40456
Registered office:	Betchworth House, 57-65 Station Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 1DL. (*For security reasons, as we work with many people under threat of intimidation, violence or detention, our registered address is our auditor's Surrey office.)*
Auditors:	Moore Kingston Smith LLP, 9 Appold Street, London, EC2A 2AP
Bankers:	CAF Bank Limited, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4JQ
Solicitors:	Edward Connor, 10 The Point, Market Harborough, LE16 7QU

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

The trustees, who are the charity's directors for the purposes of company law, have pleasure in submitting the Report and Accounts for the year starting on 1 January 2025 and ending 31 December 2025. The trustees have adopted the Provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities applicable to charities preparing the financial statements following the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and comply with the charity's governing document, Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Charitable Objects

The charity is a charitable company and is governed by its Articles of Association. The objects of the charity, as set out in the governing document are:

- To advance the Christian faith in accordance with the Statement of Faith and Ethos Statement
- The relief of poverty and other hardship, need or distress, for those who are suffering persecution or marginalisation for their Christian beliefs, and their families, by providing support and assistance
- To further the charitable work of the Charity by the advancement of such other charitable purposes as the trustees shall from time to time decide, provided such purposes are consistent with the Statement of Faith and Ethos Statement.

The Objects are to be carried out as a proclamation of the Christian beliefs set out in our Statement of Faith, which is available on our website: releaseinternational.org.

How our Activities Deliver Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Around the world, Release International seeks to prayerfully, pastorally, and practically help those who are persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ and, in the UK and Ireland, to help Christians, churches, faith-based organisations, and the general public understand and engage with the reality of persecution.

Those who benefit from our activities are Christians globally whose religious freedoms have been curtailed or abused, and any member of the public wanting to be educated about the circumstances of persecuted Christians and/or become involved in supporting and helping them.

Our approach stems from our Charitable Objects. The Trustees consider Release International's, Calling, Mission, and Operational Strategies fulfil the duty and are confident the Charitable Company's activities are delivering public benefit.

Summary of the Charity's main activities and achievements

Giving them the 'TOOLS' they need to live for Jesus Christ

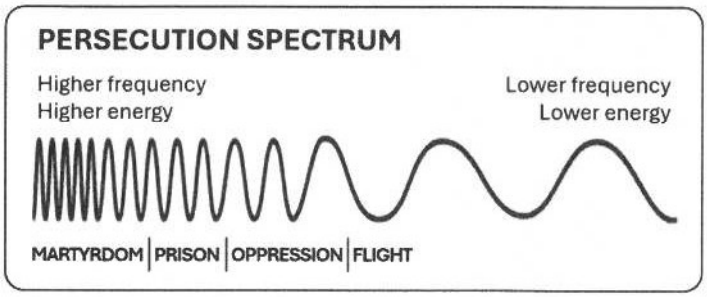
Release International delivers the international aspects of its ministry by working in-country through local churches or organisations, with whom we have established formal partnerships. Where possible these partners are indigenous to the area in which our Ministry operates, but sometimes the work is carried out through Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) where they are well connected with the local church. These partnerships form the main connections between Release International and persecuted Christian communities. The very nature of this work makes it difficult to report on without endangering those being served. However, we can share some stories that demonstrate what we've being doing to benefit persecuted Christians overseas.

History has shown that persecution comes and goes around the world. There are a variety of different types

of persecutors, who have varied reasons for persecuting. No matter who, when or where, the intensity of persecution in the Christian life can be likened to the radio frequency spectrum: at one end, Christians face a high frequency of terrible persecution, at the other end occurrences are rare and Christians pay little or no cost for following Christ'

Our international ministry is focused on lives being impacted at the high frequency end of the persecution spectrum. Our own taxonomy of persecution is used to ensure we do all prayerfully, pastorally, and practically, help:

- Families of Christian MARTYRS
- PRISONERS of faith and their families
- Christians suffering OPPRESSION and violence
- Christians forced to FLEE



Having ministered to and with Christians at this high end of the persecution spectrum, we are then able to continue presenting the first-person VOICE of persecution to those at the lower end of the spectrum, with the hope and prayer that they will become engaged with those suffering and be better prepared should they face serious persecution themselves (2 Tim 3:12).

Our approach to international ministry continues to be prayerful, pastoral and practical. In 2025 we were able to practise the ministry of presence, that is, meet in person and enter into fellowship with persecuted Christians in countries such as Tanzania, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Laos, Nigeria, Pakistan, as well as other more sensitive areas.

Raising their VOICE

Four editions of *VOICE* magazine were delivered on schedule in 2025. The leading features focused on Egypt, Laos, Pakistan Christians in Malaysia, and Nigeria, respectively. As usual, the first edition included our annual *Persecution Trends Report*, for which we received good coverage over the Christmas/New Year period in the Christian media. In addition, the magazine had its first redesign for several years, for the R131 (July-September) edition.

We published eight podcasts during the year. The content was quite varied, including partners, staff members who had been on trips, a book-launch webinar, an International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted (IDOP) tour speaker and a supporter who had recorded a fundraising music CD.

In March the Head of Theology and Media, Kenneth Harrod, was part of a small Release International team that visited our sister ministry in the US, to examine and learn from their various media activities and strategies. 2025 also saw the beginnings of a relationship with the Christian consulting firm Yeomans. The combination of these initiatives saw two significant developments in the second half of the year. First, we developed a new email strategy. New Mailchimp templates provided by a Yeomans designer have greatly improved the appearance of emails we send out. Second, a suite of templates was provided by Yeomans for our Social Media and Film Officer. Social media posting increased considerably during the second half of the year.

In June we published the book *Providence and Persecution*. It features a Foreword by North American Old Testament scholar Dr Stephen G Dempster and an Afterword by ICA colleague Petr Jasek. Commendations were written by John Stevens (National Director, FIEC), Ben Kwashi (Archbishop, Nigeria), Andy Lines (Bishop, AMiE) and Paul Robinson. Reviews have been encouraging. On the back of a presentation of the book at a Staff Day it was suggested we consider the way we now have a 'trilogy' of books on persecution. As a result, it was agreed that Kenneth Harrod embark on a revision of the two earlier books, *Promise and Persecution* and *Jars of Clay* (the latter to be renamed *Power and Persecution*).

On a recommendation Release International became a member of the Evangelical network *Affinity* in 2025. We have contributed monthly prayer items and occasional event-related articles. In addition, relationships through this network yielded two great opportunities: in 2026 we will be leading one of the evening plenary meetings at the inaugural *Rising Lights* conference (which has, effectively, replaced *Word Alive*); and Kenneth Harrod has been invited to be a speaker at the biennial Theological Study Conference in March 2027.

Throughout the course of 2025 the Regional Voice team continued to initiate and develop strong relationships with individual churches and church networks across multiple denominations in the UK, delivering 179 speaking engagements, of which 91 were first time connections. The Church of Scotland Guild partnership entered its first year of fundraising and regular speaking engagements. We delivered talks to 57 local and regional groups and received more than £24,000 from the central fund for the Operation Hope project in Egypt.

Our fruitful partnership with Artless Theatre Company concluded in 2025 after delivering a total of 80 performances. The finale event took place in Kensington Temple church in London and was attended by around 350 people including Petr Jasek, whose story is told by the play, and who participated in a Q&A with the audience afterwards.

To accompany the launch of our new book *Providence and Persecution* we delivered an online panel discussion event with CEO Paul Robinson, Head of Theology and Media, Kenneth Harrod, and special guests John Stevens (FIEC National Director) and Archbishop Ben Kwashi. The discussion was very rich and helpful.

We developed a more coordinated approach to the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church in 2025 producing a series of church resources on the theme *Pastors Under Pressure.* This accompanied our IDOP film shot in Sri Lanka earlier in the year. The film was widely viewed by churches across the country. As part of our IDOP focus we invited former prisoner of faith Andrew Brunson to speak in 7 venues across the country. He shared a powerful message reflecting on his own experience of persecution and encouraging those who heard him to prepare to stand in difficult times. Almost 1,000 people attended our events.

Exhibiting at Christian conferences and festivals continued to be a fruitful element of our engagement strategy in 2025. We developed a new exhibition presentation focused on the theme of supporting the families of Christian martyrs with a particular emphasis on Nigeria. We exhibited at Spring Harvest Skegness and Minehead, Bible by the Beach, Big Church Festival, Keswick Port Stewart, ReFuel, EMW Aberystwyth, Bangor Worldwide, and several regional day conferences. We also renewed our partnership with New Wine where we sponsored the Food Court tent serving and selling Hazaq Coffee as well as having an exhibition hut. A new focus in 2025 saw us exhibit at several church leaders' conferences including the Elim Summit, Baptist Assembly and FIEC. These were strategic opportunities to meet many leaders across these networks.

We continued to engage with Trust funds throughout the year maintaining funding from several and reengaging others with new applications.

Future plans

Giving them the 'TOOLS' they need to live for Jesus Christ

The primary role of our international partners is to extend the kingdom of God and His loving care in their communities, whatever the situation they may face. We will continue to support them by listening to their VOICE and so providing persecuted Christians with the 'TOOLS' they ask for to live more fully for Jesus and fulfil the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20).

We will continue to visit our partners, practising our ministry of presence, encouraging them in their callings, sharing in fellowship and hearing their VOICE. We will continue to develop and monitor projects with them that ensure the gospel of Christ will be proclaimed in the hardest places around the world.

More Christians are martyred in Nigeria than anywhere else in the world, and we will continue to support their families and other survivors of violent attacks against Christian communities. We will also continue to support their work of spreading the gospel of Christ, despite the extreme danger and hardship they face.

Other Christians continue to face imprisonment because of their faith; an ongoing trend which continues in Eritrea and other places such as Iran and North Korea. We will remain in prayer for them and their families. Many will need practical support, and our projects will aim to provide some of their needs.

Many Christians will still need to flee from their homes because of persecution, especially in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. Some will be forced into hiding. They will be held up in prayer during 2026 and we will work towards finding them new places to settle where they can live out their lives for Christ in safety.

As has been true for 57 years, Release International will remain committed to developing the bonds of fellowship we have with our persecuted brothers and sisters aiming to deliver, during 2026, over 60 projects in more than 30 countries. As persecution in those countries continues, we will be creative and flexible in ensuring we provide the support and 'TOOLS' persecuted believers ask for and need.

Raising their VOICE

In many ways, 2025 was a transitional year and one in which considerable progress was made. In 2026 we will be featured at *Rising Lights* in April (see above). We also plan to publish the revisions to *Promise and Persecution* and to *Jars of Clay/Power and Persecution* and, because of low stock numbers, are contemplating working on a new-look edition of *Tortured for Christ* (in the second half of the year). A media trip to Ethiopia in February/March will yield material for this year's IDOP campaign.

Developing a more strategic approach to social media will be one of the key aims this year. The Head of Theology and Media Voice will be working with the Head of Regional Voice Ministry and their respective team members on this. More work is also planned on the website. Considerable work is also envisaged, across all media platforms, moving over to—and promoting—the planned name change in 2026.

Meeting with real people is just as important to us in the UK as it is overseas. We will further develop our church engagement, reaching into individual churches, church networks, denominations and leadership groups to raise the prophetic VOICE of persecuted believers.

For 2026 we have developed an overarching engagement theme: *Light in the darkest places*. The theme creates a broad framework which allows us to tell a compelling story about our ministry across the majority of our outputs. It enables us to talk specifically about the missional aspect of our work with persecuted Christians who are shining Christ's light in some of the most hostile parts of the world.

In connection with this theme, CEO Paul Robinson is leading the *Light Walk Challenge* to raise funds and awareness. Along with around 25 supporters he will carry a large wooden cross to the top of England's highest peak, Scafell Pike, in the middle of the night. We aim to raise £25,000 in sponsorship. Building on this event, we will encourage individual churches to organise their own local Light Walk events.

Our exhibition presentation will also pick up this theme, and we are planning to exhibit at a similar range of conferences as in 2025 including New Wine, Big Church Festival and the Keswick Convention. Additionally, we have been invited to participate in one of the main evening celebrations at the inaugural Rising Lights conference organised by FIEC. This is an exciting and strategic opportunity to powerfully engage with a large audience. We will also continue to build our engagement into church networks by attending various leaders' conference.

Our Church of Scotland Guild partnership will continue into its second year where we expect to fulfil a similar number of engagements and receive a similar level of income.

Following the success of the *If Prison Walls Could Speak* production, we expect to finalise a script and launch a new production in partnership with another major Christian theatre company in the autumn of 2026.

The International Day of Prayer (IDOP) will again play a significant part in our effort to raise the VOICE in 2026. We will produce a range of high-quality church resources to accompany our IDOP film, and we are planning a speaker tour with an Ethiopian partner. In order to maximise in person contact with supporters we are also planning a series of regional supporter events.

Structure, Governance and Management

Release International is a Christian Ministry, registered as a Charity and regulated by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, It is also registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. It is constituted as a Company limited by guarantee. The Company operates under its Articles of Association, which were updated in April 2022. Release International was founded in 1968 as the Christian Mission to the Communist World, legally changing its name to Release International in June 2017.

During 2025, the decision was taken by the Board of Trustees, after a period of investigation, risk analysis, and planning, to introduce a working name for Release International's work in the UK. The aim of introducing the working name is in response to supporter confusion about who we are and what we do as Release International. The new working name of Voice of Persecuted Christians provides clarity of the charity's purpose for both new and existing supporters. The working name was registered with the Charity Commission in December 2025, and the name will be communicated to supporters in 2026.

The Board of Trustees normally meets four times each year and administers the Charity through its committees, sub-committees and workgroups.

The Strategic Leadership Team holds executive responsibility for implementing the policies and strategies approved by the Board, and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), appointed by the Board, manages the day-to-day operations of the Company.

The Board has an established process for identifying and interviewing potential new Trustees. Vacancies are identified where there are gaps in experience and skills. All prospective Trustees will be practising Christians, who uphold Release International's Statement of Faith, Ethos Statement, and Trustee Code of Conduct. Nominations arising from this process are considered by the Board as a whole and they may subsequently be invited to join the Board. Trustees serve no minimum or maximum terms of service but retire by rotation with the opportunity to stand for re-election.

New Trustees go through an induction and training process to familiarise them with Release International, the persecution sector, and their responsibilities as Trustees and Directors under Charity and Company law. New Trustees are referred to the Charity Commission's guide, The Essential Trustee (CC3), and they also meet with the Leadership Team and other Trustees. Each year the Chair and the CEO plan areas for trustee training which, with the Board's agreement, are covered in conjunction with other meetings.

Risk Management

The Board recognises that avoiding and mitigating risk is better than simply being covered by insurance. Release International operates a risk management strategy, which identifies generic risks which are reviewed annually. Dynamic or current risks are assessed and reported each quarter, together with strategies to mitigate those risks. This approach has proved helpful in focusing attention on areas which require additional monitoring or action.

A major risk to the Ministry is a significant reduction in income. The fact that our income sources are spread over many individuals and churches mitigates the likelihood of a sudden dramatic change, but we monitor this risk closely. Accordingly, our financial and data systems assess income weekly and monthly to identify any significant variation and to determine if specific action is required.

As for all organisations, there is a significant risk of a malicious attack on our IT systems. This is mitigated by security measures, including pro-active testing. Staff are regularly trained and reminded about IT security,

particularly phishing attacks.

Due to the nature of the Ministry, there is a risk when travelling to visit partners in contexts where they are being persecuted. This is mitigated by extensive pre-trip briefing and security training, and good communication with partners to assess the current situation.

Financial Review Year ended 31st December 2025

We thank God for His provision through our many faithful supporters. The Trustees express their gratitude for this continuing generosity.

Donations excluding ICA partners rose by 12% to £2,616k (2024: £2,318k) and donations from ICA partners decreased by 1% to £612k (2024: £619k), virtually maintaining the generous support seen in 2024 by our fellow ICA ministries.

Unrestricted donations from individuals, churches, trusts and legacies rose by 30% to £2,173k (2024: £1,670k) and restricted donations rose by 17% to £851k (2024: £724k).

Total income for the year was £3,729k (2024: £3,098k), with total unrestricted income of £2,265k and restricted income of £1,463k.

Total expenditure fell by 4% to £3,159k (2024: £3,293k). The expenditure on grants to international partners rose by 6% to £1,285k (2024: £1,204k).

Staff costs fell by 19% to £1,096k (2024: £1,359k). There was no pay increase for staff members during the 2025 period.

The Board has agreed a 3% pay increase for 2026 applied to all members of the Release International team.

Balancing income and expenditure

2025 saw the provision of good income and well managed costs across the ministry. That lead to an overall surplus in income of £570k. This level of surplus will, in line with the Ministry objectives, be put towards furthering the work of Release International both overseas and in the UK. The budget for 2026 has been set as a balanced budget, with the Ministry working to live within our means.

Grants Policy

A significant proportion of the overseas work of the Ministry is carried out through partners local to areas of persecution that are usually indigenous. Grants are made for specific named purposes to partners that share our objectives. Receipts and reports of the work carried out are obtained. Staff members carry out visits to evaluate potential projects, monitor existing projects, and assess the outcome of completed projects on a sample basis.

Reserves Policy

After considering the Charity Commission's guidance CC19 (Charities and Reserves) the Trustees have agreed to maintain a 'range' as the basis for the level of General funds, which are 'free reserves'. Currently the reserves policy states that this range is set to between £400k to £500k. This continues to allow the Ministry to maintain operations if donations from individuals and churches dropped by 10 -15% from current levels and income from legacies dropped by 20%.

The Trustees also agreed at the December 2021 Board meeting to designate £250k as a property reserve

which was the value paid for the long lease of the office in September 2021.

The free reserves as at 31st December 2025, amounted to £1,074k (2024: £457k), which is 139% above the target range mid-point. Trustees deemed this to be a good position and a welcome provision and that this figure would be reduced over the coming 12 months through enhanced activity both internationally and within the UK furthering the work of the ministry.

Investment Policy

Income is largely received through voluntary donations and cannot be guaranteed. The Ministry has no permanent endowment. The only funds that are not expendable within 12 months of receipt are those held for reserves or money associated with international projects that remain active beyond the year end. The Board has considered this position and seeks to place funds in savings accounts to achieve a balance between accessibility and higher returns. Funds may be invested in accounts with up to 12 months' notice, but it is not considered prudent at this time to invest income for the longer term. The funds are now spread across four institutions: Barclays, CAF Bank, Metro Bank and Flagstone Group Ltd., a cash deposit platform, who survey market deposit rates and facilitate the placing of deposits with banking institutions.

Pay for key management personnel

All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration from the charitable Company as Trustees (Rev Dr B. Asmelash is paid a retainer as a consultant on Eritrea: see note 8, page 21). Expenses reimbursed to Trustees are disclosed in note 8, page 21.

The key management personnel in charge of directing and running the operations of the Charity comprise the Strategic Leadership Team, as set out on page 3 of this report. Salaries for all staff, including key management staff, are determined on appointment to the post in line with Release International's agreed 5-level salary banding, and in line with the requirements and responsibilities of the role. All roles are reviewed annually through the appraisal system to ensure that any significant changes which may affect remuneration are addressed. The Trustees periodically carry out a review of all salaries across the Ministry, through a benchmarking exercise, to ensure that they remain reasonable and competitive.

Trustees' Responsibilities in Relation to the Financial Statements

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. The accounts in this report have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 1-5 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Company law requires the trustees to ensure financial statements are prepared for each financial year. Under that law, the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law, the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the income and expenditure of the Company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

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

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which are sufficient to show and explain

the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities. The Trustees are committed to compliance with the *Charity Governance Code*.

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant information that the Company's auditors are not aware of, and each Trustee has taken all the steps necessary to ensure they are aware of any relevant information, and to establish that the Company's auditors are aware of the information.

Auditors

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

This report was approved by the Board on 18.06.26 and signed on its behalf by:

David Bentley
Chair of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Release International

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Release International ('the charitable company' for the year ended 31 December 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs(UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the audit of financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Corporation in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and the provisions available for audits of small entities, in the circumstances set out in note 8 of the financial statements and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our

opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' annual report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Charities Act 2011 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemption in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and from preparing a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 11, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under Section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Companies Act 2006 and Section 151 of the Charities Act 2011 and report to you in accordance with regulations made under those Acts.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are; to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council and UK taxation legislation.
- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006; and to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section

44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, and in respect of the consolidated financial statements, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 8 of the Charities Act 2011. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters which we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members, as a body, and the charity's trustees, as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinion we have formed.

Signed by:
Andrew Stickland
3890148ACDE440E...

Andrew Stickland (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor

9 Appold Street
London
EC2A 2AP

2/7/2026
Date: .....

Moore Kingston Smith LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Balance Sheet at 31st December 2025

Company Number 01506576

	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	10		262,528		256,182
Intangible Assets	10		-		-
Current assets					
Investments held for resale	20	-		-	
Debtors	11	213,522		88,416	
Short term investments		153,647		339,000	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,602,524		1,021,983	
		1,969,693		1,449,399	
Creditors – Amounts falling due within one year	12	(156,816)		(200,105)	
Net current assets			1,812,877		1,249,294
Creditors – Amounts falling due in over one year	13		(220,000)		(220,000)
Total assets less current liabilities			**1,855,405**		**1,285,476**
Reserves					
Unrestricted funds					
General Fund	16		1,074,193		456,973
Designated Funds	16		330,829		330,829
Restricted funds	17		450,383		497,674
Total funds			**1,855,405**		**1,285,476**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and with FRS102.

The notes on pages 17 to 27 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board on 18.06.26 and signed on its behalf by:

David Bentley

Chair of Trustees

Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 31st December 2025

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total Funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total Funds £
Donations and legacies	3	2,173,349	-	1,463,388	3,636,737	1,670,232	-	1,342,073	3,012,305
Charitable activities									
Literature and Events		33,228	-	56	33,284	35,511	-	501	36,012
Interest receivable		48,608	-	-	48,608	33,783	-	-	33,783
Other		9,961	-	-	9,961	16,098	-	-	16,098
Total income		**2,265,146**	**-**	**1,463,444**	**3,728,590**	**1,755,624**	**-**	**1,342,574**	**3,098,198**
Expenditure on									
Costs of raising funds									
Fundraising	4	213,591	-	26,348	239,938	257,071	-	34,165	291,236
Charitable activities									
Providing them the TOOLS	4	360,659	-	1,490,758	1,851,417	422,373	-	1,214,476	1,636,849
Raising their VOICE		1,047,765	-	19,542	1,067,307	1,350,547	-	13,998	1,364,545
Total expenditure		**1,622,015**	**-**	**1,536,647**	**3,158,662**	**2,029,991**	**-**	**1,262,639**	**3,292,630**
Net income/ (expenditure)		643,131	-	(73,203)	569,928	(274,367)	-	79,935	(194,432)
Transfers	16&17	(25,911)		25,911	-	-	-	-	-
Net income/ (expenditure) after transfers		**617,220**	**-**	**(47,292)**	**569,928**	**(274,367)**	**-**	**79,935**	**(194,432)**
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2025	16&17	456,973	330,829	497,674	1,285,476	731,340	330,829	417,739	1,479,908
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2025	16&17	**1,074,193**	**330,829**	**450,382**	**1,855,404**	**456,973**	**330,829**	**497,674**	**1,285,476**

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 17 to 27 form part of these accounts.

Cash flow statement for the year ended 31st December 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
Net cash (used in)/generated by operating activities	361,541	(188,952)
Cashflows from Investing Activities		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(14,962)	(20,784)
Movement in Short-term investments	185,353	18,225
Disposal of investments	-	639,210
Interest received	48,608	33,783
Net cash generated by/(used in) investing activities	218,999	670,434
Net (decrease)/increase in cash	580,540	481,482
Cash at the beginning of the year	1,021,983	540,501
Cash at the end of the year	**1,602,524**	**1,021,983**

Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Net Income / (Expenditure)	569,928	(194,432)
Adjusted for		
Depreciation charge	8,616	6,622
Amortisation charge	-	1,044
Receipt of gift of investment for resale	-	-
Sale of investments	-	-
Loss on sale of Investments	-	35,790
Interest from deposits	(48,608)	(33,783)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(125,106)	5,186
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(43,289)	(9,379)
Net cash used in operating activities	**361,541**	**(188,952)**

Analysis of cash, cash equivalents and net debt

2025	As at 1 Jan 2025	Cash flows	Non cash movements	As at 31 Dec 2025
Cash at bank	176,057	24,203	-	200,260
Cash on deposit	845,926	556,338	-	1,402,264
Net Cash	1,021,983	580,541	-	1,602,524

2024	As at 1 Jan 2024	Cash flows	Non cash movements	As at 31 Dec 2024
Cash at bank	274,683	(98,626)	-	176,057
Cash on deposit	265,818	580,108	-	845,926
Net cash	540,501	481,482	-	1,021,983

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting Policies

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) - Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

1.1 Going Concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern basis is appropriate and have considered possible events or conditions that might cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees have made this assessment for a period of at least one year from the date of approval of the financial statements and in particular have considered the charity's forecasts and projections and have taken account of pressures on donation and investment income and expectation from the current economic challenge.

The trustees have concluded that there is a reasonable expectation that the charitable entity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

The charitable company therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements.

1.2 Basis of Accounting

Release International Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

1.3 Fund Accounting

Funds held are either

- Unrestricted general funds which are funds that can be used within the charitable objectives at the Trustees' discretion.
- Designated funds are funds that the trustees have earmarked for a specific purpose, even though they are not legally restricted by a donor.
- Restricted funds which are funds that can only be used for specified purposes. The restriction may be imposed by the donor or the terms under which the funds were raised.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations, interest and rent are recognised in the accounts on a received basis. For donations made under the gift aid scheme, the gift aid is recognised in the year in which the gift is received. Gifts in kind are valued at their value to the Charitable Company.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the Charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised, and notification has been made by the executor(s) that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably, and the Charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds are costs incurred in encouraging voluntary contributions to the Charitable Company and their associated support costs.
- Expenditure on charitable activities are costs directly relating to the objects of the Charitable Company and include grants made, direct costs incurred, and an apportionment of support costs as shown in note 7.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the Charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the Charity's activities. The Charity initially identifies the costs of its support functions. It then identifies those costs which relate to the governance function. Having identified its governance costs, the remaining support costs together with the governance costs are apportioned between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities pro rata to staff full time equivalents.

Grants payable are payments made to third parties in the furtherance of the charitable objectives of the Charitable Company. The grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which the awards are made. Grants where the beneficiary has not been informed or has to meet certain conditions before the grant is released are not accrued but are noted as financial commitments.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

1.6 Tangible Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are all used for charitable purposes and are shown at cost less depreciation. The threshold at which purchases are not normally capitalised is £10,000. Depreciation on assets is calculated to write off the cost over their estimated economic useful lives. Assets are depreciated annually on a straight-line basis over 4 years for computer equipment, 5 years for office equipment and the remainder of the lease for leasehold improvements. The leasehold property is amortised monthly over the remainder of the lease.

1.7 Intangible Fixed Assets

Intangible assets are the development costs for specific IT projects which are capitalised at cost, provided it is likely to bring future economic benefit to the Charity. If the criteria for recognition as assets are not met, the expense is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which it is incurred. Capitalised IT costs include all direct and indirect costs that are directly attributable to the development process. The costs are amortised using the straight-line method over 4 years being their estimated useful lives. The threshold at which costs are not normally capitalised is £10,000.

1.8 Foreign Currencies

Income and expenditure in foreign currencies are converted into sterling at the rates of exchange ruling on the date of transaction. Amounts held at the balance sheet date are converted at the rates prevailing at the balance sheet date.

1.9 Pension Costs

The Charity operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees which is funded by contributions from the employee and employer contributions payable to scheme and employees' personal pension plans are charged in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate. Further details of the scheme are given in note 15.

1.10 Operating Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

1.11 Financial Instruments

The Charitable Company only has basic financial instruments measured at amortised cost, with no financial instruments classified as 'other' or basic instruments measured at fair value.

1.12 Investments

The charity has a policy of selling donated shares upon receipt of donation. However, where for any reason donated shares are not sold at the balance sheet date these are listed as investments, at their market value at the balance sheet date.

Realised and unrealised gains or losses for the period are accounted for through the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which they occur.

1.13 Cash and Cash equivalents

Cash and Cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposit held at call with banks, and other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less

2. Critical Estimates

In the view of the Trustees applying the accounting policies adopted, no judgements were required apart from those listed below.

- the allocation of support costs
- depreciation rates of fixed assets
- estimation of legacy accrual

3. Donations and Gifts

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £
Individuals, churches, other groups and trusts	1,765,406	850,953	2,616,359	1,594,111	723,508	2,317,619
ICA partner ministries	-	612,435	612,435	-	618,565	618,565
Legacies	407,943	-	407,943	76,121	-	76,121
	2,173,349	**1,463,388**	**3,636,737**	**1,670,232**	**1,342,073**	**3,012,305**

4. Expenditure

	Grants £ (see note 5)	Direct costs £ (see note 6)	Support costs £ (see note 7)	2025 Total £
Costs of raising funds				
Fundraising	-	204,745	35,193	239,938
Charitable activities				
Providing them the TOOLS	1,285,223	475,537	90,657	1,851,417
Raising their VOICE	-	894,668	172,639	1,067,307
	1,285,223	**1,574,951**	**298,489**	**3,158,662**

	Grants £ (see note 5)	Direct costs £ (see note 6)	Support costs £ (see note 7)	2024 Total £
Costs of raising funds				
Fundraising	-	250,195	41,041	291,236
Charitable activities				
Providing them the TOOLS	1,203,807	341,709	91,333	1,636,849
Raising their VOICE	-	1,172,682	191,863	1,364,545
	1,203,807	**1,764,586**	**324,237**	**3,292,630**

5. Grants made

Grant payments made were for the charitable purposes of Release International. They provided support for:

- Families of Christian martyrs
- Prisoners of faith and their families
- Christians suffering oppression and violence
- Christians forced to flee

The Ministry has taken advantage of the exemption available in the Charity SORP not to disclose specific information in relation to grant making, on the grounds that the disclosure could result in serious prejudice to the grant maker and/or the recipient institution, individuals working for the recipient institution or individuals.

No support costs have been allocated to the total amount of the grants.

Prior Year Adjustment: Note 5 previously showed Unrestricted Grants made in 2024 of £149,706 and Total grants made of £1,474,771. These grants had already been included in the figure for Restricted Grants. Figures below reflect this correction

	Total 2025		Total 2024	
	No.	£	No.	£
Central Asia	2	10,900	1	34,436
Middle East/Gulf	9	83,323	7	70,566
North East Africa	12	484,029	9	412,067
West Africa	7	63,055	6	69,789
South Asia	13	156,183	18	110,671
South East Asia	7	47,484	7	36,132
Other	14	440,249	13	470,147
	64	1,285,223	61	1,203,808

6. Direct costs

*See note 8	2025 Staff costs* £	Other costs £	Total costs £	2024 Staff costs* £	Other costs £	Total costs £
Fundraising	112,851	91,895	204,745	139,884	110,310	250,194
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	235,128	240,409	475,537	290,534	51,175	341,709
Raising their VOICE	541,787	352,881	894,668	668,996	503,686	1,172,682
	889,766	**685,185**	**1,574,951**	**1,099,414**	**665,171**	**1,764,585**

7. Support costs

*See note 8	2025 Staff costs* £	Other costs £	Total costs £	2024 Staff costs* £	Other costs £	Total costs £
Fundraising	24,379	10,814	35,193	32,825	8,216	41,041
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	62,799	27,858	90,657	73,048	18,285	91,333
Raising their VOICE	119,589	53,050	172,639	153,453	38,410	191,863
	206,766	**91,722**	**298,489**	**259,326**	**64,911**	**324,237**

8. Staff costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	895,533	1,118,652
Social security costs	98,684	115,446
Pension costs	92,999	111,853
Group Life policy	9,316	12,789
	1,096,532	**1,358,740**

Total split as follows:	Direct (note 6)	Support (note 7)	2025 Total staff costs	Direct (note 6)	Support (note 7)	2024 Total staff costs
Costs of raising funds	112,851	24,379	137,229	139,884	32,825	172,709
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	235,128	62,799	297,927	290,534	73,048	363,582
Raising their VOICE	541,787	119,589	661,376	668,996	153,453	822,449
	889,766	**206,766**	**1,096,532**	**1,099,414**	**259,326**	**1,358,740**

The Trustees receive no remuneration. During 2025, 2 Trustees (2024: 4 Trustees) received out of pocket expenses of £535 (2024: £707). During the year donations from 6 Trustees (2024 : 6) were received totalling £3,900 (2024 : £6,195)

The remuneration and benefits received by key management personnel in the year were £251,502 (2024: £363,964). During the year there was 1 employee whose remuneration was in the bracket £60,000 - £69,999 (2024: 1).

No termination payments are included in the above staff costs (2024: £43,387)

The average number of employees was:	2025	2024
Management	3	3
Administration and support	5	5
Overseas project management and UK information and education	19	21
	27	29

9. Net Income/Expenditure for the Year

The net income/ expenditure for the year is stated after charging:

		2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation of assets	(see note 11)	8,616	7,666
Auditors' remuneration - audit		21,070	22,632
Auditors' remuneration - non audit services		24,208	-
Other accountancy fees		-	1,050
Hire of equipment		4,662	5,625

Non audit services include the provision of bookkeeping services to April 2025 and preparation of the prior year statutory financial statements.

At the year end, amounts relating to these services have not been accrued.

10. Fixed Assets

	Property	Computer Equipment	Office Equipment	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost				
At 1st January 2025	250,000	99,496	37,408	386,904
Additions	-	14,962		14,962
Disposals	-	(42,285)	-	(42,285)
At 31st December 2025	250,000	72,173	37,408	359,581
Depreciation				
At 1st January 2025	11,400	85,916	33,406	130,722
Charge for year	3,420	4,179	1,017	8,616
Disposals	-	(42,285)	-	(42,285)
At 31st December 2025	14,820	47,810	34,423	97,053
Net book values				
At 31st December 2025	235,180	24,363	2,985	262,528
At 31st December 2024	238,600	13,580	4,002	256,182

Depreciation rates: Straight-line
Property - remainder of lease
Computers - 33.3% per annum
Office equipment - 25% per annum

Intangible Assets

	Software Development	Total
	£	£
Cost		
At 1st January 2025	25,345	25,345
Additions	-	-
Disposals	-	-
At 31st December 2025	25,345	25,345
Depreciation		
At 1st January 2025	25,345	25,345
Charge for year	-	-
Disposals	-	-
At 31st December 2025	25,345	25,345
Net book values		
At 31st December 2025	-	-
At 31st December 2024	-	-

11. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Due within one year		
Other debtors	32,809	50,863
Prepayments	38,999	29,946
Accrued income	141,714	7,607
	213,522	88,416

12. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within One Year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	66,987	57,918
Other creditors	18,564	20,520
Interest free loan	30,000	30,000
Accruals	41,265	91,667
	156,816	200,105

13. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Over One Year

	2025 £	2024 £
Interest free loan	220,000	220,000

14. Members' Liability

The Charitable Company is limited by guarantee and each of the members is bound to contribute a sum not exceeding £10 in certain circumstances as set out in clause 7 of the Articles of Association.

15. Pension Commitments

The Charitable Company participates in the Global Connections pension scheme which is a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets are held separately from those of the Charitable Company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge representing contributions payable by the Charitable Company to the scheme and to other personal pension schemes amounted to between 7% or 10% of gross salaries depending on whether the staff member also contributes (2024: 7% or 10%). At 31st December 2025 there were no significant contributions outstanding payable to the scheme. The Charitable Company's pension arrangements comply with its statutory obligations in respect of auto-enrolment.

16. Unrestricted Funds

16 - Unrestricted funds

	Balance 01-Jan-25	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-25
	£	£	£	£	£
General Reserve Fund	456,973	2,265,146	(1,622,015)	(25,911)	1,074,193
Designated Fund - Grant Reponse Fund	81,399	-	-	-	81,399
Designated Fund - Property Reserve	249,430	-	-	(14,250)	235,180
Designated Fund - Future Property Fund	-	-	-	14,250	14,250
	787,802	2,265,146	(1,622,015)	(25,911)	1,405,022

	Balance 01-Jan-24	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-24
	£	£	£	£	£
General Reserve Fund	731,340	1,755,624	(2,029,991)	-	456,973
Designated Fund - Grant Reponse Fund	81,399	-	-	-	81,399
Designated Fund - Property reserve	249,430	-	-	-	249,430
	1,062,169	1,755,624	(2,029,991)	-	787,802

The reserve policy is explained on page 10 of the trustee report.

The Grant Response Fund allows Release International to be more agile and give grants to overseas partners, usually funded by restricted gifts in anticipation of funds being received later in the year.

The Property Reserve Fund relates to the lease of the office building purchased in September 2021 and has been set aside as a designated fund, so that it does not form part of general reserves. This will reduce in line with the Net Book Value of the leased asset.

Trustees have designated a Future Property Fund which will increase in line with the depreciation of the current lease, in order to provide funds for a future property at the time the lease expires.

17. Restricted Funds

These are donations received for specific purposes as requested by the donors. The first four funds are for the taxonomy of persecution (page 5 of the trustee report) The other funds are many and varied and where appropriate have been grouped into geographical areas. They are all within our objectives as described on page 4.

	Balance 01-Jan-25	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-25
	£	£	£	£	£
Christians forced to flee	9,541	107,500	(114,081)	-	2,960
Families of Christian martyrs	1,834	124,882	(107,026)	(2,821)	16,870
Prisoners of faith and their families	30,593	83,682	(87,615)	-	26,660
Christians suffering oppression and violence	9,332	204,238	(212,901)	(26,028)	(25,358)
Central Asia	749	14,565	(14,541)	-	773
Middle East/Gulf	15,629	75,759	(88,746)	2,821	5,463
North East Africa	254,958	461,172	(500,402)	702	216,431
West Africa	33,874	119,771	(76,326)	-	77,319
South Asia	106,624	83,324	(168,084)	24,902	46,765
South East Asia	8,119	76,199	(54,284)	-	30,034
Personal Support	1,187	29,539	(30,726)	-	0
Generic funds and other	25,233	82,812	(81,916)	26,335	52,465
	497,674	1,463,444	(1,536,647)	25,911	450,382

	Balance 01-Jan-24	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-24
	£	£	£	£	£
Christians forced to flee	7,810	145,696	(139,865)	(4,100)	9,541
Families of Christian martyrs	6,763	50,009	(54,938)	-	1,834
Prisoners of faith and their families	52,420	68,617	(90,431)	(13)	30,593
Christians suffering oppression and violence	5,233	157,240	(173,265)	20,124	9,332
Central Asia	5,277	39,408	(34,436)	(9,500)	749
Middle East/Gulf	19,202	84,854	(70,566)	(17,861)	15,629
North East Africa	250,930	423,646	(419,942)	324	254,958
West Africa	42,359	61,304	(69,789)	-	33,874
South Asia	24,155	193,024	(110,670)	115	106,624
South East Asia	12,199	28,558	(36,132)	3,494	8,119
Personal Support	1,187	17,744	(17,744)	-	1,187
Generic funds and other	(9,796)	72,473	(44,860)	7,416	25,233
	417,739	1,342,573	(1,262,638)	-	497,674

During 2025, amounts have been transferred from general restricted funds to cover overspends in other specific restricted funds. In addition, amounts were transferred from unrestricted funds to restricted, to cover overspends.

18. Analysis of Net Assets Between Funds

2025	Fixed assets	Net current assets	Non current liabilites	Totals
	£	£		£
Restricted funds	-	450,383	-	450,383
Unrestricted funds	262,528	1,362,494	(220,000)	1,405,022
	262,528	1,812,877	(220,000)	1,855,405

2024	Fixed assets	Net current assets	Non current liabilites	Totals
	£	£		£
Restricted funds	-	497,674	-	497,674
Unrestricted funds	256,182	751,620	(220,000)	787,802
	256,182	1,249,294	(220,000)	1,285,476

19. Other Financial Commitments

	2025		2024	
	Office Equipment	Premises Rental	Office Equipment	Premises Rental
Operating Leases	£	£	£	£
Due under 1 year	4,276	225	4,276	225
Due between 2 to 5 years	16,034	900	17,103	900
Due after more than 5 years	-	13,669	3,207	14,569
	20,310	14,794	24,586	15,694

The operating lease is for the franking machine. A new lease was started in October 2024 for 6 years at £891 + VAT per quarter.

The premises rent is ground rent for the leasehold property, which is £225 per year.

20. Taxation

As a Charity Release International benefits from exemptions on income and gains falling within Sections 466-493 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 to the extent they are derived from charitable activities.

21. Related party transactions

Revd Dr Berhane Asmelash, who is a Trustee, receives no remuneration for his role as Trustee. He was paid as a consultant on Eritrea £7,875 (2024: £7,875)

22. Capital Commitments

There were no capital commitments not provided for in the financial statements (2024: none).

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL

England & Wales - Charity number 280577

Accounts

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL

Voice of Persecuted Christians

Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements For the year ended 31 December 2024

Company Limited by Guarantee (01506576)

Registered Charity in England and Wales (280577)

Registered Charity in Scotland (SCO40456)

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COMPANY INFORMATION

The trustees of the Charity are also the Company's directors for the purposes of company law.

Trustees/Directors

David Armond CBE QPM	Chair of trustees
Rev Dr Berhane Asmelash	
David Bentley	
Janet Crick	(resigned 1 April 2025)
Danielle Face	
Robert Karami	
Martin Print	(appointed 28 March 2024)
Sarah Shearer FCA	Vice-chair of trustees (resigned 13 March 2025)
Andrew Wayland	

Executive leadership:

Christopher Badley	Director of International Ministries
Lynnette Feist	Director of Personnel & Internal Operations
Laura Hayes	Director of Engagement UK & Ireland (To 30 November 2024)
Patrick Lineen	Director of Finance & Company Secretary (To 28 December 2024)
Paul Robinson	Chief Executive Officer

Charity registration number:	280577
Company registration number:	01506576
Scottish Charity registration number:	SCO40456
Registered office:	Betchworth House, 57-65 Station Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 1DL. (*For security reasons, as we work with many people under threat of intimidation, violence or detention, our registered address is our auditor's Surrey office.)*
Auditors:	Moore Kingston Smith LLP, 9 Appold Street, London, EC2A 2AP
Bankers:	CAF Bank Limited, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4JQ
Solicitors:	Edward Connor, 10 The Point, Market Harborough, LE16 7QU

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

The trustees, who are the charity's directors for the purposes of company law, have pleasure in submitting the Report and Accounts for the year starting on 1 January 2024 and ending 31 December 2024. The trustees have adopted the Provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities applicable to charities preparing the financial statements following the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and comply with the charity's governing document, Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Charitable Objects

The charity is a charitable company and is governed by its Articles of Association. The objects of the charity, as set out in the governing document are:

- To advance the Christian faith in accordance with the Statement of Faith and Ethos Statement
- The relief of poverty and other hardship, need or distress, for those who are suffering persecution or marginalisation for their Christian beliefs, and their families, by providing support and assistance
- To further the charitable work of the Charity by the advancement of such other charitable purposes as the trustees shall from time to time decide, provided such purposes are consistent with the Statement of Faith and Ethos Statement.

The Objects are to be carried out as a proclamation of the Christian beliefs set out in our Statement of Faith, which is available on our website: releaseinternational.org.

How our Activities Deliver Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Around the world, Release International seeks to prayerfully, pastorally, and practically help those who are persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ and, in the UK and Ireland, to help Christians, churches, faith-based organisations, and the general public understand and engage with the reality of persecution.

Those who benefit from our activities are Christians globally whose religious freedoms have been curtailed or abused, and any member of the public wanting to be educated about the circumstances of persecuted Christians and/or become involved in supporting and helping them.

Our approach stems from our Charitable Objects. The Trustees consider Release International's, Calling, Mission, and Operational Strategies fulfil the duty and are confident the Charitable Company's activities are delivering public benefit.

Summary of the Charity's main activities and achievements

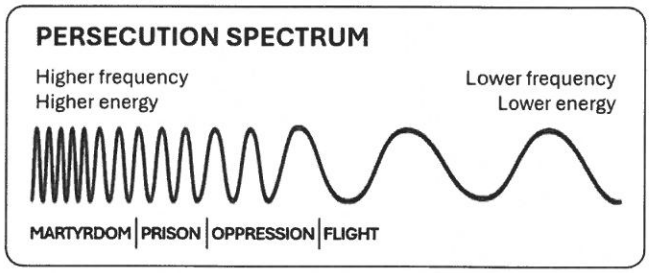
Giving them the 'TOOLS' they need to live for Jesus Christ

Release International delivers the international aspects of its ministry by working in-country through local churches or organisations, with whom we have established formal partnerships. Where possible these partners are indigenous to the area in which our Ministry operates, but sometimes the work is carried out through Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) where they are well connected with the local church. These partnerships form the main connections between Release International and persecuted Christian communities. The very nature of this work makes it difficult to report on without endangering those being served. However, we can share some stories that demonstrate what we've being doing to benefit persecuted Christians overseas.

History has shown that persecution comes and goes around the world. There are a variety of different types of persecutors, who have varied reasons for persecuting. No matter who, when or where, the intensity of persecution in the Christian life can be likened to the radio frequency spectrum: at one end, Christians face a high frequency of terrible persecution, at the other end occurrences are rare and Christians pay little or no cost for following Christ'

Our international ministry is focused on lives being impacted at the high frequency end of the persecution spectrum. Our own taxonomy of persecution is used to ensure we do all prayerfully, pastorally, and practically, help:

- Families of Christian MARTYRS
- PRISONERS of faith and their families
- Christians suffering OPPRESSION and violence
- Christians forced to FLEE



Having ministered to and with Christians at this high end of the persecution spectrum, we are then able to continue presenting the first-person VOICE of persecution to those at the lower end of the spectrum, with the hope and prayer that they will become engaged with those suffering and be better prepared should they face serious persecution themselves (2 Tim 3:12).

Our approach to international ministry continues to be prayerful, pastoral and practical. In 2024 we were able to practise the *ministry of presence*, that is, meet in person and enter into fellowship with persecuted Christians in countries such as Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Laos, Nigeria, Pakistan, as well as other more sensitive areas. A comment from one of our partners sums up feedback we so often hear from those we visit:

> *I would like to say a great thank you from our brothers and sisters in Central Asia for your prayer support for people you've never met in person. Thank you so much that you are supporting and praying for people you will probably never meet this side of eternity. Your prayers will have made such a difference, and you'll be surprised how your gifts, whether large or small, have helped with a special need. So, thank you so much from people you've never met. You will know their names and the results in eternity.*

Raising their VOICE

As planned, 4 VOICE magazines were delivered on schedule in 2024. Lead stories focused on Ukraine, India, Pakistan, and Nigeria. We delivered 12 podcasts through the year. 9 of those were interviews with partners; 3 with Release International staff members. 12 monthly VOICE update emails were sent out at the beginning of each month. In addition to editing the magazine, the Content Manager regularly produced Prayer Alerts (two per month), which were emailed to supporters.

In 2024 we published two books: Revd Dr Berhane Asmelash's biography, *Brother, I Have Come to Arrest You*. Linked to the launch of his book, we arranged a series of speaking opportunities for Revd Dr Berhane. He spoke in 10 churches across the country and many people benefited from the opportunity to receive a copy of his book and hear his challenge to stand with our persecuted brothers and sister from Eritrea. We also published a UK version of John Cao's poems from prison, *Living Lyrics* (originally published in the USA by our partner, ChinaAid).

Work continued on the soon-to-be published book, *Providence and Persecution*. Once the draft text was completed, we commissioned an external proof-reader to work on the book. We then obtained a Foreword, written by North American scholar Dr Stephen G Dempster; and an Afterword written by Petr Jasek. Commendations were sought (and received in January 2025) from John Stevens (National Director, FIEC), Ben Kwashi (Bishop, Nigeria); Andy Lines (AMiE), and our own CEO, Paul Robinson.

Since one member of staff (who worked with both the Content & Theology and the Engagement Manager's departments) went on maternity leave in the summer, we have reduced our pattern of social media postings to three times a week (this is to be reviewed, with increases planned for 2025). Our social media focus has been mainly on Facebook and Instagram. Twitter has also been used to promote press releases.

In January our Head of Content & Theology, Kenneth Harrod, was the main plenary speaker at Friends International's annual conference in Swanwick. Subsequently, an article was written for that organisation's April magazine.

Throughout the course of 2024 the Engagement Manager's team continued to initiate and develop strong relationships with churches and church networks across multiple denominations in the UK, delivering 169 speaking engagements, of which 79 were first time connections.

3 church related partnerships are noteworthy: (1) The one-year Nigeria project partnership with the Free Church of Scotland Women for Mission group concluded in 2024 resulting in a gift of £13,100, and the opportunity to present at their annual conference. (2) The Church of Scotland Guild partnership supporting our Operation Hope project in Egypt also launched in 2024. Speaking engagements and donations from this partnership will be received from Jan 2025 to Dec 2027. (3) After being invited to apply to the All Souls Langham Place World Mission Fund we received funding to support our project providing legal aid to pastors in India.

Our partnership with Artless Theatre Company continued to be very well received by audiences across the UK in 2024. Artless completed a total of 20 performances of *If Prison Walls Could Speak* which motivated many more people to pray and stand with persecuted Christians. Approximately 1,500 people attended these performances. We are looking forward to a finale event with Artless in London in May 2025.

Nigerian partner Mark Lipdo of the Stefanos Foundation spoke at a volunteer event, supporter's lunch, and at 3 other churches who have supported our Nigeria projects. The events were well attended, and the partner churches were very encouraged by Mark's presentation and the opportunity to hear the first person voice of persecuted Christians.

Exhibiting at Christian conferences and festivals continued to be a fruitful element of our engagement strategy in 2024. Re-using the very successful prisoners of faith exhibition concept first promoted in 2022, we called Christians in the UK into fellowship with their persecuted Christian family members by remembering those in prison and identifying with them personally. Almost 500 people had their picture taken beside a prisoner of faith banner and took away prayer cards committing to pray for an individual prisoner and their families.

We exhibited at Bible by the Beach, Big Church Festival, Keswick Port Stewart, Cedarwood, The Keswick Convention, ReFuel, New Wine United 24, EMW Aberystwyth, and Bangor Worldwide. We benefited from a sponsorship partnership at Cedarwood where Artless Theatre performed, and a further partnership with New Wine United 24 where we sponsored their food tent and promoted our Hazaq Coffee brand.

Finally, we continued our partnership with the Gettys as the key sponsor for their Christmas concerts which were attended by approximately 16,000 people over two nights in Belfast.

Future plans

Giving them the 'TOOLS' they need to live for Jesus Christ

The primary role of our international partners is to extend the kingdom of God and His loving care in their communities, whatever the situation they may face. We will continue to support them by listening to their VOICE and so providing persecuted Christians with the 'TOOLS' they ask for to live more fully for Jesus and fulfil the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20).

We will continue to visit our partners, practising our *ministry of presence*, encouraging them in their callings, sharing in fellowship and hearing their VOICE. We will continue to develop and monitor projects with them

that ensure the gospel of Christ will be proclaimed in the hardest places around the world.

More Christians are martyred in Nigeria than anywhere else in the world, and we will continue to support their families and other survivors of violent attacks against Christian communities. We will also continue to support their work of spreading the gospel of Christ, despite the extreme danger and hardship they face.

Other Christians continue to face imprisonment because of their faith; an ongoing trend which continues in Eritrea and other places such as Iran and North Korea. We will remain in prayer for them and their families. Many will need practical support, and our projects will aim to provide some of their needs.

Many Christians will still need to flee from their homes because of persecution, especially in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. Some will be forced into hiding. They will be held up in prayer during 2025 and we will work towards finding them new places to settle where they can live out their lives for Christ in safety.

As has been true for 56 years, Release International will remain committed to developing the bonds of fellowship we have with our persecuted brothers and sisters aiming to deliver, during 2025, over 60 projects in more than 30 countries. As persecution in those countries continues, we will be creative and flexible in ensuring we provide the support and 'TOOLS' persecuted believers ask for and need.

Raising their VOICE

Raising the VOICE of persecuted believers remains one of our key strategic purposes. Utilising the skills and experience of our own team members, and through a new partnership with a renowned Christian agency, we aim to improve the digital delivery of that VOICE in 2025. The website will be further improved, messaging will become more coordinated and joined up across the website, social media and our flagship magazine, VOICE. We also aim to make more use of social influencing through the development of our YouTube and podcast outputs.

Meeting with real people is just as important to us in the UK as it is overseas. We will further develop our church networks, reaching into churches, church networks and church leadership groups to raise the prophetic VOICE of persecuted believers.

Sadly, but as planned, we will wind up our association with the Artless Theatre Company who produced the hugely successful play, *If Prison Walls Could Speak*, a performance designed for churches that tells the true story of Petr Jasek, a Czech national who was imprisoned in Sudan for his work aiding and assisting persecuted Christians. The play has been delivered to over 60 churches and festivals across the UK since its launch in September 2021. However, we are already in discussions with a larger theatre company and hope to produce another successful play which should be ready for 2026.

The International Day of Prayer (IDOP) will play a significant part if our effort to raise the VOICE in 2025, with plans for a substantial range of high-quality church resources, together with a speaker tour aimed at equipping and challenging the church in the UK in its understanding of the theology of persecution and how to respond to it.

Given the positive response from grant funders in 2024, we will continue to submit more applications and bids to Trusts and Foundations in the UK. Also, we have planned and already have stands secured at several Christian conferences and exhibitions around the country where the VOICE of persecuted Christians will continue to be raised.

Structure, Governance and Management

Release International is a Christian Ministry, registered as a Charity and regulated by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, It is also registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. It is constituted as a Company limited by guarantee. The Company operates under its Articles of Association, which were updated in April 2022. Release International was founded in 1968 as the Christian Mission to the Communist World, legally changing its name to Release International in June 2017.

The Board of Trustees normally meets four times each year and administers the Charity through its committees, sub-committees and workgroups.

The Leadership Team holds executive responsibility for implementing the policies and strategies approved by the Board, and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), appointed by the Board, manages the day-to-day operations of the Company.

The Board has an established process for identifying and interviewing potential new Trustees. Vacancies are identified where there are gaps in experience and skills. All prospective Trustees will be practising Christians, who uphold Release International's Statement of Faith, Ethos Statement, and Trustee Code of Conduct. Nominations arising from this process are considered by the Board as a whole and they may subsequently be invited to join the Board. Trustees serve no minimum or maximum terms of service but retire by rotation with the opportunity to stand for re-election.

New Trustees go through an induction and training process to familiarise them with Release International, the persecution sector, and their responsibilities as Trustees and Directors under Charity and Company law. New Trustees are referred to the Charity Commission's guide, The Essential Trustee (CC3), and they also meet with the Leadership Team and other Trustees. Each year the Chair and the CEO plan areas for trustee training which, with the Board's agreement, are covered in conjunction with other meetings.

Risk Management

The Board recognises that avoiding and mitigating risk is better than simply being covered by insurance. Release International operates a risk management strategy, which identifies generic risks which are reviewed annually. Dynamic or current risks are assessed and reported each quarter, together with strategies to mitigate those risks. This approach has proved helpful in focusing attention on areas which require additional monitoring or action.

A major risk to the Ministry is a significant reduction in income. The fact that our income sources are spread over many individuals and churches mitigates the likelihood of a sudden dramatic change, but we monitor this risk closely. Accordingly, our financial and data systems assess income weekly and monthly to identify any significant variation and to determine if specific action is required.

As for all organisations, there is a significant risk of a malicious attack on our IT systems. This is mitigated by security measures, including pro-active testing. Staff are regularly trained and reminded about IT security, particularly phishing attacks.

Due to the nature of the Ministry, there is a risk when travelling to visit partners in contexts where they are being persecuted. This is mitigated by extensive pre-trip briefing and security training, and good communication with partners to assess the current situation.

Financial Review Year ended 31st December 2024

We thank God for His provision through our many faithful supporters. The Trustees express their gratitude for this continuing generosity. We particularly thank God for the generous gift of a residential property in Eastbourne, the monies from sale of which were received in 2024.

Donations excluding ICA partners fell by 22% to £2,318k (2023: £2,952k) and donations from ICA partners increased by 57% to £619k (2023: £396k), due to the generosity of our ICA partner ministries.

Unrestricted donations from individuals, churches and trusts rose by 9% to £1,670k (2023: £1,536k excluding the income from the gift of the property) and restricted donations fell by 8% to £724k (2023: £789k).

Total income for the year was £3,098k (2023: £3,461k), with total unrestricted income of £1,756k and restricted income of £1,343k.

Total expenditure fell by 11% to £3,293k (2023: £3,705k). The expenditure on grants to international partners rose by 3% to £1,204k (2023: £1,165k), principally due to the rise in ICA income, referred to above.

Staff costs rose by 6% to £1,359k (2023: £1,280k). This included a pay increase of 4%, as well as redundancy costs.

The Board has agreed a 0% pay increase for 2025 for reasons made clear in the following paragraphs relating to balancing income and expenditure.

Balancing income and expenditure

In the late stages of 2023, it became clear that regular committed donations to the Ministry were slowing down, assumed to be a consequence of the national and global squeeze on costs of living. For similar reasons it also became clear our fundraising expectations were not being fully realised. With those financial pressures bearing down, and our commitment to use supporters' funds diligently and righteously, it became clear our non-staffing variable and fixed costs had to be dramatically reduced. Action to reduce those costs was immediately taken. At the same the CEO and trustees thought it wise to initiate an external review to properly understand the presenting financial circumstances and future financial prospects for the Ministry with an eye to ensuring financial sustainability and resilience. Recommendations from the external review's final report were fully considered by the trustees along with a strategic proposal from the CEO to fully restructure the staffing of the Ministry to further reduce fixed costs. Counter proposals from others in the Ministry were also fully considered by the trustees leading to a unanimous decision to initiate the CEO's proposal. Work to deliver that proposal concluded in December 2024, the process and implementation of which has included losing 7 staff (8 roles), some voluntary pay cuts (including the CEO), and reducing the hours of some others. Overall, our fulltime equivalent has reduced by almost one quarter–from 28.67 to 21.87. Though achieved through a painful process, this new staffing structure is releasing significant new opportunities for leadership development, creativity and growth. As direct consequence to those actions, we have reduced the projected 2024 deficit by 20% from -£244K to -£194k and have a fully balanced budget in place for 2025.

Grants Policy

A significant proportion of the overseas work of the Ministry is carried out through partners local to areas of persecution that are usually indigenous. Grants are made for specific named purposes to partners that share our objectives. Receipts and reports of the work carried out are obtained. Staff members usually carry out visits to evaluate potential projects, monitor existing projects, and assess the outcome of completed projects on a sample basis.

Reserves Policy

After considering the Charity Commission's guidance CC19 (Charities and Reserves) the Trustees have agreed to maintain a 'range' as the basis for the level of General funds, which are 'free reserves'. At a Board meeting in December 2024, it was agreed to maintain this range at £400k to £500k. This continues to allow the Ministry to maintain operations if donations from individuals and churches dropped by 10 -15% from current levels and income from legacies dropped by 20%.

The Trustees also agreed at the December 2021 Board meeting to designate £250k as a property reserve which was the value paid for the long lease of the office in September 2021. In addition, the Trustees designated a further £170k for property repairs to the office, which is a listed building. A major programme

of refurbishment to our office was undertaken in 2023, which has been successfully completed.

The free reserves, after adjusting for fixed assets, as at 31st December 2024, amounted to £592k (2023: £731k), which is 32% above the target range mid-point. Trustees deemed this to be a good position and a welcome provision at this time of uncertainty.

Investment Policy

Income is largely received through voluntary donations and cannot be guaranteed. The Ministry has no permanent endowment. The only funds that are not expendable within 12 months of receipt are those held for reserves or money associated with international projects that remain active beyond the year end. The Board has considered this position and seeks to place funds in savings accounts to achieve a balance between accessibility and higher returns. Funds may be invested in accounts with up to 12 months' notice, but it is not considered prudent at this time to invest income for the longer term. The funds are now spread across four institutions: Barclays, CAF Bank, Metro Bank and Flagstone Group Ltd., a cash deposit platform, who survey market deposit rates and facilitate the placing of deposits with banking institutions.

Pay for key management personnel

All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration from the charitable Company as Trustees (Rev Dr B. Asmelash is paid a retainer as a consultant on Eritrea: see note 8, page 24). Expenses reimbursed to Trustees are disclosed in note 8, page 24.

The key management personnel in charge of directing and running the operations of the Charity comprise the Leadership Team, as set out on page 3 of this report. Salaries for all staff, including key management staff, are determined on appointment to the post in line with Release International's agreed 5-level salary banding, and in line with the requirements and responsibilities of the role. All roles are reviewed annually through the appraisal system to ensure that any significant changes which may affect remuneration are addressed. The Trustees periodically carry out a review of all salaries across the Ministry, through a benchmarking exercise, to ensure that they remain reasonable and competitive.

Trustees' Responsibilities in Relation to the Financial Statements

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. The accounts in this report have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 1-5 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Company law requires the trustees to ensure financial statements are prepared for each financial year. Under that law, the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law, the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the income and expenditure of the Company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

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

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which are sufficient to show and explain

the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities. The Trustees are committed to compliance with the *Charity Governance Code*.

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant information that the Company's auditors are not aware of, and each Trustee has taken all the steps necessary to ensure they are aware of any relevant information, and to establish that the Company's auditors are aware of the information.

Auditors

A resolution to re-appoint Moore Kingston Smith LLP as the independent auditors to the charitable Company was passed at a meeting of the trustees on 19th June 2025.

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

This report was approved by the Board on 19/6/25 and signed on its behalf by:

David Armond CBE QPM
Chair of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Release International ('the company' for the year ended 31 December 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the audit of financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Corporation in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and the provisions available for audits of small entities, in the circumstances set out in note 8 to the financial statements and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine

whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' annual report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Charities Act 2011 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and from preparing a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 10, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under Section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Companies Act 2006 and Section 151 of the Charities Act 2011 and report to you in accordance with regulations made under those Acts.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted

in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are; to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council and UK taxation legislation.

- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.

- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.

- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.

- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006; and to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, and in respect of the consolidated financial statements, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 8 of the Charities Act 2011. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters which we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members, as a body, and the charity's trustees, as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinion we have formed.

Andrew Stickland (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor

9 Appold Street,
London
EC2A 2AP

Date:

Moore Kingston Smith LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 31st December 2024

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	2024 Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total Funds £	2023 Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total Funds £
Donations and legacies	3	1,670,232	-	1,342,073	3,012,305	2,211,017	-	1,182,409	3,393,426
Charitable activities									
Literature and Events		35,511	-	501	36,012	27,965	-	527	28,492
Interest receivable		33,783	-	-	33,783	28,194	-	-	28,194
Other		16,098	-	-	16,098	11,270	-	-	11,270
Total income		**1,755,624**	-	**1,342,574**	**3,098,198**	**2,278,446**	-	**1,182,936**	**3,461,382**
Expenditure on									
Costs of raising funds									
Fundraising	4	257,071	-	34,165	291,236	290,089	-	25,171	315,260
Charitable activities									
Providing them the TOOLS	4	422,373	-	1,214,476	1,636,849	635,493		1,265,471	1,900,964
Raising their VOICE		1,350,547	-	13,998	1,364,545	1,305,890	169,297	13,998	1,489,185
Total expenditure		**2,029,991**	-	**1,262,639**	**3,292,630**	**2,231,472**	**169,297**	**1,304,640**	**3,705,409**
Net income/ (expenditure)		(274,367)	-	79,935	(194,432)	46,974	(169,297)	(121,704)	(244,027)
Transfers		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net income/ (expenditure) after transfers		**(274,367)**	-	**79,935**	**(194,432)**	**46,974**	**(169,297)**	**(121,704)**	**(244,027)**
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2024	16&17	731,340	330,829	417,739	1,479,908	684,366	500,126	539,443	1,723,935
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2024	16&17	**456,973**	**330,829**	**497,674**	**1,285,476**	**731,340**	**330,829**	**417,739**	**1,479,908**

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 19 to 30 form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet at 31st December 2024

Company Number 01506576

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	10		256,182		242,020
Intangible Assets	10		-		1,044
Current assets					
Investments held for resale	20	-		675,000	
Debtors	11	88,416		93,602	
Short term investments		339,000		357,225	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,021,983		540,501	
		1,449,399		1,666,328	
Creditors – Amounts falling due within one year	12	(200,105)		(209,484)	
Net current assets			1,249,294		1,456,844
Creditors – Amounts falling due in over one year	13		(220,000)		(220,000)
Total assets less current liabilities			**1,285,476**		**1,479,908**
Reserves					
Unrestricted funds					
General Fund	16		456,973		731,340
Designated Funds	16		330,829		330,829
Restricted funds	17		497,674		417,739
Total funds			**1,285,476**		**1,479,908**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and with FRS102.

The notes on pages 19 to 30 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board on ...19/06/2025.... and signed on its behalf by:

David John Armond

Chair of Trustees

Cash flow statement for the year ended 31st December 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Net cash (used in)/generated by operating activities		(188,952)	(583,560)
Cashflows from Investing Activities			
Purchase of property plant and equipment		(20,784)	-
Movement in Short-term investments		18,225	40,771
Disposal of investments		639,210	-
Interest received		33,783	28,194
Net cash generated by/(used in) investing activities		670,434	68,965
Net (decrease)/increase in cash		481,482	(514,595)
Cash at the beginning of the year		540,501	1,055,096
Cash at the end of the year		**1,021,983**	**540,501**

Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Net Income / (Expenditure)	(194,432)	(244,027)
Adjusted for		
Depreciation charge	6,622	8,845
Amortisation charge	1,044	1,056
Receipt of gift of investment for resale	-	(675,000)
Sale of investments	-	4,878
Loss on sale of Investments	35,790	-
Interest from deposits	(33,783)	(28,194)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	5,186	12,017
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(9,379)	336,865
Net cash used in operating activities	**(188,952)**	**(583,560)**

Analysis of cash, cash equivalents and net debt

2024	As at 1 Jan 2024	Cash flows	Non cash movements	As at 31 Dec 2024
Cash at bank	274,683	(98,626)	-	176,057
Cash on deposit	265,818	580,108	-	845,926
Net Cash	540,501	481,482	-	1,021,983

2023	As at 1 Jan 2023	Cash flows	Non cash movements	As at 31 Dec 2023
Cash at bank	237,766	36,917	-	274,683
Cash on deposit	1,215,326	(949,508)	-	265,818
Net cash	1,453,092	(912,591)	-	540,501

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting Policies

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) - Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

1.1 Going Concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern basis is appropriate and have considered possible events or conditions that might cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees have made this assessment for a period of at least one year from the date of approval of the financial statements and in particular have considered the charity's forecasts and projections and have taken account of pressures on donation and investment income and expectation from the current economic challenge.

The trustees have concluded that there is a reasonable expectation that the charitable entity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

The charitable company therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements.

1.2 Basis of Accounting

Release International Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

1.3 Fund Accounting

Funds held are either

- Unrestricted general funds which are funds that can be used within the charitable objectives at the Trustees' discretion.
- Designated funds are funds that the trustees have earmarked for a specific purpose, even though they are not legally restricted by a donor.
- Restricted funds which are funds that can only be used for specified purposes. The restriction may be imposed by the donor or the terms under which the funds were raised.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations, interest and rent are recognised in the accounts on a received basis. For donations made under the gift aid scheme, the gift aid is recognised in the year in which the gift is received. Gifts in kind are valued at their value to the Charitable Company.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the Charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised, and notification has been made by the executor(s) that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably, and the Charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds are costs incurred in encouraging voluntary contributions to the Charitable Company and their associated support costs.
- Expenditure on charitable activities are costs directly relating to the objects of the Charitable Company and include grants made, direct costs incurred, and an apportionment of support costs as shown in note 7.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the Charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the Charity's activities. The Charity initially identifies the costs of its support functions. It then identifies those costs which relate to the governance function. Having identified its governance costs, the remaining support costs together with the governance costs are apportioned between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities pro rata to staff full time equivalents.

Grants payable are payments made to third parties in the furtherance of the charitable objectives of the Charitable Company. The grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which the awards are made. Grants where the beneficiary has not been informed or has to meet certain conditions before the grant is released are not accrued but are noted as financial commitments.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

1.6 Tangible Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are all used for charitable purposes and are shown at cost less depreciation. The threshold at which purchases are not normally capitalised is £1,000. Depreciation on assets is calculated to write off the cost over their estimated economic useful lives. Assets are depreciated annually on a straight-line basis over 4 years for computer equipment, 5 years for office equipment and the remainder of the lease for leasehold improvements. The leasehold property is amortised monthly over the remainder of the lease.

1.7 Intangible Fixed Assets

Intangible assets are the development costs for specific IT projects which are capitalised at cost, provided it is likely to bring future economic benefit to the Charity. If the criteria for recognition as assets are not met, the expense is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which it is incurred. Capitalised IT costs include all direct and indirect costs that are directly attributable to the development process. The costs are amortised using the straight-line method over 4 years being their estimated useful lives. The threshold at which costs are not normally capitalised is £1,000.

1.8 Foreign Currencies

Income and expenditure in foreign currencies are converted into sterling at the rates of exchange ruling on the date of transaction. Amounts held at the balance sheet date are converted at the rates prevailing at the balance sheet date.

1.9 Pension Costs

The Charity operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees which is funded by contributions from the employee and employer contributions payable to scheme and employees' personal pension plans are charged in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate. Further details of the scheme are given in note 15.

1.10 Operating Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

1.11 Financial Instruments

The Charitable Company only has basic financial instruments measured at amortised cost, with no financial instruments classified as 'other' or basic instruments measured at fair value.

1.12 Investments

The charity has a policy of selling donated shares upon receipt of donation. However, where for any reason donated shares are not sold at the balance sheet date these are listed as investments, at their market value at the balance sheet date.

Realised and unrealised gains or losses for the period are accounted for through the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which they occur.

1.13 Cash and Cash equivalents

Cash and Cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposit held at call with banks and other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less

2. Critical Estimates

In the view of the Trustees applying the accounting policies adopted, no judgements were required apart from those listed below.

- the allocation of support costs
- depreciation rates of fixed assets
- estimation of legacy accrual

3. Donations and Gifts

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £
Individuals, churches, other groups and trusts	1,594,111	723,508	2,317,619	2,163,615	788,850	2,952,465
ICA partner ministries	-	618,565	618,565	-	393,559	393,559
Legacies	76,121	-	76,121	47,402	-	47,402
	1,670,232	**1,342,073**	**3,012,305**	**2,211,017**	**1,182,409**	**3,393,426**

There was a gift of a residential property, which has been valued at £675,000 in 2023 and was included in unrestricted donations from individuals.

4. Expenditure

	Grants £ (see note 5)	Direct costs £ (see note 6)	Support costs £ (see note 7)	2024 Total £
Costs of raising funds				
Fundraising	-	250,195	41,041	291,236
Charitable activities				
Providing them the TOOLS	1,203,807	341,709	91,333	1,636,849
Raising their VOICE	-	1,172,682	191,863	1,364,545
	1,203,807	**1,764,586**	**324,237**	**3,292,630**

	Grants £ (see note 5)	Direct costs £ (see note 6)	Support costs £ (see note 7)	2023 Total £
Costs of raising funds				
Fundraising	-	290,089	25,171	315,260
Charitable activities				
Providing them the TOOLS	1,164,763	631,900	104,301	1,900,964
Raising their VOICE	-	1,133,583	186,305	1,319,888
	1,164,763	**2,055,572**	**315,777**	**3,536,112**

5. Grants made

Grant payments made were for the charitable purposes of Release International. They provided support for:

- Families of Christian martyrs
- Prisoners of faith and their families
- Christians suffering oppression and violence
- Christians forced to flee

The Ministry has taken advantage of the exemption available in the Charity SORP not to disclose specific information in relation to grant making, on the grounds that the disclosure could result in serious prejudice to the grant maker and/or the recipient institution, individuals working for the recipient institution or individuals.

No support costs have been allocated to the total amount of the grants.

	Total 2024		Total 2023	
A. Restricted Funds				
	No.	**£**	**No.**	**£**
Central Asia	1	34,436	16	68,462
Middle East/Gulf	7	70,566	26	273,748
North East Africa	9	412,067	16	423,461
West Africa	6	69,789	18	154,786
South Asia	18	110,671	43	139,898
South East Asia	7	36,132	12	91,240
Other	13	470,147	13	13,169
	61	1,203,807	144	1,164,763
B. Unrestricted Funds				
Central Asia	2	2,641	5	37,475
Middle East/Gulf	7	3,304		
North East Africa	5	6,333	1	10,000
West Africa	6	14,600		
South Asia	13	14,717	6	31,526
South East Asia	7	4,644	1	8,003
Other	10	103,467	1	67,742
	50	149,706	14	154,746
Total Grant payments	**111**	**1,353,513**	**158**	**1,319,509**

6. Direct costs

*See note 8	Staff costs* £	Other costs £	2024 Total costs £	Staff costs* £	Other costs £	2023 Total costs £
Fundraising	139,884	110,310	250,194	131,764	158,325	290,089
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	290,534	51,175	341,709	273,743	358,157	631,900
Raising their VOICE	668,996	503,686	1,172,682	630,368	503,215	1,133,583
	1,099,414	**665,171**	**1,764,586**	**1,035,875**	**1,019,697**	**2,055,572**

7. Support costs

*See note 8	Staff costs* £	Other costs £	2024 Total costs £	Staff costs* £	Other costs £	2023 Total costs £
Fundraising	32,825	8,216	41,041	30,414	10,440	40,854
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	73,048	18,285	91,333	76,774	20,342	97,116
Raising their VOICE	153,453	38,410	191,863	136,844	40,963	177,807
	259,326	**64,911**	**324,237**	**244,032**	**71,745**	**315,777**

8. Staff costs

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	1,118,652	1,057,057
Social security costs	115,446	106,644
Pension costs	111,853	105,022
Group Life policy	12,789	11,185
	1,358,740	**1,279,908**

Total split as follows:	Direct (note 6)	Support (note 7)	2024 Total staff costs	Direct (note 6)	Support (note 7)	2023 Total staff costs
Costs of raising funds	139,884	32,825	172,709	131,764	30,414	162,178
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	290,534	73,048	363,582	273,743	76,774	350,517
Raising their VOICE	668,996	153,453	822,449	630,368	136,844	767,212
	1,099,414	**259,326**	**1,358,740**	**1,035,875**	**244,032**	**1,279,908**

The Trustees receive no remuneration. During 2024, 4 Trustees (2023: 4 Trustees) received out of pocket expenses of £707 (2023: £817). During the year donations from 6 Trustees (2023: 5) were received totalling £6,195 (2023: £4,425).

The remuneration and benefits received by key management personnel in the year were £363,964 (2023: £360,228). During the year there was 1 employee whose remuneration was in the bracket £70,000 - £79,999 (2023: 1).

Included within the above staff costs were termination payments totalling £43,387 (2023: NIL).

The average number of employees was:	2024	2023
Management	3	5
Administration and support	5	5
Overseas project management and UK information and education	21	21
	29	31

9. Net Income/Expenditure for the Year

The net income/ expenditure for the year is stated after charging:

		2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation of assets	(see note 11)	7,666	9,901
Auditors' remuneration - audit		22,632	21,132
Auditors' remuneration - non audit services		-	-
Other accountancy fees		1,050	-
Hire of equipment		5,625	5,005

Non audit services include the provision of bookkeeping services and preparation of the statutory financial statements.

At the year end, amounts relating to these services have not been accrued.

10. Fixed Assets

	Property	Computer Equipment	Office Equipment	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost				
At 1st January 2024	250,000	82,782	33,338	366,120
Additions	-	16,714	4,070	20,784
Disposals	-	-	-	-
At 31st December 2024	250,000	99,496	37,408	386,904
Depreciation				
At 1st January 2024	7,980	82,782	33,338	124,100
Charge for year	3,420	3,134	68	6,622
Disposals	-		-	-
At 31st December 2024	11,400	85,916	33,406	130,722
Net book values				
At 31st December 2024	238,600	13,580	-	256,182
At 31st December 2023	242,020	-	-	242,020

Depreciation rates: Straight-line

Property- remainder of lease
Computers- 33.3% per annum
Office equipment- 25% per annum

Intangible Assets

	Software Development	Total
	£	£
Cost		
At 1st January 2024	25,345	25,345
Additions	-	-
Disposals	-	-
At 31st December 2024	25,345	25,345
Depreciation		
At 1st January 2024	24,301	24,301
Charge for year	1,044	1,044
Disposals	-	-
At 31st December 2024	25,345	25,345
Net book values		
At 31st December 2024	-	-
At 31st December 2023	1,044	1,044

Depreciation rates: Straight-line 25% p.a.

11. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Due within one year		
Other debtors	50,863	69,713
Prepayments	29,946	23,889
Accrued income	7,607	-
	88,416	93,602

12. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within One Year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	57,918	68,731
Other creditors	20,520	21,069
Interest free loan	30,000	30,000
Accruals	91,667	89,684
	200,105	209,484

13. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Over One Year

	2024 £	2023 £
Interest free loan	220,000	220,000

The above loan is interest-free and is due to forgiven over the next 7 years 4 months

14. Members' Liability

The Charitable Company is limited by guarantee and each of the members is bound to contribute a sum not exceeding £10 in certain circumstances as set out in clause 7 of the Articles of Association.

15. Pension Commitments

The Charitable Company participates in the Global Connections pension scheme which is a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets are held separately from those of the Charitable Company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge representing contributions payable by the Charitable Company to the scheme and to other personal pension schemes amounted to between 7% or 10% of gross salaries depending on whether the staff member also contributes (2023: 7% or 10%). At 31st December 2024 there were no significant contributions outstanding payable to the scheme. The Charitable Company's pension arrangements comply with its statutory obligations in respect of auto-enrolment.

16. Unrestricted Funds

	Balance 01-Jan-24	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-24
	£	£	£	£	£
General Reserve Fund	731,340	1,755,624	(2,029,991)		456,973
Designated Fund - Grant Reponse Fund	81,399	-	-	-	81,399
Designated Fund - Property reserve	249,430	-	-	-	249,430
	1,062,169	1,755,624	(2,029,991)	-	787,802

	Balance 01-Jan-23	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-23
	£	£	£	£	£
General Reserve Fund	684,366	2,278,446	(2,231,472)		731,340
Designated Fund - Grant Reponse Fund	1,917	-	(20,518)	100,000	81,399
Designated Fund - Property reserve	250,000	-	(570)	-	249,430
Designated Fund- Property repairs	148,209	-	(148,209)	-	-
Designated Fund- new property	100,000	-	-	(100,000)	-
	1,184,492	2,278,446	(2,400,769)	-	1,062,169

The reserve policy is explained on page 9 of the trustee report.

The Grant Response Fund allows Release International to be more agile and give grants to overseas partners, usually funded by restricted gifts in anticipation of funds being received later in the year.

The Property reserve fund relates to the office building purchased in September 2021 and has been set aside as a designated fund, so that it does not form part of general reserves.

The New Property reserve fund relates to the gift of a residential property, in the prior year.

17. Restricted Funds

These are donations received for specific purposes as requested by the donors. The first four funds are for the taxonomy of persecution (page 5 of the trustee report) The other funds are many and varied and where appropriate have been grouped into geographical areas. They are all within our objectives as described on page 5.

	Balance 01-Jan-24	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-24
	£	£	£	£	£
Christians forced to flee	7,810	145,696	(139,865)	(4,100)	9,541
Families of Christian martyrs	6,763	50,009	(54,938)	-	1,834
Prisoners of faith and their families	52,420	68,617	(90,431)	(13)	30,593
Christians suffering oppression and violence	5,233	157,240	(173,265)	20,124	9,332
Central Asia	5,277	39,408	(34,436)	(9,500)	750
Middle East/Gulf	19,202	84,854	(70,566)	(17,861)	15,629
North East Africa	250,930	423,646	(419,942)	324	254,958
West Africa	42,359	61,304	(69,789)	-	33,874
South Asia	24,155	193,024	(110,670)	115	106,624
South East Asia	12,199	28,558	(36,132)	3,494	8,119
Personal Support	1,187	17,744	(17,744)		1,187
Generic funds and other	(9,796)	72,473	(44,860)	7,416	25,233
	417,739	1,342,574	(1,262,638)	-	497,674

	Balance 01-Jan-23	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-23
	£	£	£	£	£
Christians forced to flee	21,090	98,121	(118,665)	7,264	7,810
Families of Christian martyrs	-	122,208	(114,526)	(919)	6,763
Prisoners of faith and their families	39,786	84,436	(66,822)	(4,980)	52,420
Christians suffering oppression and violence	-	196,958	(183,629)	(8,096)	5,233
Central Asia	1,864	12,558	(14,290)	5,145	5,277
Middle East/Gulf	5,233	53,311	(53,579)	14,237	19,202
North East Africa	398,275	300,960	(454,134)	5,829	250,930
West Africa	9,369	124,169	(91,179)	-	42,359
South Asia	36,046	98,563	(106,343)	(4,111)	24,155
South East Asia	25,389	24,557	(42,168)	4,421	12,199
Personal Support	1,187	22,009	(22,009)	-	1,187
Generic funds and other	1,204	45,086	(37,296)	(18,790)	(9,796)
	539,443	1,182,936	(1,304,640)	-	417,739

During 2024 funds have been transferred from general restricted funds to cover overspends in specific restricted funds.

18. Analysis of Net Assets Between Funds

2024	Fixed assets	Net current assets	Non current liabilites	Totals
	£	£		£
Restricted funds	-	497,675	-	497,674
Unrestricted funds	256,182	751,620	(220,000)	787,802
	256,182	1,249,295	(220,000)	1,285,476

2023	Fixed assets	Net current assets	Non current liabilites	Totals
	£	£		£
Restricted funds	-	417,739	-	417,739
Unrestricted funds	243,064	1,039,105	(220,000)	1,062,169
	243,064	1,456,844	(220,000)	1,479,908

19. Other Financial Commitments

	2024		2023	
	Office Equipment	Premises Rental	Office Equipment	Premises Rental
Operating Leases	£	£	£	£
Due under 1 year	4,276	225	6,674	225
Due between 2 to 5 years	17,103	900	6,674	900
Due after more than 5 years	3,207	14,569	-	14,794
	24,586	15,694	13,348	15,919

The operating lease is for the franking machine. A new lease was started in October 2024 for 6 years at £891 + VAT per quarter.

The premises rent is ground rent for the leasehold property, which is £225 per year.

20. Investments held for re-sale

	2024	2023
	£	£
Investments	-	675,000

Investments in Merryfield property

Residential property in Eastbourne gifted to Release International in June 2023, conservatively valued at: £675,000.

The property was sold in the period under review.

21. Taxation

As a Charity Release International benefits from exemptions on income and gains falling within Sections 466-493 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 to the extent they are derived from charitable activities.

22. Related party transactions

Revd Dr Berhane Asmelash, who is a Trustee, receives no remuneration for his role as Trustee. He was paid as a consultant on Eritrea £7,875 (2023: £7,594)

23. Capital Commitments

There were no capital commitments not provided for in the financial statements (2023: none).

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL

England & Wales - Charity number 280577

Accounts

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL

voice

of Persecuted Christians

Release International

The Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the Year ended 31st December 2023

A Company Limited by Guarantee. Company No. 01506576

Registered Charity No. 280577 and Registered in Scotland No. SCO40456

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

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Trustees' Annual Report

The Trustees have the pleasure of presenting their Annual Report together with the Financial Statements of the Charity for the year ended 31st December 2023, which are also prepared to meet the requirements of a Directors' Report and Accounts for Companies Act purposes. Release International is a Christian Ministry and will often be referred to in this report as the Ministry.

Message from the Chair



I am delighted to have the opportunity to present the Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2023. It has been both a pleasure and privilege to serve as a Trustee of Release International for the last six years, working with a dedicated and talented team in support of our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ around the world. I continue to be impressed and motivated by the selfless efforts of this outstanding group of individuals, consisting of both paid staff and volunteers, doing their utmost to follow God's calling to serve persecuted Christians.

I talked in my introduction last year about the enormous privileges we have in this country that flow from living in a free society, including the ability to worship as we please and, within reason, to express personal views without fear of retribution. We do tend at times to take those privileges for granted in the UK and fail to appreciate just how blessed we are. We know, of course, that many of our Christian brothers and sisters around the world are not so fortunate, experiencing real persecution because of their faith, with many losing their liberty or their lives because of it. Yet they stay firm in their faith and are amazing witnesses for those of us living in more fortunate circumstances. Release International's annual *Persecution Trends* report highlights that the situation is worsening for many Christian communities around the world. The work of Release International and other like-minded missions has never been more important. We are privileged at Release International, whether as permanent staff, volunteers, supporters, or prayer warriors, to have the opportunity to play a small role in supporting and serving the persecuted church.

Through God's grace, the sacrificial generosity of our many supporters has continued this year, despite the challenge of the cost-of-living crisis, which has had an impact across the charitable sector, including those organisations with a Christian mission focus. We have therefore been able to maintain a strong programme of work throughout 2023. Our Board of Trustees has continued to meet throughout the year, including a two-day retreat at High Leigh Conference Centre in September, which provided a good opportunity to get to know each other better and, more importantly, to plan and pray for the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to give thanks for the long service of our dear sister and fellow Trustee Mary Print, who sadly passed away a few months ago. She made a huge and faithful contribution to the work of the Board and her fellowship and wisdom are missed by all. I would also like to introduce two new members of the Board of Trustees: Janet Crick and Robert Karami, who bring a very broad set of skills and experience to the team. Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the continuing witness, service, and commitment of the Release International team of staff members and volunteers, who have worked tirelessly with our partners around the world to ensure that the voice of persecuted Christians is heard more widely. I also give thanks to God for you, our huge network of supporters, whose faithful prayer and generous financial support enable us to continue this important work.

David Armond CBE QPM - Chair of Trustees



Chief Executive's Introduction



Anyone who receives our quarterly magazine will be well aware of what the Ministry of Release International is all about and, again, during 2023 we have been doing all we can to fulfil our Christian calling to Love and Serve Persecuted Christians, urging all Christians to *"Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body."* (Hebrews 13, verse 3)

During 2023 Release International has been prayerfully, pastorally, and practically present through our own indigenous Christian partners in 27 countries and, through our wider relational partnerships, influential in more than 70 countries.

I asked some prominent missions' leaders to sum up, in one word, what are the defining characteristics of the ministry of Release International, as they see it. They used words like these: biblical, authentic, loving, relational, determined, all-in, committed, focussed. But the one which instantly intrigued me was 'journeying'. I asked what was meant by that and received this reply: *"You journey with the persecuted. Your relationships with your indigenous partners last for years and you make sure persecuted Christians aren't helped just in the moment but you seek to ensure they are equipped to go on living for Christ for the long term".*

You can read our Calling and Mission statements in the early parts of this report but, as I have thought through that person's reply, it has reinforced for me something which is at the heart of all we do at Release International: we are a biblically based Christian Ministry, not a humanitarian or human-rights organisation. We are a Ministry called by God to love and serve the body of Christ, particularly those within it who live for Him in some of the toughest places on earth. As such we are very much committed to the Great Commission, enabling believers to thrive in the midst of the worst situations, and to go and make disciples of all nations (see Matthew 28, verses 16–20).

As a Christian Ministry all of the income donated to fulfil the calling we have received is given by Christians here in the UK and Ireland, and it is always humbling to see how God's people respond sacrificially to the needs of their persecuted brothers and sisters, especially in the current financial climate. Indeed, we do know some of our donors have felt financial pressures for a long time now, so their giving feels all the more precious to us.

If you were to look only at the financial headlines of this report you might conclude that we had a very good year, with our income exceeding expectations. That is true and we praise God for that, but some very significant one-off-donations do mask the fact that we experienced a decline in regular giving and so, as is true for many Christian Ministries and charities, we are needing to believe God for increased future income while, at the same time, prudently planning measures to reduce expenditure. In all of this, knowing as we do the constant faithfulness of our Father God through all the fifty-six years of this Ministry, we will continue to boldly trust Him who owns every resource, and we will continue doing all we can, prayerfully, pastorally, and practically, to love and serve our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ.

Paul Robinson - Chief Executive

Our Charitable Objects

To advance the Christian faith in accordance with the Statement of Faith and Ethos Statement;

The relief of poverty and other hardship, need or distress, for those who are suffering persecution or marginalisation for their Christian beliefs, and their families, by providing support and assistance;

To further the charitable work of the Charity by the advancement of such other charitable purposes as the trustees shall from time to time decide, provided such purposes are consistent with the Statement of Faith and Ethos Statement.

The Objects are to be carried out as a proclamation of the beliefs set out in our Statement of Faith, which is available on our website: releaseinternational.org.

About Release International

Release International was founded in 1968 as the Christian Mission to the Communist World, inspired by Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, who was imprisoned and tortured by Romanian secret police under brutal Communism. Following the demise of Communism in Eastern Europe and the increase in the persecution of Christians elsewhere in the world, the Ministry broadened its activities and changed its name to Release International.

Our Calling and Mission

Our Calling

Through the ministry of Pastor Richard Wurmbrand and Hebrews 13:3 we have been called by God to **Love and Serve Persecuted Christians**.

Our Mission (five Strategic Purposes)

Our Mission is to love and serve persecuted Christians by:

- Giving them the **'TOOLS'** they need to live for Jesus Christ;
- Raising their **VOICE**;
- Calling UK Christians into **FELLOWSHIP** with them;
- Learning lessons of Christian **DISCIPLESHIP** with them;
- Maintaining Christian **STEWARDSHIP** to honour them.

Our Taxonomy of Persecution

Around the world, we prayerfully, pastorally, and practically help:

- Families of Christian martyrs;
- Prisoners of faith and their families;
- Christians suffering oppression and violence;
- Christians forced to flee.

How our Activities Deliver Public Benefit

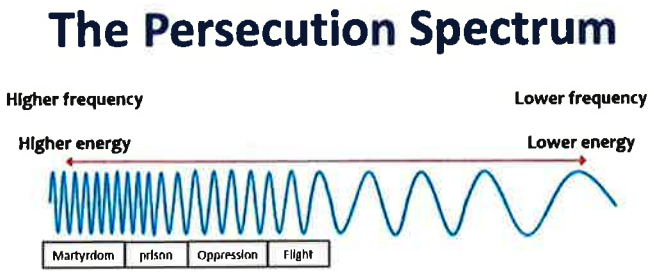
The Trustees confirm they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission. Release International seeks to prayerfully, pastorally, and practically help those who are persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ, and to help Christians, churches, faith-based organisations and the general public understand and engage with the reality of persecution. Those who benefit from our activities are Christians globally whose religious freedoms have been curtailed or abused, and any member of the public wanting to be educated about the circumstances of persecuted Christians and/or become involved in supporting and helping them. Our approach stems from our Charitable Objects (page 5). The Trustees consider Release International's, Calling, Mission, and Operational Strategies fulfil the duty and are confident the Charitable Company's activities are delivering public benefit.

Our Achievements and Performance

Strategic Purpose: Giving them the 'TOOLS' they need to live for Jesus Christ

Release International delivers the international aspects of its ministry by working in-country through local churches or organisations, with whom we have established formal partnerships. Where possible these partners are indigenous to the area in which our Ministry operates, but sometimes the work is carried out through Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) where they are well connected with the local church. These partnerships form the main connections between Release International and persecuted Christian communities. The very nature of this work makes it difficult to report on it without endangering those being served. However, we can share some stories that demonstrate what we've being doing to benefit persecuted Christians overseas.

History has shown that persecution comes and goes around the world. There are a variety of different types of persecutors, who have varied reasons for persecuting. No matter who, when or where, the intensity of persecution in the Christian life can be likened to the radio frequency spectrum (see diagram below): at one end, Christians face a high frequency of terrible persecution, at the other end occurrences are rare and Christians pay little or no cost for following Christ.



Our international work is focused on the high frequency end of the persecution spectrum. Our own Taxonomy of Persecution is used to ensure the Ministry remains in the right place for the foreseeable future. We have identified four clear areas of ministry: Families of Christian martyrs; Prisoners of faith and their families; Christians suffering oppression and violence; and Christians forced to flee. Having ministered to and with Christians at this high end of the persecution spectrum, Release International is able to continue presenting the first-person VOICE of persecution to those at the lower end of the spectrum, with the hope and prayer that they will become engaged with

those suffering and be better prepared should they face serious persecution themselves! (2 Tim 3:12).

The stories below demonstrate current examples from each element of the Taxonomy.

Families of Christian martyrs

Christians faced another year of suffering as government complacency at a federal and local level emboldened various Islamist terrorist groups in central and northeast Nigeria. One of our partners stated, *'Persecution continues to spread to many rural communities that have been attacked previously. Though the attacks on large communities to inflict largescale casualties have subsided, the persistent killing of small groups and individuals continues to spread across the central regions of southern Kaduna, Benue, Plateau and Taraba states'.*

During 2023, villages and communities were persistently attacked, with more than 6,000 people estimated to have been killed by Islamist Fulani militia and other terrorists. Fulani have forced Christian villagers to pay millions of Naira in order not to be attacked, but even when some have paid they have still been attacked. Christians have been the target for kidnap and ransom, while many farmlands were deliberately destroyed by the Fulani to force the villagers to leave or face starvation.

At the same time our partners reported that pastors who had been trained as a result of Release International support had continued evangelism in regions controlled by Boko Harem.

'We send our deepest appreciation to all those who stand with us in prayer and who support the persecuted in every way they can. We are still standing here because of your sacrifice and support.'

Prisoners of faith and their families

The Eritrean Government continued to arrest Christians in 2023 while at the same time releasing others. Among those detained were a group of 44 believers who were seized while gathering in two private homes at the start of the year. In March, 30 Christians were arrested as they gathered to worship in a home in the town of Keren, 60 miles northwest of the capital, Asmara. At the same time, nine others were released. Then in April more than 100 Christian college students were arrested in Asmara after gathering to sing and record video clips. These arrests put the number of Christian prisoners at more than 500, around double the number of the previous year.

Many Christians are held without charge and detained indefinitely. Torture and brutality are commonplace, including being held in shipping containers in the desert. Many have been in prison for more than a decade.

Our partner said that although Christian worship gatherings were banned, the church would continue to serve God underground. Release International's support not only helped the underground church, it supported families who's loved ones were being held in prison.

Christians suffering oppression and violence

During 2023 Christians in India experienced physical and emotional abuse and harassment of pastors and believers; the destruction of church buildings; false charges and imprisonment; and the prohibition of home prayer meetings.

Most significant was the widespread ethnic violence that turned into religious persecution in Manipur in the northeast of India, which saw 60 people killed and 50 churches burnt or destroyed. One pastor was unable to hold Sunday services for the rest of the year and is still in this situation. Another church, whose premises were demolished in the May attack, no longer has a place to hold meetings. The pastor had to care for his congregation by visiting them individually.

Thanks to the financial gifts of release International supporters, our partners were able to help believers who experienced persecution last year. A teenage girl from Manipur who fled the violence was taken in by our partners and provided with a new home. A believer on false charges of forced conversion was released after our partner's intervention, and a pastor was helped with medical care after being attacked by militants. Our partner stated,

'We are so thankful to all the supporters and prayer partners who have made possible the helping of persecuted Christians all across India. As the persecution of Christians and other religious minorities increases dramatically with each passing month, we are thankful that we have a global network of people standing with us and our workers'.

Christians forced to flee

The war in Ukraine has forced many believers to flee their country because of persecution. One pastor who was imprisoned and regularly interrogated by the Russian forces escaped to tell his story:

'I was interrogated every day for three or four hours. They accused me of what I would call "normal" things, such as receiving money from other countries. I said that's not illegal. They said, "It is in Russia." I said, "We're not in Russia!" Every time they took me for interrogation they put a bag over my head and dragged me through the corridors. Every day I thought it could be the last day of my life.'

Although the pastor could hear screams when other prisoners were being interrogated, he said the Lord gave him a supernatural peace in his heart and he began to witness to them and talk about the Bible.

With support from Release International, our partners provide pastoral support for those who have suffered. This includes pastors and their families; those who have been detained and tortured; and those who have seen their churches closed. Our partners have run trauma healing retreats for believers, including one pastor who was almost beaten to death. This pastor has since returned to minister in Ukraine.

Our partners have also been able to use our funding to equip a small group of frontline Christian workers operating in southern and eastern Ukraine, often in the war zone. One of these workers is based in a town near Kharkov. He said,

'Many people from our church, especially young families, were forced to leave for western Ukraine, or abroad... Currently we serve the residents and those living in other settlements in the region with food, humanitarian aid and the Gospel.'

Our partners expressed their gratitude for the financial gifts and the prayers of Release International supporters, adding, *'We want to stand with our persecuted Ukrainian brothers and sisters and strengthen their faith'.*

Fundraising

Our engagement and fundraising strategy and plans are approved by Trustees and monitored by the Leadership Team. Most of our income is generated through charitable donations we receive from Christian individuals, churches and trusts and foundations (see note 3, page 36). In addition, we work in partnership with several International Christian Association (ICA) Ministries, who contribute to our international project work.

Our fundraising activities are conducted by our staff team, drawing on the expertise of external fundraising advisors for selected campaigns. We do not contract out fundraising to third parties. We maintain oversight of all third-party suppliers and have written agreements with them, where necessary, under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Act 2021.

We are committed to the highest standards in fundraising practice. We are regulated by the Fundraising Regulator and abide by the Fundraising Code of Practice, which includes guidelines on how to fundraise with people in vulnerable circumstances. In 2023 we handled 16 fundraising complaints (2022: 16) through our Supporters' Complaints Procedure, which were all resolved. We have a fundraising policy which gives a clear commitment to protect supporters from unreasonably persistent or obtrusive fundraising practice. We do not undertake donor profiling or sell data to third parties at any time.

Strategic Purpose: Raising their VOICE

In 2023, the central focus of our work began with a major UK-wide prayer campaign in April to raise the voice of persecuted Christians in Nigeria. The *'Out of these Ashes'* engagement plan included a major speaker tour by the Rev Mark Mukan, who serves with our partner, Archbishop Ben Kwashi. Mark joined us for a visit for over three weeks, which reached out to more than 20 churches.

'I am asking God that ***out of these ashes*** *will rise a wave of an uncommon, unseen revival, likened to the kind of revivals seen in the 1700s in the UK and surpassing them. Because so much blood has been spilled on a land of Christians, and so many churches destroyed, I would like to see a revival that would sweep over Nigeria, and, indeed, all of Africa: a revival that will take the gospel back to Europe and America.'* Letter to the World, *'Neither Bomb Nor Bullet'* by Archbishop Ben Kwashi, p.312.

We were very pleased that Mark was able to be part of the Anglican Mission in England conference in Yorkshire. We also partnered with the New Wine International Church in Woolwich London to host an international church leaders' event with pastors attending in person and online from five countries. We held an online supporter prayer event to open the campaign in Holy Week, which had over 300 attendees.



Over the summer of 2023, we delivered an extended programme of engagement at major UK Christian festivals, including New Wine, Keswick Conference, Bangor Worldwide, Big Church

Festival, New Horizon and Spring Harvest, along with some smaller regional events.

We were particularly blessed to partner with New Wine, in Kent, and Bangor Worldwide in Belfast to bring to these festivals our partner production with Artless Theatre Co. about the life and ministry of Petr Jasek, who was imprisoned for his faith in Christ in Sudan for 14 months in 2015. Overall, we achieved a very encouraging 700 sign-ups from our work at exhibitions in 2023.

Our *Voice* magazine continued to be widely well received and we produced four editions. We issue around 13,000 copies to our supporters, volunteers and churches. Our fundraising income from the magazine continues to be a significant contribution to our funding, achieving around £207k of direct gifts in 2023. We have estimated that the overall indirect income (which can't be attributed to other campaigns) is in the region of £505k.

We are pleased that our Christmas appeal for 2023 performed extremely well and was the second most successful campaign in five years. We thank and praise God for His continued blessings. We were very thankful for a major gift of £20k, which helped to boost the Christmas appeal.

We were thrilled by and deeply thankful for a major donation of a large property on the South Coast of England, donated by a Christian charity that has wound down its own ministry in 2023. This major gift has made a significant impact on our ministry and we plan to realise the funds in 2024.

Strategic Purpose: Calling UK Christians into FELLOWSHIP with them

This Strategic Purpose is integrated into the activities of raising their VOICE, and so has not been reported on separately in the Statement of Financial Activities (page 30).

In 2023 we continued to encourage supporters to meet with persecuted Christians through engaging with our various communications channels: in print, online and at live events.

We were delighted to be part of the national Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast event in June at the Palace of Westminster, with our friends Christians in Parliament. This was attended by our partners VOM Korea, Mordecai Ministries International and ChinaAid. We also produced two key events with our partners Transform Iran at New Wine and in November as part of our national volunteering conference.

We continued to produce our monthly podcasts in 2023. We spoke to the Rev Mark Mukan, Mark Lipdo and Andrew Boyd about Nigeria; we spoke to Eric Foley at VOM Korea about North Korea; and we spoke to Bob Fu at ChinaAid. We also spoke with our partners Voice of Persecuted Christians Poland about new projects in Ukraine, which have been started a result of the war with Russia. We hope to promote our podcasts more in 2024.

Our *Voice* magazine featured interviews and testimonies from persecuted Christians from Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Eritrea, North Korea, Central Asia, Iran, Ukraine, Nigeria, Middle East and Burkina Faso.

Our appeals in 2024 covered testimony from persecuted Christians suffering for Jesus in Ukraine, Nigeria, Iran and India.

We issued 76 press releases and prayer alerts on our website. We commissioned a new website provider in February 2023 and launched our new website to supporters in September 2023.

Strategic Purpose: Learning lessons of Christian DISCIPLESHIP with them

This Strategic Purpose is integrated into the activities of raising their VOICE, and so has not been reported separately on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 30).

The persecuted church and persecuted Christians are part of the 'one body of Christ' and they can teach us here in the UK so much about what our faith really means. We continue to look at ways to engage with our supporters in their walk with Christ Jesus as disciples. We have a particular focus on the biblical call for followers of Christ to understand persecution overseas and be prepared for persecution to come everywhere. 'Persecution theology' can be traced through the Old Testament and the New Testament and can teach us about how to endure trials and suffering, no matter where we live.

We reprinted our Bible Study Guide *'All for Jesus'* in 2023. Our Head of Theology and Content Kenneth Harrod began working on his new book *Providence and Persecution*, which follows on from his book *Promise and Persecution*, which was published in 2018.

We continue to stock a range of books on our web e-store to encourage supporters to read more about the theology of persecution and the lives of our brothers and sisters. We continued to promote Petr Jasek's book *'Imprisoned with Isis: Faith in the Face of Evil'*.

In 2023 we also started writing Dr Berhane Asmelash's biography about his life in prison as a Christian in Eritrea. *'Brother I have come to arrest you'* was published in May 2024.

Volunteering

At the end of 2023 we finished the year with 262 volunteers (2022: 261). We recruited 19 new volunteers but 18 volunteers stepped down due to a variety of factors, including age profile, health issues and other pressures. We recruited 11 new Church Representatives and in 2024 we are going to focus on recruiting another 40. In 2023 we recruited four new volunteer speakers and one fundraising volunteer.

We were pleased to recruit our new Volunteering Co-ordinator into post in September after our current Volunteering Co-ordinator was promoted to Volunteering Manager. Now we have two members of staff, we pray that we will be able to expand our volunteering network in 2024.

Our volunteering team put together an annual programme of volunteering recruitment and retention events and these were all successfully completed. We held events in Northern Ireland, the Midlands, Scotland (Inverness and Glasgow), the North, South-East, the South-West, and Wales. In November we held our Annual Volunteers' Conference, which had over 120 delegates. We had six new volunteer applications as a direct result of these events.

We continued to promote volunteering through our weekly Prayers for Partners email which has a very good open rate of around 60%. We issued quarterly newsletters by email and continued to promote new roles on social media and through our new website. We are currently working on a new members' area of the website to further build a library of resources for volunteers.

We introduced our Volunteering Annual Review in November 2023 to enable us to hear from volunteers about their experience of volunteering with us.

We were particularly pleased that we encouraged volunteers to support our Artless Theatre events in 2023 around the UK and we recruited 26 volunteers to help us at summer conferences and exhibitions.

Our office administration, church research and specialist volunteers really helped us this year, particularly those who reviewed our Gift Aid paperwork; those who helped us contact new churches; and those who helped us develop our project management processes and Google Analytics.

Thank you to all our amazing volunteers for all you do: without your energy, commitment and support we couldn't do nearly as much as we do. Praise the Lord.

Strategic Purpose: Maintaining Christian STEWARDSHIP to honour them

This Strategic Purpose is integrated into all the activities, and so it is not reported separately on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 30).

The staffing team is now at full strength, with some changes during the year within the Volunteering staff team and with the addition of two new International Partnerships Managers in the International Ministries Team. The whole staff team has continued to work extremely hard throughout the year, with a clear focus on fulfilling our Calling and Mission. Staff meet together regularly in person or online, for relational opportunities as well as devotions, Staff Meetings, team meetings and day-to-day communications. Our Christians Ethos is evident not just in what we do, but how we do it and staff relationships are very good. Training opportunities are available for all staff, as appropriate. Line Managers meet four times during the year to focus on specific training needs, including regular Data Protection updates, and with the opportunity to share any problems or challenges they may face, as well as sharing examples of good practice in how to address these. Digital Strategy is reviewed quarterly by the Leadership Team to agree priorities for ongoing development across the Ministry, in line with budget. Effective in-house ICT support, provided partially through a regular online 'drop-in', has continued to develop staff competence and confidence in all aspects of IT. During 2023, most staff who travel overseas as part of their role undertook Hostile Environment and First Aid Training to help equip them thoroughly for this important aspect of work. More generally, Health & Safety and Business Continuity have also been a focus this year in terms of policy and good practice, to ensure that the Ministry can continue, regardless of external events. As part of our Stewardship of our listed office building, we undertook a major external refurbishment programme to safeguard this valuable asset and to ensure that it remains fit for purpose for many years to come.

Risk Management

The Board recognises that avoiding and mitigating risk is better than simply being covered by insurance. Release International operates a risk management strategy, which identifies generic risks and which is reviewed annually each September. Dynamic or current risks are assessed and reported each quarter, together with strategies to mitigate those risks. This approach has proved helpful in focusing attention on areas which require additional monitoring or action.

A major risk to the Ministry is a significant reduction in income. The fact that our income sources are spread over many individuals and churches mitigates the likelihood of a sudden dramatic change, but we monitor this risk closely. Accordingly, our financial and data systems assess income each month to identify any significant variation and to determine if specific action is required.

As for all organisations, there is a significant risk of a malicious attack on our IT systems. This is mitigated by security measures, including pro-active testing. Staff are regularly trained and reminded about IT security, particularly phishing attacks.

Due to the nature of the Ministry, there is a risk when travelling to visit partners in contexts where they are being persecuted. This is mitigated by good communication with Partners to assess the current situation, extensive pre-trip briefing and security training.

Financial Review Year ended 31st December 2023

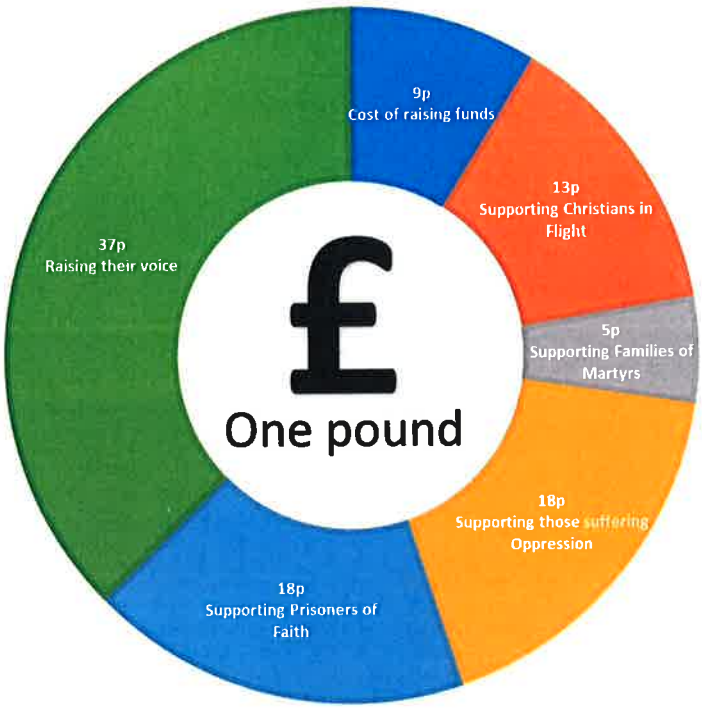
We thank God for His provision through our many faithful supporters. The Trustees express their gratitude for this continuing generosity. We particularly thank God for the generous gift of a residential property in Eastbourne, which we have valued at £675,000 and we are in the process of selling. We will use the sale proceeds to fund the Ministry of Release International.

The diagrams below show the different sources of donations. Total income (excluding the income from the gift of the property referred to above) fell by 10% to £2,718k. Unrestricted donations from individuals, churches and trusts fell by 5% and restricted donations increased by 8% (note 3, page 36). Donations from ICA Partner Ministries (see page 15 of the trustee annual report) fell by 16%.

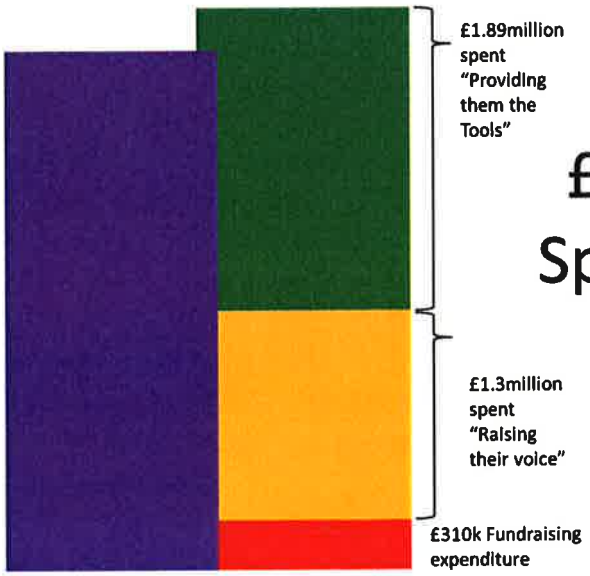
The diagrams below show the income and expenditure for the year. Total expenditure increased by 13% to £3,705k (2022: £3,270k).The expenditure on grants to Partners fell by 18% to £1,165k (2022: £1,421k), principally due to the fall in ICA income, referred to above. Staff costs increased by 21% to £1,280k (2022: £1,140k). This included a pay increase of 6%. The Board have agreed a 4% pay increase from 1st January 2024, in view of the current high levels of inflation.


2023 Total Income
£3,393,425.31
Restricted funds
Unrestric... funds
Churches & other group...
ICA partner ministries, £393,559
Individuals, £661,036
Trusts, £37,597
Legacies, £47,402
Churches & other groups, £282,337
Individuals, £1,843,682

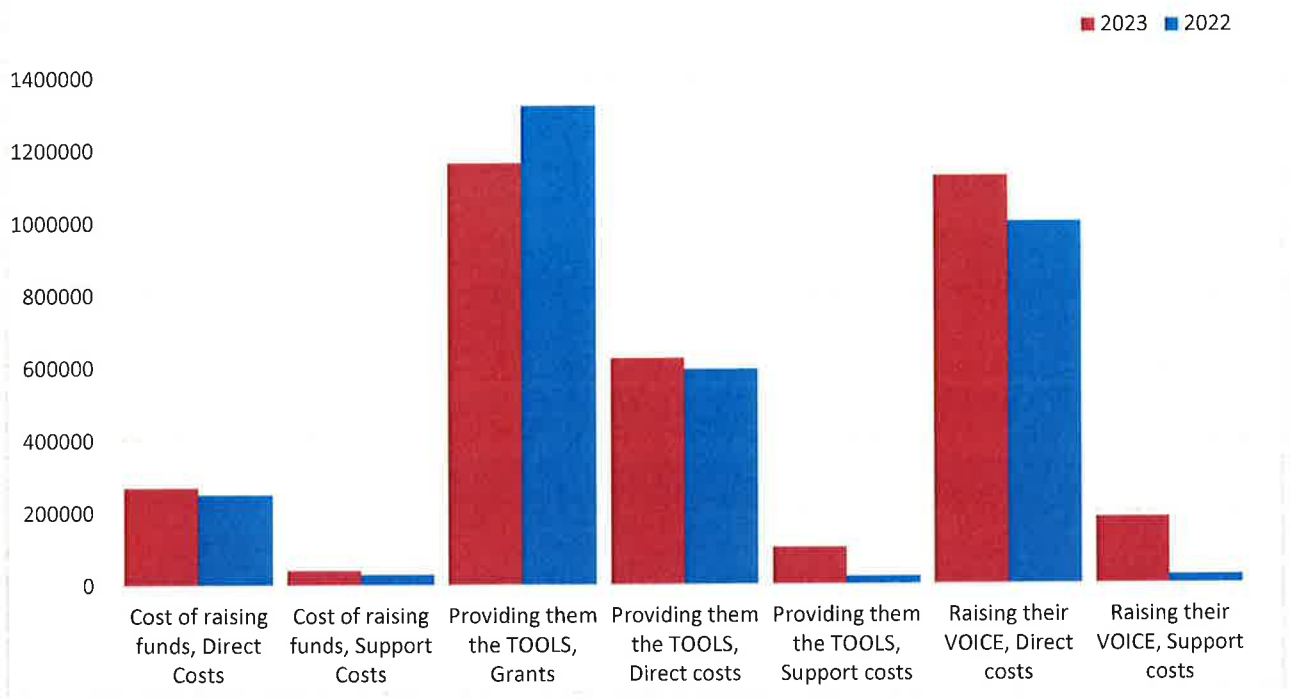

2022 Total Income
£3,028,821.63
Restricted funds
Unrestricted funds
Churches & other groups, £130,075
ICA partner ministries, £469,967
Individuals, £581,236
Trusts, £30,802
Churches & other groups, £132,082
Legacies, £257,701
Individuals, £1,407,969



£3.39 million Total income in 2023



£3.54million Spent serving persecuted Christians in 2023



Restricted Funds at the year-end were £418k (2022: £539k), a reduction of £121k. It should be noted that Release International's overseas projects funds relate to a broad range of international projects, some of which are longer term, multi-year projects. Release International's policy is to spend balances held in restricted funds as soon as is practicable, once all the grant conditions have been met. For further information on restricted funds see note 17 of the financial statements.

Grants Policy

A significant proportion of the overseas work of the Ministry is carried out through agencies local to areas of persecution, that are usually indigenous. Grants are made for specific named purposes to agencies that share our objectives. Receipts and reports of the work carried out are obtained. Staff members usually carry out visits to evaluate potential projects, monitor existing projects, and assess the outcome of completed projects on a sample basis.

Reserves Policy

After considering the Charity Commission's guidance CC19 (Charities and Reserves) the Trustees have agreed to maintain a 'range' as the basis for the level of General funds, which are 'free reserves'. At the Board meeting in December 2023, it was agreed to maintain this range at £400k to £500k. This would allow the Ministry to keep operating if donations from individuals and churches dropped by 10 -15% from current levels and income from legacies dropped by 20%.

During the year, the Trustees designated £100k as part of the Grant Response Fund.

The Trustees also agreed at the December 2021 Board meeting to designate £250k as a property reserve which was the value paid for the long lease of the office in September 2021. In addition, the

Trustees designated a further £170k for property repairs to the office, which is a listed building. A major programme of refurbishment to our office was undertaken in 2023, which has been successfully completed.

The free reserves, after adjusting for fixed assets, as at 31st December 2023, amounted to £731k (2022: £684k), which is 67% above the target range mid-point. Trustees deemed this to be a good position and a welcome provision at this time of uncertainty.

Investment Policy

Income is largely received through voluntary donations and cannot be guaranteed. The Ministry has no permanent endowment. The only funds that are not expendable within 12 months of receipt are those held for reserves or money associated with international projects that remain active beyond the year end. The Board has considered this position and seeks to place funds in savings accounts to achieve a balance between accessibility and higher returns. Funds may be invested in accounts with up to 12 months' notice, but it is not considered prudent at this time to invest income for the longer term. The funds are now spread across four institutions: Barclays, CAF Bank, Nationwide Building Society and Flagstone Group Ltd., a cash deposit platform, who survey market deposit rates and facilitate the placing of deposits with banking institutions.

Structure, Governance and Management

Release International is a Christian Ministry, which is a registered Charity, regulated by the Charity Commission for England and Wales and also registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. It is constituted as a Company limited by guarantee. The Company operates under its Articles of Association, which were updated in April 2022. Release International was founded in 1968 as the Christian Mission to the Communist World, legally changing its name to Release International in June 2017.

The Board of Trustees normally meets four times each year and administers the Charity through its four committees: International Ministries, UK Engagement, Finance, and Resources. The Leadership Team holds executive responsibility for implementing the policies and strategies approved by the Board and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), appointed by the Board, manages the day-to-day operations of the Company.

The Board has an established process for identifying and interviewing potential new Trustees. Vacancies are identified where there are gaps in experience and skills. All prospective Trustees will be practising Christians, who uphold Release International's Statement of Faith, Ethos Statement, and Trustee Code of Conduct. Nominations arising from this process are considered by the Board as a whole and they may subsequently be invited to join the Board. Trustees serve no minimum or maximum terms of service but retire by rotation with the opportunity to stand for re-election.

New Trustees go through an induction and training process to familiarise them with Release International, the persecution sector and their responsibilities as Trustees and Directors under Charity and Company law. New Trustees are referred to the Charity Commission's guide *The Essential Trustee* (CC3) and they also meet with the Leadership Team and other Trustees. Each year the Chair and the CEO plan areas for trustee training which, with the Board's agreement, are covered in conjunction with other meetings.

Pay for key management personnel

The key management personnel in charge of directing and running the operations of the Charity comprise the Trustees and Leadership Team, as set out on page 24. All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration from the charitable Company as Trustees (Rev Dr B. Asmelash is paid a retainer as a consultant on Eritrea: see note 22, page 48). Expenses reimbursed to Trustees are disclosed in note 8, page 48.

Salaries for all staff, including key management staff, are determined on appointment to the post in line with Release International's agreed 5-level salary banding, and in line with the requirements and responsibilities of the role. All roles are reviewed annually through the appraisal system to ensure that any significant changes which may affect remuneration are addressed. The Trustees periodically carry out a review of all salaries across the Ministry, through a benchmarking exercise, to ensure that they remain reasonable and competitive.

International Associations

Release International is a member of the International Christian Association (ICA). The purpose of the ICA is to provide a relational link between Christian Ministries around the world whose foundings were inspired by Pastor Richard Wurmbrand. In doing so, member Ministries seek to maintain a focus upon the biblical mandate of Hebrews 13:3, *'Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow-prisoners, and those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering'* (NIV).

As a member of the ICA, Release International co-operates in a range of international projects and shares information and resources with other members. An Annual General Meeting is the decision-making forum for ICA business. Release International is a voting delegate.

Through ICA membership, Release International is directly able to support many more persecuted Christians throughout the world than it could in isolation. Currently Release International's CEO, Paul Robinson, is an elected member of the Executive Committee of the ICA, which helps co-ordinate the activity of the ICA Ministries.

Release International is also a member of The Evangelical Alliance, Middle East Concern, The Religious Liberties Partnership, and Global Connections.

Plans for the Future

International Ministry

The primary role of our international partners is to extend the kingdom of God and His loving care in their communities, whatever the situation they may face. We will continue to support them by listening to their VOICE and providing the ministry 'TOOLS' that they ask for.

We expanded the International staff team in 2023, making us better equipped to serve our partners. We will consolidate this team in 2024 and make sure our policies and procedures work well, both internally with staff and externally with our partners. We will continue to visit our partners and encourage them in their callings, sharing in fellowship and hearing their VOICE. We will continue to develop and monitor projects with them that ensure the gospel of Christ will be proclaimed in the hardest of places around the world.

Release International is a relationship-based Ministry and it is vital that there are opportunities to

develop and maintain relationships in person with our partners around the world. This is the core and underpinning reason for our travel and why much of our work is conducted in person.

There are other reasons why travel is an important aspect of this Ministry; for example, it enables us to be an authoritative source for what is happening around the world, speaking out in a timely manner and to produce media, which helps to inform and educate people in the UK about matters relating to the persecution of Christians. It is a crucial part of exercising the due diligence and good governance we need to monitor the projects we support. We also want to create opportunities to enhance the Ministries of our partners through visits, which they testify are beneficial to them and which encourage them in their work.

Many Christians in today's world are still being forced to flee from their homes, especially in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. There are many Christians who have been forced into hiding because of their faith. We pray that in 2024 they will be able to find new places to live out their lives for Christ and we will continue to work to that end as well.

Other Christians continue to face imprisonment, an ongoing trend which continues in Eritrea and other places such as Iran and North Korea. We pray for imprisoned believers and their families, many who remain in need of our practical support.

Release International remains committed to developing the bonds of fellowship we have enjoyed with our persecuted brothers and sisters for so long, delivering over 60 projects in more than 30 countries. As persecution in these countries continues, we will continue to be creative and flexible in ensuring that we provide the fellowship and 'TOOLS' persecuted believers ask for and need.

UK Engagement

In 2024 the UK team is planning to deliver a new and sharper fundraising plan which was put together in the fourth quarter 2023. The final quarter of the year was challenging in terms of fundraising, so we continue to pray that our loyal supporters feel called to provide funding and support, to enable us to continue to raise the voice of persecuted Christians and give them the love and financial support that they need. Those in Christ who are suffering for their love for Jesus are not diminishing in numbers at all. In fact, 2023 was a deeply troubling year for Christian communities where we witnessed more than ever increasing pressures around the world, particularly in some key countries including Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nigeria, Eritrea, East Africa, China, North Korea, Central Asia and Iran as reported in our annual *Persecution Trends* Report for 2023.

The economic situation in the UK continues to be very challenging, too. We are very pleased to see the indicators that inflation will continue to fall in 2024, which we pray will be a blessing to our supporters. House prices are also set to further recover after stagnation in the last few years. We also pray that the cost of fuel will continue to remain stable, as many media reports indicate that households continue to have some concern over prices of gas and electricity.

Our plans for 2024 are centred on looking at our key outputs and ensuring that we are focusing on those critical engagement activities that raise the voice of persecuted Christians. We also need to raise our funding and will look to further develop our key income streams.

Voice magazine continues to be well-received and a popular tool for our supporters and donors. We postponed our supporter survey in 2023 and have now planned to issue that in 2024. Our quarterly

letters to supporters asking for their help are also very important in enabling us to raise critical funds for our international projects.

Our new website will be key this year in helping us reach out to more supporters. In 2024 we aim to increase our online presence and donations by web. Our new website is far more advanced, with many new advanced technical features which will connect our website to our online social media accounts, particularly Facebook and YouTube. We are focusing more of our efforts on generating more engagement, particularly with Facebook. We have reduced our presence on X (formerly known as Twitter) and on LinkedIn. We have opened an account on the new social media platform run by Facebook (whose parent company is known as Meta), which is called Threads. We continue to pilot new campaigns with video clips and photography on all social media channels.

Our regional engagement team are planning to focus this year on expanding our mission giving from our strong list of donor churches. We are also expanding our work with new applications and bids to Trusts and Foundations in the UK. We hope to engage more closely with local networks of churches to ensure that we meet church leaders across the UK and we are expanding our letters to churches to include a Christmas appeal. We are also seeking to grow our *Building One Body* initiative, which encourages donor churches to partner with a particular project. We have already planned to have stands at several Christian Conferences and Exhibitions in 2024.

Company Information

The Directors set out below are also the Trustees of the Charity and members of the Company.

Board of Trustees

David Armond CBE QPM	Chair of Trustees
Rev Dr Berhane Asmelash	
David Bentley	
Janet Crick	(appointed 3 July 2023)
Danielle Face	
Robert Karami	(appointed 3 July 2023)
Mary Print	(resigned 28 October 2023)
Sarah Shearer FCA	
Andrew Wayland	

Company Secretary

Patrick Lineen FCA

Leadership Team

Chief Executive Officer	Paul Robinson
Director of International Ministries	Christopher Badley
Director of Engagement UK & Ireland	Laura Hayes
Director of Finance	Patrick Lineen FCA
Director of Personnel & Internal Operations	Lynnette Feist

Registered Office

Betchworth House, 57-65 Station Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 1DL
For security reasons, as we work with many people under threat of intimidation, violence or detention, our registered address is our auditor's Surrey office.

Auditors	Moore Kingston Smith LLP, 9 Appold Street, London, EC2A 2AP
Bankers	CAF Bank Limited, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4JQ
Solicitors	Edward Connor, 10 The Point, Market Harborough, LE16 7QU

Trustees' Responsibilities in Relation to the Financial Statements

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. The accounts in this report have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Company law requires the Trustees to ensure financial statements are prepared for each financial year. Under that law, the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the income and expenditure of the Company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which are sufficient to show and explain the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities. The Trustees are committed to compliance with the *Charity Governance Code.*

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant information that the Company's auditors are not aware of, and each Trustee has taken all the steps necessary to ensure they are aware of any relevant information, and to establish that the Company's auditors are aware of the information.

Auditors

A resolution to re-appoint Moore Kingston Smith LLP as the independent auditors to the charitable Company was passed at the AGM in June 2023.

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

This report was approved by the Board on 20 June 2024 and signed on its behalf by,



David Armond CBE QPM
Chair of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Release International ('the company') for the year ended 31 December 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs(UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the audit of financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Corporation in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other

information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Charities Act 2011 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; [or]
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; [or]
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and from preparing a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 25, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under Section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Companies Act 2006 and Section 151 of the Charities Act 2011 and report to you in accordance with regulations made under those Acts.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control;
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees;
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern;
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are: to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council and UK taxation legislation;
- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance;
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance;
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006; and to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, and in respect of the consolidated financial statements, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 8 of the Charities Act 2011. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters which we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members, as a body, and the charity's trustees, as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinion we have formed.

Moore Kingston Smith LLP

Andrew Stickland (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor

9 Appold Street,

London

EC2A 2AP

Date: 8 July 2024

Moore Kingston Smith LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 31st December 2023

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total Funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total Funds £
Income from								
Donations and legacies	3	2,211,019	-	1,182,407	3,393,426	1,828,566	1,200,279	3,028,845
Charitable activities								
Literature and Events		27,965	-	527	28,492	22,534	283	22,817
Interest receivable		28,194	-	-	28,194	18,460	-	18,460
Other		11,270	-		11,270	14,378		14,378
Total income		**2,278,448**	**-**	**1,182,934**	**3,461,382**	**1,883,938**	**1,200,562**	**3,084,500**
Expenditure on								
Costs of raising funds	4							
Fundraising		290,089	-	25,171	315,260	252,528	29,391	281,919
Charitable activities	4							
Providing them the TOOLS		635,493		1,265,471	1,900,964	518,779	1,434,319	1,953,098
Raising their VOICE		1,305,890	169,297	13,998	1,489,185	1,010,950	24,114	1,035,064
Total expenditure		**2,231,472**	**169,297**	**1,304,640**	**3,705,409**	**1,782,257**	**1,487,824**	**3,270,081**
Net income/ (expenditure)		46,976	(169,297)	(121,706)	(244,027)	101,682	(287,263)	(185,581)
Transfers		-	-	-	-	177,801	(177,801)	-
Net income/ (expenditure) after transfers		**46,976**	**(169,297)**	**(121,706)**	**(244,027)**	**279,483**	**(465,064)**	**(185,581)**
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2023	16&17	684,366	500,126	539,443	1,723,935	1,222,684	686,830	1,909,514
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2023	16&17	**731,342**	**330,829**	**417,737**	**1,479,908**	**1,502,167**	**221,766**	**1,723,934**

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Balance Sheet at 31st December 2023

For Release International - Company Number 01506576

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		242,020		250,865
Intangible Assets	11		1,044		2,100
Current assets					
Investments held for resale	20	675,000		4,876	
Debtors	12	93,604		105,620	
Short term investments		357,225		397,996	
Cash at bank and in hand		540,501		1,055,096	
		1,666,330		1,563,588	
Creditors – Amounts falling due within one year	13	(209,484)		(92,619)	
Net current assets			1,456,846		1,470,969
Creditors – Amounts falling due in over one year	14		(220,000)		-
Total assets less current liabilities			1,479,910		1,723,934
Reserves					
Unrestricted funds					
General Fund	16		731,345		684,366
Designated Funds	16		330,828		500,125
Restricted funds	17		417,737		539,443
Total funds			1,479,910		1,723,934

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and with FRS102.

The notes on pages 34 to 49 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board on 20 June 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Sarah Shearer

Trustee and Treasurer

Cashflow Statement for year ended 31st December 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Net cash (used in)/generated by operating activities		(583,560)	(215,157)
Cashflows from Investing Activities			
Purchase of property plant and equipment		-	(5,265)
Purchase of intangible fixed assets		-	-
Interest received		28,194	18,460
Net cash generated by/(used in) investing activities		28,194	13,195
Net (decrease)/increase in cash	10	(555,366)	(201,962)
Cash at the beginning of the year		1,453,092	1,655,054
Cash at the end of the year		897,726	1,453,092

Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Net Income / (Expenditure)	(244,027)	(185,580)
Adjusted for		
Depreciation charge	8,845	11,586
Amortisation charge	1,056	2,050
Receipt of gift of investment for resale	(675,000)	(4,875)
Sale of investments	4,878	-
Interest from deposits	(28,194)	(18,460)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	12,017	(32,655)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	336,865	12,778
Net cash used in operating activities	(583,560)	(215,157)

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting Policies

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) - Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

1.1 Going Concern

The Trustees have assessed whether the use of going concern is appropriate and made this assessment for a period of at least one year from the date of the approval of these financial statements. The Trustees have given due consideration to the current risks facing the Ministry. Income increased in 2022 due to the loyal donor base and increased legacy and ICA donations. The Ministry's reserves were above the planned level (page 19). Income estimates for 2023 and 2024 are cautious. Having reviewed forecasts prepared by management the Trustees are confident that the Ministry will continue to meet its obligations as they fall due and that therefore the going concern basis continues to be appropriate.

1.2 Basis of Accounting

Release International Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

1.3 Fund Accounting

Funds held are either

- Unrestricted general funds which are funds that can be used within the charitable objectives at the Trustees' discretion. Some of these funds have been designated by the Trustees for specific purposes.
- Restricted funds which are funds that can only be used for specified purposes. The restriction may be imposed by the donor or the terms under which the funds were raised.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations, interest and rent are recognised in the accounts on a received basis. For donations made under the gift aid scheme, the gift aid is recognised in the year in which the gift is received. Gifts in kind are valued at their value to the Charitable Company.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the Charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably, and the Charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds are costs incurred in encouraging voluntary contributions to the Charitable Company and their associated support costs.
- Expenditure on charitable activities are costs directly relating to the objects of the Charitable Company and include grants made, direct costs incurred, and an apportionment of support costs as shown in note 7.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the Charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the Charity's activities. The Charity initially identifies the costs of its support functions. It then identifies those costs which relate to the governance function. Having identified its governance costs, the remaining support costs together with the governance costs are apportioned between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities pro rata to staff full time equivalents.

Grants payable are payments made to third parties in the furtherance of the charitable objectives of the Charitable

Company. The grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which the awards are made. Grants where the beneficiary has not been informed or has to meet certain conditions before the grant is released are not accrued but are noted as financial commitments.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

1.6 Tangible Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are all used for charitable purposes and are shown at cost less depreciation. The threshold at which purchases are not normally capitalised is £1,000. Depreciation on assets is calculated to write off the cost over their estimated economic useful lives. Assets are depreciated annually on a straight-line basis over four years for computer equipment, five years for office equipment and the remainder of the lease for leasehold improvements. The leasehold property is amortised monthly over the remainder of the lease.

1.7 Intangible Fixed Assets

Intangible assets are the development costs for specific IT projects which are capitalised at cost, provided it is likely to bring future economic benefit to the Charity. If the criteria for recognition as assets are not met, the expense is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which it is incurred. Capitalised IT costs include all direct and indirect costs that are directly attributable to the development process. The costs are amortised using the straight-line method over four years being their estimated useful lives.

1.8 Foreign Currencies

Income and expenditure in foreign currencies are converted into sterling at the rates of exchange ruling on the date of transaction. Amounts held at the balance sheet date are converted at the rates prevailing at the balance sheet date.

1.9 Pension Costs

The Charity operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees which is funded by contributions from the employee and employer contributions payable to scheme and employees' personal pension plans are charged in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate. Further details of the scheme are given in note 15.

1.10 Operating Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

1.11 Financial Instruments

The Charitable Company only has basic financial instruments measured at amortised cost, with no financial instruments classified as 'other' or basic instruments measured at fair value.

1.12 Investments

The charity has a policy of selling donated shares upon receipt of donation. However, where for any reason donated shares are not sold at the balance sheet date these are listed as investments, at their market value at the balance sheet date.

Realised and unrealised gains or losses for the period are accounted for through the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which they occur.

1.13 Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include: cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks and other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

2. Critical Estimates

In the view of the Trustees applying the accounting policies adopted, no judgements were required apart from those listed below:

- the allocation of support costs;
- useful economic lives of intangible fixed assets;
- depreciation rates of fixed assets;
- estimation of legacy accrual.

3. Donations and Gifts

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £
Individuals	1,843,681	661,037	2,504,718	1,407,981	581,246	1,989,227
Churches & other groups	282,337	115,112	397,449	132,082	130,075	262,157
Trusts	37,597	12,701	50,298	30,802	18,991	49,793
ICA partner ministries		393,559	393,559		469,967	469,967
Legacies	47,402	-	47,402	257,701	-	257,701
	2,211,018	1,182,408	3,393,426	1,828,566	1,200,279	3,028,845

There was a gift in kind of a residential property, which has been valued at £675,000. There was a gift in kind of some shares in a public company in 2022 of £4,876.

4. Expenditure

	Grants	Direct costs	Support costs	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£
	(see note 5)	(see note 6)	(see note 7)	
Costs of raising funds				
Fundraising	-	290,089	25,171	315,260
Charitable activities				
Providing them the TOOLS	1,164,763	631,899	104,301	1,900,963
Raising their VOICE	-	1,133,584	186,305	1,319,889
	1,164,763	2,055,572	315,777	3,536,112

The above expenditure excludes exceptional repair costs on our premises at Priory Buildings, Orpington of £169,297

	Grants	Direct costs	Support costs	2022 Total
Costs of raising funds	£	£	£	£
Fundraising	(see note 5)	(see note 6)	(see note 7)	
Charitable activities	-	245,288	36,631	281,919
Providing them the TOOLS	1,420,508	423,855	108,735	1,953,098
Raising their VOICE	-	888,419	146,645	1,035,064
	1,420,508	1,557,562	292,011	3,270,081

5. Grants Made

Grant payments made were for the charitable purposes of Release International. They provided support for:

- Families of Christian martyrs;
- Prisoners of faith and their families;
- Christians suffering oppression and violence;
- Christians forced to flee.

The Ministry has taken advantage of the exemption available in the Charity SORP not to disclose specific information in relation to grant making, on the grounds that the disclosure could result in serious prejudice to the grant maker and/or the recipient institution, individuals working for the recipient institution or individuals.

No support costs have been allocated to the total amount of the grants.

	Total 2023		Total 2022	
A. Restricted Funds				
	No.	**£**	**No.**	**£**
Central Asia	16	68,462	10	66,426
Middle East/Gulf	26	273,748	34	318,483
North East Africa	16	423,461	22	409,450
West Africa	18	154,786	27	151,768
South Asia	43	139,898	118	258,675
South East Asia	12	91,240	19	144,763
Other	13	13,169	13	70,943
	144	1,164,763	243	1,420,508
B. Unrestricted Funds				
Central Asia	5	37,475	3	8,000
Middle East/Gulf			1	26,541
North East Africa	1	10,000		
South Asia	6	31,526		
South East Asia	1	8,003		
Other	1	67,742	1	56,339
	14	154,746	5	90,880
Total Grant payments	**158**	**1,319,509**	**248**	**1,511,388**

6. Direct Costs

*See note 8	2023 Staff costs* £	Other costs £	Total costs £	2022 Staff costs* £	Other costs £	Total costs £
Costs of raising funds						
Fundraising	131,764	158,325	290,089	117,316	127,972	245,288
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	273,743	358,156	631,899	244,774	179,081	423,855
Raising their VOICE	630,368	503,215	1,133,583	564,182	324,237	888,419
	1,035,875	1,019,696	2,055,571	926,272	631,290	1,557,562

7. Support Costs

*See note 8	2023 Staff costs* £	2023 Other costs £	2023 Total costs £	2022 Staff costs* £	2022 Other costs £	2022 Total costs £
Costs of raising funds						
Fundraising	30,414	10,441	40,855	28,986	7,645	36,631
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	76,774	26,356	103,130	68,797	18,145	86,943
Raising their VOICE	136,844	46,977	183,821	116,039	30,606	146,645
	244,032	83,773	327,805	213,823	56,396	270,219

8. Staff Costs

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries		1,057,057	942,604
Social security costs		106,644	94,255
Pension costs		105,022	93,810
Group Life policy		11,185	9,425
		1,279,908	1,140,094

Total split as follows:

	2023 Direct (note 6)	2023 Support (note 7)	2023 Total staff costs	2022 Direct (note 6)	2022 Support (note 7)	2022 Total staff costs
Costs of raising funds	131,764	30,414	162,178	117,316	28,986	146,302
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	273,743	76,774	350,517	244,774	68,797	313,571
Raising their VOICE	630,368	136,844	767,212	564,182	116,039	680,221
	1,035,875	244,032	1,279,908	926,271	213,823	1,140,094

The Trustees receive no remuneration. During 2023 three Trustees received out of pocket expenses of £817 (2022:£718, one Trustee) . During the year donations from five Trustees (2022: five) were received totalling £4,425 (2022: £4,406)

The remuneration and benefits received by key management personnel in the year were £360k (2022: £319k). During the year there was one employee whose remuneration was in the bracket £70,000 - £79,999. (2022: one).

At 31st December 2023, the Charitable Company included in creditors an amount of accrued holiday pay not taken of £20k (2022: £19k).

The average number of employees was:	2023	2022
Management	5	5
Administration and support	5	6
Overseas project management and UK information and education	21	18
	31	29

9. Net Income/Expenditure for the Year

The net income/ expenditure for the year is stated after charging:

		2023 £	2022 £
Depreciation of assets	(see note 11)	9,901	13,634
Auditors' remuneration		21,132	15,990
Hire of equipment		5,005	6,794

10. Analysis of Cash, Cash Equivalents and Net Debt

2023	As at 1 Jan 2023	Cash flows	Non cash movements	As at 31 Dec 2023
Cash at bank	237,766	36,917	-	274,683
Cash on deposit	1,215,326	(592,283)	-	623,043
Net Cash	1,453,092	(555,366)	-	897,726

2022	As at 1 Jan 2022	Cash flows	Non cash movements	As at 31 Dec 2022
Cash at bank	665,179	(427,413)	-	237,766
Cash on deposit	989,875	225,451	-	1,215,326
Net cash	1,655,054	(201,962)	-	1,453,092

11. Fixed Assets

	Property	Computer Equipment	Office Equipment	Leasehold Improvements	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost					
At 1st January 2023	250,000	82,782	33,338	-	366,120
Additions	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
At 31st December 2023	250,000	82,782	33,338	-	366,120
Depreciation					
At 1st January 2023	4,560	77,357	33,338	-	115,255
Charge for year	3,420	5,425	-		8,845
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
At 31st December 2023	7,980	82,782	33,338	-	124,100
Net book values					
At 31st December 2023	242,020	-	-	-	242,020
At 31st December 2022	245,440	5,425	-	-	250,865

Depreciation rates: Straight-line

Property- remainder of lease

Computers- 33.3% per annum

Office equipment- 25% per annum

Intangible Assets

	Software Development	Total
	£	£
Cost		
At 1st January 2023	25,345	25,345
Additions	-	-
Disposals	-	-
At 31st December 2023	25,345	25,345
Depreciation		
At 1st January 2023	23,245	23,245
Charge for year	1,057	1,057
Disposals	-	-
At 31st December 2023	24,301	24,301
Net book values		
At 31st December 2023	1,044	1,044
At 31st December 2022	2,100	2,100

Depreciation rates: Straight-line 25% p.a.

12. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Due within one year		
Other debtors	69,715	54,068
Prepayments	23,889	25,852
Accrued legacies	-	25,700
	93,604	105,620

13. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within One Year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	68,731	28,504
Other creditors	21,069	18,725
Interest free loan	30,000	-
Accruals	89,684	45,390
	209,484	92,619

14. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Over One Year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Interest free loan	220,000	0

The above loan is interest-free and is due to be forgiven over the next 8 years 4 months.

15. Members' Liability

The Charitable Company is limited by guarantee and each of the members is bound to contribute a sum not exceeding £10 in certain circumstances as set out in clause 7 of the Articles of Association.

15. Pension Commitments

The Charitable Company participates in the Global Connections pension scheme which is a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets are held separately from those of the Charitable Company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge representing contributions payable

by the Charitable Company to the scheme and to other personal pension schemes amounted to between 7% or 10% of gross salaries depending on whether the staff member also contributes (2022: 7% or 10%). At 31st December 2023 there were no significant contributions outstanding payable to the scheme. The Charitable Company's pension arrangements comply with its statutory obligations in respect of auto-enrolment.

16. Unrestricted Funds

	Balance 01-Jan-23	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-23
	£	£	£	£	£
General Reserve Fund	684,366	2,278,448	(2,231,470)		731,344
Designated Fund - Grant Reponse Fund	1,917	-	(20,518)	100,000	81,399
Designated Fund - Property reserve	250,000	-	(570)	-	249,430
Designated Fund- Property repairs	148,209	-	(148,209)	-	-
Designated Fund- new property	100,000	-	-	(100,000)	-
	1,184,492	2,278,448	(2,400,767)	-	1,062,173

	Balance 01-Jan-22	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-22
	£	£	£	£	£
General Reserve Fund	602,684	1,883,938	(1,782,256)	(20,000)	684,366
Designated Fund - Grant Reponse Fund	200,000	-	-	(198,083)	1,917
Designated Fund - Property reserve	250,000	-		-	250,000
Designated Fund Property repairs	170,000	-	(21,791)	-	148,209
Designated Fund- new property	-	-	-	100,000	100,000
	1,222,684	1,883,938	(1,804,047)	(118,083)	1,184,492

The Reserve Policy is explained on page 19-20 of the Trustee Report.

The Grant Response Fund allows Release International to be more agile and give grants to overseas partners, usually funded by restricted gifts in anticipation of funds being received later in the year.

The Property Fund relates to the office building purchased in September 2021 and has been set aside as a designated fund, so that it does not form part of general reserves.

During the year the Property Repairs Fund was spent on refurbishing the office building.

The New Property Fund relates to the gift of a residential property, see discussion on page 23 of the Annual Report.

17. Restricted Funds

These are donations received for specific purposes as requested by the donors. The first four funds are for the taxonomy of persecution (page 6 of the trustee report) The other funds are many and varied and where appropriate have been grouped into geographical areas. They are all within our objectives as described on page 5.

	Balance 01-Jan-23	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-23
	£	£	£	£	£
Christians forced to flee	21,090	85,856	(106,400)	7,264	7,810
Families of Christian martyrs	0	106,932	(99,250)	(919)	6,763
Prisoners of faith and their families	39,786	75,468	(57,854)	(4,980)	52,420
Christians suffering oppression and violence	(0)	172,338	(159,009)	(8,096)	5,233
Central Asia	1,864	10,988	(12,720)	5,145	5,277
Middle East/Gulf	5,233	51,231	(51,499)	14,237	19,202
North East Africa	398,275	299,636	(452,810)	5,829	250,930
West Africa	9,369	108,774	(75,786)	-	42,357
South Asia	36,046	92,474	(100,254)	(4,111)	24,155
South East Asia	25,389	22,176	(39,787)	4,421	12,199
Personal Support	1,187	22,009	(22,009)	-	1,187
Generic funds and other	1,203	39,450	(31,661)	(18,790)	(9,798)
	539,443	1,087,333	(1,209,038)	-	417,735

	Balance 01-Jan-22	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-22
	£	£	£	£	£
Christians forced to flee	2,023	169,322	(87,895)	(62,359)	21,091
Families of Christian martyrs	93,108	32,736	(113,220)	(12,624)	0
Prisoners of faith and their families	45,901	100,876	(106,991)	-	39,786
Christians suffering oppression and violence	78,702	78,221	(223,622)	66,699	(0)
Central Asia	1,898	37,215	(64,750)	27,501	1,864
Middle East/Gulf	12,286	83,402	(102,993)	12,538	5,233
North East Africa	329,112	445,672	(376,971)	462	398,275
West Africa	13,199	11,175	(37,548)	22,543	9,369
South Asia	46,496	71,025	(140,148)	58,673	36,046
South East Asia	18,183	19,211	(12,118)	113	25,389
Personal Support	195	38,907	(37,915)	-	1,187
Generic funds and other	45,726	32,206	(81,268)	4,539	1,203
	686,829	1,119,968	(1,385,439)	118,085	539,443

During 2023 funds have been transferred from general restricted funds to cover overspends in specific restricted funds.

18. Analysis of Net Assets Between Funds

	Fixed assets	Cash	Net Current assets	Totals
	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	-	399,493	18,244	417,737
Unrestricted funds	243,064	278,231	540,876	1,062,172
	243,064	677,724	559,120	1,479,909

2022	Fixed assets	Cash	Net Current assets	Totals
	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	-	529,198	10,245	539,443
Unrestricted funds	252,965	923,893	7,632	1,184,491
	252,965	1,453,091	17,877	1,723,934

19. Other Financial Commitments

	2023		2022	
	Office Equipment	Premises Rental	Office Equipment	Premises Rental
Operating Leases	£	£	£	£
Due under 1 year	6,674	225	6,674	225
Due between 2 to 5 years	6,674	900	13,348	900
Due after more than 5 years	-	14,794	-	15,019
	13,348	15,919	20,022	16,144

Lease with Bromley Council terminates on 13/9/2094. Ground rent is £225 per annum; 71.75 years to run

Franking machine leased at £1668.49 per qtr upto 31/12/25

The premises rental is ground rent for the leasehold property.

20 Investments Held for Re-sale

	2023	2022
	£	£
Shares in publicly quoted company	-	4,876

The above shares are in Treatt plc and were gifted by a donor.

INVESTMENT IN MERRIFIELD PROPERTY

Residential property in Eastbourne gifted to Release International in June 2023, conservatively valued at: £675,000

Estate agents in Eastbourne valued the property at between £695,000-£750,000 in January 2024

21. Taxation

As a Charity, Release International benefits from exemptions on income and gains falling within Sections 466-493 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 to the extent they are derived from charitable activities.

22. Related Party Transactions

Revd Dr Berhane Asmelash, who is a Trustee, receives no remuneration for his role as Trustee. He was paid as a consultant on Eritrea £7,594 (2022: £7,275)

23. Capital Commitments

There were no capital commitments not provided for in the financial statements (2022: none).

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL

England & Wales - Charity number 280577

Accounts

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL
Voice
of Persecuted Christians

Release International

The Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the Year ended 31st December 2022

A Company Limited by Guarantee. Company No. 01506576

Registered Charity No. 280577 and Registered in Scotland No. SCO40456

Registered with
FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR

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Trustees' Annual Report

The Trustees have the pleasure of presenting their Annual Report together with the Financial Statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 December 2022, which are also prepared to meet the requirements of a Directors' Report and Accounts for Companies Act purposes. Release International is a Christian Ministry and will often be referred to in this report as the Ministry.

Message from the Chair



I am delighted to again have the opportunity to present the Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2022. It has been an enormous privilege to serve as a Trustee of Release International for the last five years, working with a talented team in support of our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ around the world. I have witnessed first-hand the selfless efforts of committed individuals, both staff and volunteers, doing their utmost to follow God's calling to serve persecuted Christians and my own faith and commitment has undoubtedly strengthened as a result.

I had the opportunity to travel the world during my career, including to many hostile, challenging environments and to states governed in a harsh, autocratic, or corrupt fashion. It made me appreciate, perhaps for the first time, how blessed I was to live in a free society, with the privilege to worship as I please and to express my personal views (within reason!) without fear of retribution. We do tend to take those privileges for granted in the UK and fail to appreciate just how blessed we are. But many of our Christian brothers and sisters around the world are not so fortunate, experiencing real persecution because of their faith, with many losing their liberty or their lives because of it. Yet they stay firm in their faith and are amazing witnesses for those of us living in more fortunate circumstances. Release International's annual Persecution Trends report highlights growing concern for Christian communities in Nigeria, India, and China in 2023, as well as in Iran, Afghanistan, Malaysia, and many other parts of Africa. The situation in Ukraine continues to be of huge concern and remains at the front of our consciousness due to daily news reports, but as I pointed out last year, there are vast numbers of our brothers and sisters around the world affected by war or its consequences at this time in Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea and Ethiopia and elsewhere, whose plight is not as well highlighted in our media as the unfolding tragedy in Europe. The need is astronomic. The work of Release International and other like-minded Christian Missions around the world has never been more important. We are privileged at Release International, whether as permanent staff, volunteers, supporters, or prayer warriors, to have the opportunity to play a small role in supporting and serving them.

Through God's grace, the sacrificial generosity of our many supporters has continued this year and we remain in a solid financial position, which has enabled us to deliver a strong programme of work over the last 12 months. Our Board of Trustees has continued to meet face-to-face throughout the year, with the September Board meeting forming part of a two-day retreat at High Leigh Conference Centre. The highlight of that event was to hear the personal testimony of Petr Jasek, former prisoner of faith and now global ambassador for Voice of the Martyrs USA, who attended the event with his wife Vanda to lead a bible study and observe our Board meeting.

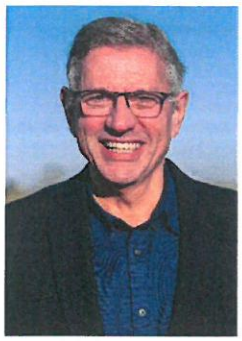
I would like to take this opportunity to introduce a new member of the Board of Trustees, Danielle Face, the UK Missions Training Co-ordinator for Elim Missions, who brings a very broad set of skills and experience to the team. I also want to thank Martin Lee for his contribution as a Trustee, who has now retired from the role. Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the continuing witness, service, and commitment of the Release International team of staff members and volunteers, who have worked tirelessly with our Partners around the world to ensure that the voice of persecuted Christians is heard more widely. I also give thanks to God for you, our huge network of supporters, whose faithful prayer and financial support make this work possible.



David Armond CBE QPM

Chair of Trustees

Chief Executive's Introduction



2022 was something of a milestone for me personally; I reached the 10 year point in my service as CEO for Release International. I am still able to say with all sincerity that this role is the most privileged I have fulfilled during my life. While it is true to say those of us fulfilling ministry within Release International often see the worst of the world's persecution of the followers of Jesus Christ, it is also true to say we see God's glory in the midst of it all. An example comes from a recent trip I made to northern Nigeria. I had the blessing and challenge of ministering God's word in a village which had recently been attacked by Islamic extremists. During that attack, homes were burned along with the local church building I preached in. Many villagers were macheted, resulting in traumatic injuries or death. One of those killed was a village pastor. No doubt the extremists believed they scored a significant victory in killing that Pastor, shouting *'Allahu Akbar, death to the Christians'* as they did so, but I can report that eight young men from that village have stepped forward to take his place and are currently in training to become pastors themselves. As Tertullian is often quoted as saying, *"the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church"*. It can certainly be said to those extremists, as Joseph said of his brothers in Genesis 50 verse 20,*"You meant evil against me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives"*. Jesus is building His church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it (Matthew 16 verse 18).

Release International's Partners are supporting the people of that Nigerian village, helping to rebuild their lives, and giving them what they need to go on living fully for Jesus Christ. It is just one small, but effectively great, example of how the sacrificial donations of Release International supporters have enabled us, during 2022, to fulfil our Calling, *'To love and serve persecuted Christians'*, around the world, in fulfilment of our Charitable Objects.

Everyone at Release International frequently expresses deep gratitude for God's financial provision to this Ministry. During the trip to Nigeria mentioned above, the secretary of our Partner Archbishop Ben Kwashi, reminded us that *"money follows mission, not the other way around"*. Her simple but profound reminder describes our own approach to fundraising. While we always ensure we fulfil the requirements of the Fundraising Regulator, and the Information Commissioner's Office, we are clear that our mission is to fulfil our Calling, not to chase money. We hear regularly from our supporters that they appreciate that approach and, as we continue in it, we trust God will always *meet all our needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus* (Philippians 4 verse 19). He has faithfully done so since this Ministry began in 1968, and again throughout 2022. To God be the glory!

It is always humbling to see how, in response to our raising the *Voice of Persecuted Christians*, God's people in the United Kingdom and Ireland respond by giving faithfully and sacrificially (especially during a time of rising costs of living) to ensure we can faithfully go on *Loving and Serving* those being persecuted for their faithfulness to Jesus Christ.

Paul Robinson

Chief Executive

Our Charitable Objects

To advance the Christian faith in accordance with the Statement of Faith and Ethos Statement;

The relief of poverty and other hardship, need or distress, for those who are suffering persecution or marginalisation for their Christian beliefs, and their families, by providing support and assistance;

To further the charitable work of the Charity by the advancement of such other charitable purposes as the trustees shall from time to time decide, provided such purposes are consistent with the Statement of Faith and Ethos Statement.

The Objects are to be carried out as a proclamation of the beliefs set out in our Statement of Faith, which is available on our website releaseinternational.org.

About Release International

Release International was founded in 1968 as the Christian Mission to the Communist World, inspired by Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, who was imprisoned and tortured by Romanian secret police under brutal Communism. Following the demise of Communism in Eastern Europe and the increase in the persecution of Christians elsewhere in the world, the Ministry broadened its activities and changed its name to Release International.

Our Calling and Mission

Our Calling

Through the ministry of Pastor Richard Wurmbrand and Hebrews 13:3 we have been called by God to **Love and Serve Persecuted Christians**.

Our Mission (five Strategic Purposes)

Our Mission is to love and serve persecuted Christians by:

- Giving them the **'TOOLS'** they need to live for Jesus Christ.
- Raising their **VOICE**.
- Calling UK Christians into **FELLOWSHIP** with them.
- Learning lessons of Christian **DISCIPLESHIP** with them.
- Maintaining Christian **STEWARDSHIP** to honour them.

Our Taxonomy of Persecution

Around the world, we prayerfully, pastorally, and practically help:

- Families of Christian martyrs
- Prisoners of faith and their families
- Christians suffering oppression and violence

- Christians forced to flee

How our Activities Deliver Public Benefit

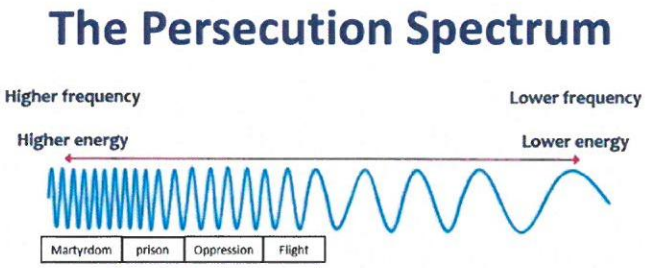
The Trustees confirm they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission. Release International seeks to prayerfully, pastorally, and practically help those who are persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ, and to help Christians, churches, faith-based organisations and the general public understand and engage with the reality of persecution. Those who benefit from our activities are Christians globally whose religious freedoms have been curtailed or abused, and any member of the public wanting to be educated about the circumstances of persecuted Christians and/or become involved in supporting and helping them. Our approach stems from our Charitable Objects (page 5). The Trustees consider Release International's, Calling, Mission, and Operational Strategies fulfil the duty and are confident the Charitable Company's activities are delivering public benefit.

Our Achievements and Performance

1. Strategic Purpose: Giving them the 'TOOLS' they need to live for Jesus Christ

Release International delivers the international aspects of its ministry by working in-country through local churches or organisations, with whom we have established formal partnerships. Where possible these Partners are indigenous to the area in which our Ministry operates, but sometimes the work is carried out through Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) where they are well connected with the local church. These partnerships form the main connections between Release International and persecuted Christian communities. The very nature of this work makes it difficult to report on it without endangering those being served. However, we can share some stories that demonstrate what we've being doing to benefit persecuted Christians overseas.

History has shown that persecution comes and goes around the world. There are a variety of different types of persecutors, who have varied reasons for persecuting. No matter who, when or where, the intensity of persecution in the Christian life can be likened to the radio frequency spectrum (see diagram below): at one end, Christians face a high frequency of terrible persecution, at the other end occurrences are rare and Christians pay little or no cost for following Christ.



Our international work is focused on the high frequency end of the persecution spectrum. Our own Taxonomy of Persecution is used to ensure the Ministry remains in the right place for the foreseeable future. We have identified four clear areas of ministry: Families of Christian martyrs; Prisoners of faith and their families; Christians suffering oppression and violence, and Christians forced to flee. Having ministered to and with Christians at this high end of the persecution spectrum, Release International is able to continue presenting the first-person VOICE of persecution to those

at the lower end of the spectrum, with the hope and prayer that they will become engaged with those suffering and be better prepared should they face serious persecution themselves! (2 Tim 3:12).

The stories below demonstrate current examples from each element of the Taxonomy.

Families of Christian martyrs

Takum is a Local Government Area (LGA) in Taraba State, Nigeria. Throughout 2022 it experienced violent attacks on its communities by militant Fulani groups. However, this is nothing new, as far back as 2005 Release International provided funds for building materials to restore homes in the village of Kumutu that were attacked at that time.

Our partners reported that over 40 villages in this area were ransacked and taken over, displacing indigenous people from their ancestral homes and over 100 people were killed in this area, with over 1000 families displaced. Almost 5,000 Christians were killed in such incidents in Nigeria during 2022. Houses, schools and Churches were burnt down, farmlands and farm produce destroyed. Inhabitants of affected villages were forced to flee their homes and migrate to neighbouring towns in search of safety.

Our partners, who travelled many hours on dangerous roads to reach Takum, were able to encourage the survivors and distribute substantial aid packages, which include essential food items. Some of the survivors from the attacks reported the following:

I lost my brother and sister to the attack. Now, we have all been displaced and we are left with no homes. We are squatting in different places. Some of us are staying in Churches with our families, some are living in Government primary schools. Our homes are now occupied by the herdsmen. We just want to return to our homes and our normal lives.

I want to appreciate the Lord Almighty for bringing you safely to this place. Thank you for taking the risk to come to us despite all the dangers on the road. All the people here are victims of these attacks. You cannot even go to their villages because of how unsafe it is. We also appreciate the people that supported you to help bring these materials to us. May God provide for them and for you.

I want to say thank you to those that have visited us with these food items. This gift is a physical representation of God's love to us and we truly appreciate it. It is my prayer that this work will continue to prosper and cover more people encountering the same challenge as us. I pray for God's unending guidance and protection for the organisation. We appeal that you continue to pray for the Church in Takum.

Prisoners of faith and their families

Pakistani pastor Zafar Bhatti has been in Rawalpindi's Adyala Central Jail since July 2012, when he was charged with sending blasphemous text messages. On May 3, 2017, Zafar was sentenced to life imprisonment for blasphemy, a charge he denies. In December 2021 this was changed to the Death Sentence. The mobile phone in question was not registered to his name.

Our partner visits Zafar when he can and continues to regularly visit his wife, Nawab Bibi. Both husband and wife are suffering from ill health and depression. Throughout 2022 Nawab Bibi received monthly support in order to buy basic food and medical supplies. Sadly, towards the end

of the year Nawab Bibi and Zafar felt it was no longer tenable for her to remain near her husband in Rawalpindi. Release's partner assisted her move to a more sustainable location in Lahore.

There are many long-term prisoners of faith around the world, in countries such as Eritrea and North Korea; Release international will continue to remember them and support their families whenever possible.

Christians suffering oppression and violence

Christians in Egypt face persecution because of their faith in Jesus Christ, especially in Upper Egypt, where there is much poverty, illiteracy and disease. Owing to violent attacks, many Christians in this region have been forced to leave their homes. In 2022 Release helped our partner to offer compassionate care to such people through community programmes aimed at lifting them above the poverty line and strengthening their faith.

Marrying at very young ages, many young wives are clueless about the world outside their little homes. Our partner reports on the story of one such woman:

Having never gone to school, let alone worked or purchased her household needs, her husband's death was a drastic blow that left her depressed and suicidal. When we met her to explore options for small businesses, she despairingly replied that the only thing she could do was cook. That was good enough for us! We helped her with a small income-generating baking business, which she has thrived in, with neighbours and families from church ordering her products! It's a blessing to see the Lord bring her back to life! The business provided her with the concrete evidence she needed that she was not forgotten but loved and cared for by a sovereign God and His people. The fruit of God's work in her life is clear in the way she talks about God as Father and communicates with her children. What a blessing for us to be a part of God's amazing orchestration of and provision for her and her family's life!

Another testimony they cite is about a young man who lives in a very poor slums area on the edge of Cairo:

He lives with his elderly and sick parents, as well as his three siblings. He is the breadwinner of the family, who used to work as an electrician fixing air conditioners. Several years ago, while he was at his job, he was electrocuted and began to suffer epileptic seizures. He is very talented in what he does, but this accident and its consequences cost him his job and any future jobs in the electrical field. This badly affected his home and his family's already harsh living conditions. Needless to say, this had dreadful psychological effects on him and he felt helpless and hopeless. The Lord enabled our ministry to help him with a small income-generating project of installing network cables in homes. Despite the ongoing effects of COVID, his project has been growing because he is very smart and dedicated. He now testifies that the Lord redeemed his life and is truly thankful for this new beginning when all the doors seemed closed.

Christians forced to flee

Many Christian communities around the world are being forced to flee persecution and the disruption to their lives can continue for years. One such example is that of Christians from Syria and the devastation caused by ISIS. ISIS emerged from a local offshoot of al- Qaeda in 2004. Although it faded into the background for some years, they launched a major offensive on Mosul and Tikrit in June 2014. The effects were still being felt in 2022.

One of our partners in Lebanon helps Christian Syrian refugee families in the Lebanon with monthly food and hygiene distributions. Throughout 2022 they visited these families regularly, offering spiritual support and Bible studies. They have seen lives transformed through this work and have felt blessed to see this happening among the Syrian Christian refugees that they serve. Our partner reported on a family that has been benefiting from their support since 2015:

The wife had an opportunity to participate in two programmes that were taking place in their camp: the Bible study and the literacy programmes. When we visited the family, she welcomed the team warmly and our visit brought her joy and peace! She excitedly shared the stories she had heard from previous Bible Studies. She still remembers the lessons. She's grateful for our presence in her life and said, "I can never forget the positive impact you've had on my life. I was illiterate and your team gave me an opportunity to study the Arabic language through the literacy programme. You taught me about Jesus Christ, His teachings and His miracles."

Strategic Purpose: Raising their VOICE

Fundraising

Our engagement and fundraising plans are approved by Trustees and monitored by the Leadership Team. Most of our income is generated through charitable donations we receive from individuals, churches, trusts and foundations (note 3, page 35). In addition, we work in partnership with several International Christian Association (ICA) Ministries, who contribute to our international project work.

Our fundraising activities are conducted by our staff team, drawing on the expertise of external fundraising advisors for selected campaigns. We do not contract out fundraising to third parties. We maintain oversight of all third-party suppliers and have written agreements where necessary with them under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Act 2021.

We are committed to the highest standards in fundraising practice. We are regulated by the Fundraising Regulator and abide by the Fundraising Code of Practice which includes guidelines on how to fundraise with people in vulnerable circumstances. In 2022 we handled 16 fundraising complaints (2021: 11) through our Supporters' Complaints Procedure, which were all resolved. We have a fundraising policy which gives a clear commitment to protect supporters from unreasonably persistent or obtrusive fundraising practice. We do not undertake donor profiling or sell data to third parties at any time.

Strategic Purpose: Raising their VOICE.

In 2022, the UK church began to fully open up and live meetings really returned as the norm by the close of the year. This was a great blessing, as we were able to re-connect with friends and supporters across the UK, particularly for our regional teams at the summer conferences and in

church preaching on Sundays. We were able to open up special events again and to bring our partners in from overseas to share and visit with church supporters. We have learnt and grown over the period of the pandemic and the online and digital skills that were expanded rapidly in 2021, are now fully part of our engagement approach for the future. Last year we have also invested in a new website, to fully enable Release International to maximise our on-line giving, which has increased over 300% since the lockdowns.

Our *Voice* magazine, press and social media outputs and monthly prayer alerts are also critical to keeping in touch with supporters and raising the Voice of persecuted Christians. Our Annual *Persecution Trends* Report is gaining global recognition as a benchmark for persecution around the world.

We held a range of significant events including a very successful Lent study course on Zoom, based on our Bible guide *'All for Jesus'* with over 70 supporters joining that group. We were back too at many Christian conferences and exhibitions, including attending a very successful trip to the Keswick Convention. We arranged for a performance of our commissioned play *'If Prison Walls Could Speak'* with Artless Theatre Co., which attracted over 700 attendees.

We also were present live at New Wine United 2022 and Big Church Day Out which were both extremely fruitful for raising the voice of persecuted Christians. The theme of our exhibition was based on our Prisoners of Faith international ministry and we focused on key prisoners – including our dear sister Twen from Eritrea. There was great joy and celebration with supporters as Release International worked with our sister partner, Release Eritrea, to secure her move to a safe country in October last year. She had been held in prison for her faith for over 16 long years.

We also heard news that another of our focus prisoners upheld for prayer, Nasar Navad Gol-Tapeh, was released after serving 6 years of a ten-year sentence. We are deeply encouraged that our prayer support across the UK evidences so clearly that our calls for prayer are pleasing to the Lord.

2022 also saw the wonderful finale of the Robert de Berry bike pilgrimage, which ran over 6 weeks of the summer in May and June. This raised over £84,000 for the ministries involved, CSW and Release International. We put on over 35 church events over the course of the bike ride and we called for prayer from around 40 churches, who were so generous in hosting our events and even offering beds for the night to the cyclists. We had over 80 cyclists joining the route at various points and the weather was also quite glorious, which helped spur them on. We are deeply thankful for the efforts of retired vicar, Revd Robert de Berry, and his volunteers for this amazing achievement.

At the end of the year, we began work on putting together our new 2023 engagement campaign *Out of These Ashes – Christian Persecution in Nigeria.* The UK team will be launching this in April 2023, during Holy Week. The title of the campaign comes from the book *Neither Bomb Nor Bullet* by Archbishop Ben Kwashi. We continue to pray for our dearest brothers and sisters as there is so much sorrow and bloodshed in Nigeria.

Strategic Purpose: Calling UK Christians into FELLOWSHIP with them

This Strategic Purpose is integrated into the activities of raising their VOICE, and so has not been reported separately on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 30).

We continued to focus on our key international partners' speaker tours in 2022 to engage our supporters with them in churches. We started off the year with our partners, Mordecai Ministries International (MMI). MMI spoke about a specialised strategic intervention project they lead called *'Operation Philip'*. In certain specific circumstances, this project works to re-locate Christians whose lives are in immediate danger due to persecution.

In June we were delighted to welcome our dearest sister, Dr Susannah, from Voice of the Martyrs in Poland to join us for *the Day of the Christian Martyr* events in the week leading up to the 29th June. She shared with churches in the Midlands and the North about her work in Burkina Faso.

Archbishop Ben Kwashi, our partner in Nigeria, joined the Bangor Worldwide Convention in August alongside Release International, although our planned Zoom event with Ben was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.

In October we were delighted to welcome our dear friend and brother Bob Fu, President of China Aid from Texas USA, and he spent time with churches in Orpington, Sutton and Camberley in the South of England; and Hamilton and Carlisle Scotland and the Borders. He continued to raise the voice of Christians in China, who are under increasing pressure of persecution from the communist state.

All these events were very well attended, attracting between 50 and 200 guests.

Strategic Purpose: Learning lessons of Christian DISCIPLESHIP with them

This Strategic Purpose is integrated into the activities of raising their VOICE, and so has not been reported separately on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 30).

We are very pleased that our publishing portfolio for our supporters and donors, which builds on our leading edge thinking around persecution theology, has been developing into 2022.

We have worked with Dr Berhane Asmelash of Release Eritrea to produce a new book which is now at final draft stage and will be published in 2023.

We have also published theological pieces as booklets to support our events work, and last year we launched 'God's goodness in Times of Trial' at the Westminster National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast.

Our regional teams too provide excellent sermons when visiting to support our donor churches. Each speaking opportunity in churches is carefully planned and delivered by our local engagement managers, which are always tailored to the particular church's denomination and liturgy.

Our flagship quarterly magazine, *Voice*, is published to provide testimony to our partners and persecuted brothers and sisters, so that, not only can they respond in prayer and giving, but that they can also deepen their relationship with Jesus themselves. The persecuted church teaches us all in the comfortable Western churches so much about what it means to follow Christ in every situation.

Volunteering

At the end of 2022 our Volunteering Ambassador, Imtiaz Ashraf, decided to step away from Release International after carefully seeking the Lord and being with us for 16 years. We want to especially thank Imtiaz for his most faithful service to the Kingdom over that blessed time.

We are very pleased to report that our excellent Volunteering Co-ordinator, Andrew Wilmshurst, will be taking over in the new role of Volunteering Manager. Andrew has been instrumental in driving new and creative volunteering initiatives and we pray for him, as he steps up to take on this new challenge.

We held regional volunteering meetings around the UK which were very well attended. A major focus for the volunteering team last year was the Robert de Berry Bike Ride in May and June, which was highly successful.

We also held our first Annual Volunteering Conference live at St Nicholas' Church Sevenoaks, which was very well attended. We had over 120 delegates both in church and joining us live on Zoom. This 'hybrid' event was quite an IT feat of communications! We were joined online via Zoom by our partner Hassan John from Nigeria and the event was hosted by Paul Robinson CEO.

We were also extremely grateful for our summer conferences programme being so well supported by volunteers. Without them, we would not be able to do nearly as much at these busy live events. We also thank our volunteers for supporting the Artless Theatre shows.

We were very encouraged that we continued to recruit new volunteers. At the end of 2021 we recorded 235 volunteers and at the end of 2022 we had 265 volunteers. We also had an additional 80 volunteers sign up to support the Robert de Berry Bike Pilgrimage.

Praise the Lord for His great blessings and thank you to all our amazing volunteers for all you do.

Strategic Purpose: Maintaining Christian STEWARDSHIP to honour them

This Strategic Purpose is integrated into all the activities, and so it is not reported separately on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 30).

As a result of the implementation of the restructure in 2021, a recruitment plan was put in place and a number of new staff joined the team throughout 2022. All new staff received a comprehensive Induction to the Ministry of Release International and to their role specifically; helping staff to settle in quickly and become valuable members of the team. Our post-COVID 'hybrid' model of working, with a combination of people working remotely and in the office, has bedded in very successfully and has been well-received by staff, enabling them to use their time more effectively. Two relational in-person staff days were held in May and December, with an opportunity for a picnic in the park at the first of these days – helped by warm weather! There were many other relational opportunities through our online platforms for staff to meet together for worship, devotions, training and to socialise, also ensuring that there is good communication within the staff team. Continued professional development for all staff is encouraged and many varied training opportunities were provided as needed. All staff had the opportunity to undertake relevant online Health and Safety training to ensure that there is a safe working environment for all, whatever the location. Internal processes and systems for use in the office are being developed to bring greater consistency and effectiveness to our use of space and resources. The appointment of a full-time ICT Assistant during the year has increased the capacity for in-house ICT support for staff, which has continued to develop staff IT competence and confidence, as well as providing support for the further development of the IT systems. Other training has been provided for all staff in: Safeguarding, Data Protection and Information Security.

Risk Management

The Board recognises that avoiding and mitigating risk is better than simply being covered by insurance. Release International operates a risk management strategy, which identifies generic risks and which is reviewed annually each September. Dynamic or current risks are assessed and reported each quarter, together with strategies to mitigate those risks. This approach has proved helpful in focusing attention on areas which require additional monitoring or action.

A major risk to the Ministry is a significant reduction in income. The fact that our income sources are spread over many individuals and churches mitigates the likelihood of a sudden dramatic change, but we monitor this risk closely. Accordingly, our financial and data systems assess income each month to identify any significant variation and to determine if specific action is required.

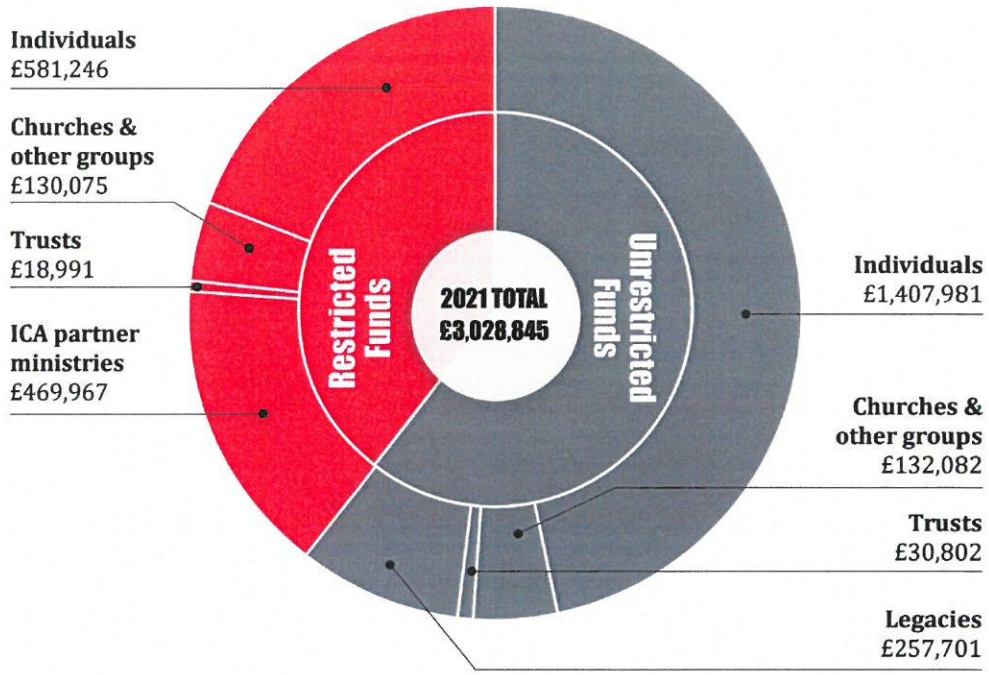
As for all organisations, there is a significant risk of a malicious attack on our IT systems. This is mitigated by security measures, including pro-active testing. Staff are regularly trained and reminded about IT security, particularly phishing attacks.

Due to the nature of the Ministry, there is a risk when travelling to visit Partners in contexts where they are being persecuted. This is mitigated by good communication with Partners to assess the current situation, extensive pre-trip briefing and security training.

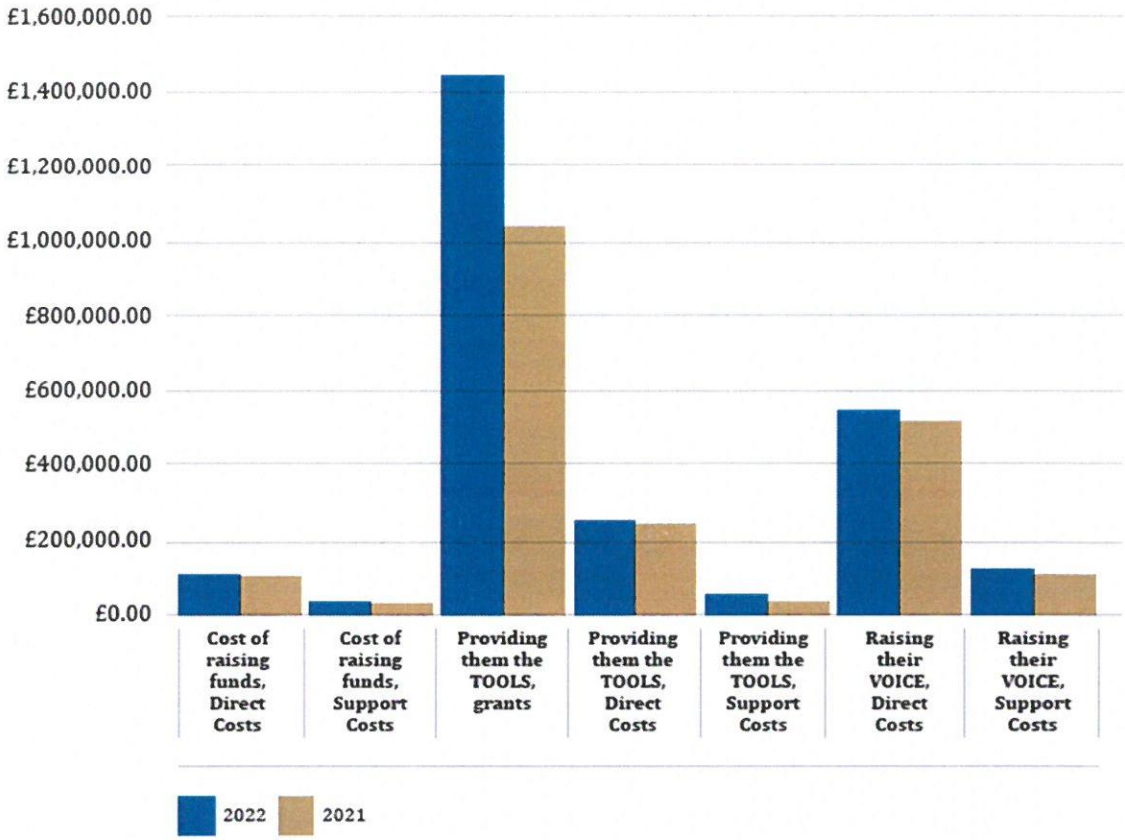
Financial Review Year ended 31st December 2022

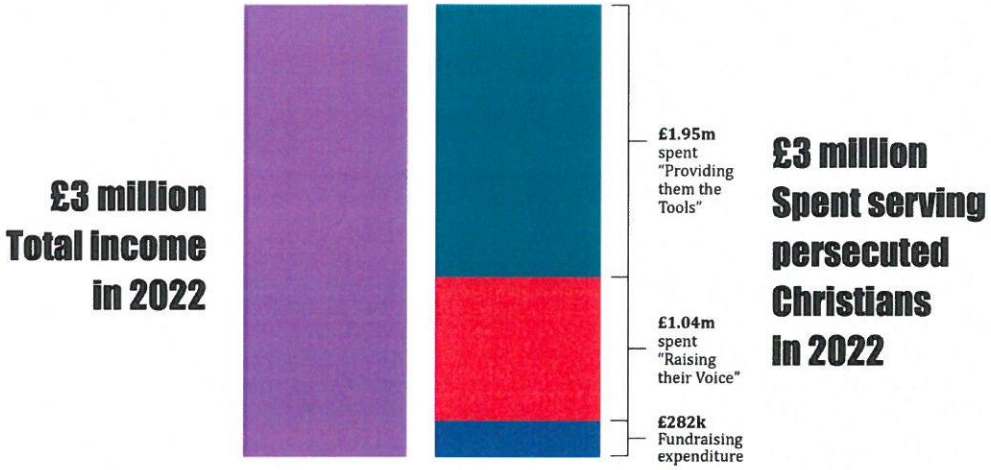
2022 has been a good year financially for the Ministry. We thank God for His provision through our many faithful supporters. The Trustees express their gratitude for their continuing generosity.

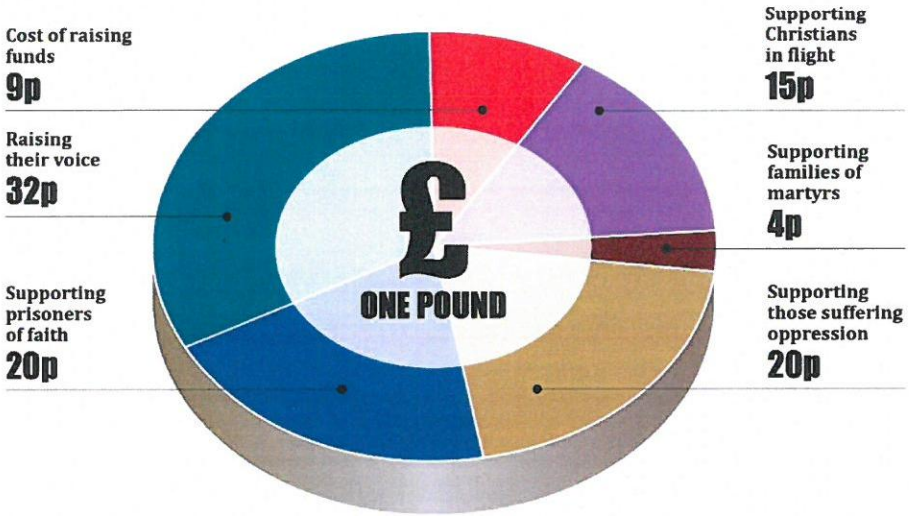
The diagrams below show the different sources of donations. Total income increased by 5% to £3,084k, after adjusting for the exceptional donation of £178k received from the ICA in September 2021 to help fund the purchase of the property (2021: £3,124k, after exceptional credit, £2,946k). Unrestricted donations from individuals, churches and trusts increased by 14% and restricted donations fell by 3% (note 3, page 36). Donations from ICA Partner Ministries (see page 15 of the trustee annual report) fell by 10%, after adjusting for the exceptional donation of £178k referred to above.



The diagrams below show the expenditure for the year. Total expenditure increased by 14% to £3,270k (2021: £2,866k).The expenditure on grants to Partners increased by 20% to £1,421k (2021: £1,186k). Staff costs increased by 8% to £1,140k (2021: £1,054k). This included a pay increase of 3% and an increase in pension contributions of 1%. The Board have agreed a 5% pay increase from 1st January 2023, in view of the current high levels of inflation.


£1,600,000.00
£1,400,000.00
£1,200,000.00
£1,000,000.00
£800,000.00
£600,000.00
£400,000.00
£200,000.00
£0.00
Cost of raising funds, Direct Costs
Cost of raising funds, Support Costs
Providing them the TOOLS, grants
Providing them the TOOLS, Direct Costs
Providing them the TOOLS, Support Costs
Raising their VOICE, Direct Costs
Raising their VOICE, Support Costs
2022
2021


£3 million
Total income
in 2022
£1.95m
spent
"Providing
them the
Tools"
£1.04m
spent
"Raising
their Voice"
£282k
Fundraising
expenditure
£3 million
Spent serving
persecuted
Christians
In 2022



Restricted Funds at the year-end were £539k (2021: £687k), a reduction of £148k. It should be noted that Release International's overseas projects funds relate to a broad range of international projects, some of which are longer term, multi-year projects. Release International's policy is to spend balances held in restricted funds as soon as is practicable, once all the grant conditions have been met. For further information on restricted funds see note 17 of the financial statements.

Grants Policy

A significant proportion of the overseas work of the Ministry is carried out through agencies local to areas of persecution, that are usually indigenous. Grants are made for specific named purposes to agencies that share our objectives. Receipts and reports of the work carried out are obtained. Staff members usually carry out visits to evaluate potential projects, monitor existing projects, and assess the outcome of completed projects on a sample basis.

Reserves Policy

After considering the Charity Commission's guidance CC19 (Charities and Reserves) the Trustees have agreed to maintain a 'range' as the basis for the level of General funds, which are 'free reserves'. At the Board meeting in December 2022, it was agreed to maintain this range at £400k to

£500k. This would allow the Ministry to keep operating if donations from individuals and churches dropped by 10 -15% from current levels and income from legacies and ICA partners, which are more unpredictable, dropped 20%.

The Trustees also agreed at the December 2021 Board meeting to designate £250k as a property reserve which was the value paid for the long lease of the office in September 2021. In addition, the Trustees designated a further £170k for property repairs to the office, which is a listed building.

The free reserves, after adjusting for fixed assets, as at 31st December 2022 amounted to £681k(2021-£591k), which is 51% above the target range mid-point. The Trustees have agreed a deficit budget for 2023 of £615k, which includes additional grant expenditure of £104k from unrestricted funds. This expenditure will reduce free reserves to £499k, which is within target. Trustees deemed this to be a good position and a welcome provision at this time of uncertainty.

Investment Policy

Income is largely received through voluntary donations and cannot be guaranteed; the Ministry has no permanent endowment. The only funds that are not expendable within 12 months of receipt are those held for reserves or money associated with international projects that remain active beyond the year end. The Board has considered this position and seeks to place funds in savings accounts to achieve a balance between accessibility and higher returns. Funds may be invested in accounts with up to 12 months' notice, but it is not considered prudent at this time to invest income for the longer term. The funds are now spread across four institutions, Barclays, CAF Bank, Nationwide Building Society and Flagstone Group Ltd, who are a cash deposit platform, who survey market deposit rates and facilitate the placing of deposits with banking institutions.

Structure, Governance and Management

Release International is a Christian Ministry, which is a registered Charity, regulated by the Charity Commission for England and Wales and also registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. It is constituted as a Company limited by guarantee. The Company operates under its Articles of Association, which were updated in April 2022. Release International was founded in 1968 as the Christian Mission to the Communist World, legally changing its name to Release International in June 2017.

The Board of Trustees normally meets four times each year and administers the Charity through its four committees: International Ministries, UK Engagement, Finance and Resources. The Leadership Team holds executive responsibility for implementing the policies and strategies approved by the Board and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), appointed by the Board, manages the day-to-day operations of the Company.

The Board has an established process for identifying and interviewing potential new Trustees. Vacancies are identified where there are gaps in experience and skills. All prospective Trustees will be practising Christians, who uphold Release International's Statement of Faith, Ethos Statement, and Trustee Code of Conduct. Nominations arising from this process are considered by the Board as a whole and they may subsequently be invited to join the Board. Trustees serve no minimum or maximum terms of service but retire by rotation with the opportunity to stand for re-election.

New Trustees go through an induction and training process to familiarise them with Release International, the persecution sector and their responsibilities as Trustees and Directors under

Charity and Company law. New Trustees are referred to the Charity Commission's guide *The Essential Trustee (CC3)* and they also meet with the Leadership Team and other Trustees. Each year the Chair and the CEO plan areas for trustee training which, with the Board's agreement, are covered in conjunction with other meetings.

Pay for key management personnel

The key management personnel in charge of directing and running the operations of the Charity comprise the Trustees and Leadership Team, as set out on page 25. All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration from the charitable Company as Trustees (Rev Dr B. Asmelash is paid a retainer as a consultant on Eritrea see note 22, page 47). Expenses reimbursed to Trustees are disclosed in note 8, page 39.

Salaries for all staff, including key management staff, are determined on appointment to the post in line with Release International's agreed 5-level salary banding, and in line with the requirements and responsibilities of the role. All roles are reviewed annually through the appraisal system to ensure that any significant changes which may affect remuneration are addressed. The Trustees periodically carry out a review of all salaries across the Ministry, through a benchmarking exercise,to ensure that they remain reasonable and competitive.

International Associations

Release International is a member of the International Christian Association (ICA). The purpose of the ICA is to provide a relational link between Christian Ministries around the world whose foundings were inspired by Pastor Richard Wurmbrand. In doing so, member Ministries seek to maintain a focus upon the Biblical mandate of Hebrews 13:3, *'Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow-prisoners, and those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering'* (NIV).

As a member of the ICA, Release International co-operates in a range of international projects and shares information and resources with other members. An Annual General Meeting is the decision-making forum for ICA business. Release International is a voting delegate.

Through ICA membership, Release International is directly able to support many more persecuted Christians throughout the world than it could in isolation. Currently Release International's CEO, Paul Robinson, is an elected member of the Executive Committee of the ICA, which helps co-ordinate the activity of the ICA Ministries.

Release International is also a member of The Evangelical Alliance, Middle East Concern, The Religious Liberties Partnership, and Global Connections.

Plans for the Future

International Ministry

The primary role of our International Partners is to extend the kingdom of God and His loving care in their communities, whatever the situation they may face. We will continue to support them by listening to their VOICE and providing the ministry 'TOOLS' that they ask for.

We have continued to expand the staff team into 2023, making us better equipped to serve our partners. We will visit them and encourage them in their callings, sharing in fellowship and hearing their VOICE. We will continue to develop and monitor projects with them that ensure the gospel of

Christ will be proclaimed in the hardest of places around the world.

Release International is a relationship-based Ministry and it is vital that there are opportunities to develop and maintain relationships in person with our Partners around the world. This is the core and underpinning reason for our travel and why much of our work is conducted in person.

There are other reasons why travel is an important aspect of this Ministry; for example: it enables us to be an authoritative source for what is happening around the world, speaking out in a timely manner and to produce media, which helps to inform and educate people in the UK about matters relating to the persecution of Christians; it is a crucial part of exercising the due diligence and good governance we need to monitor the projects we support. We also want to create opportunities to enhance the Ministries of our Partners through visits, which they testify are beneficial to them and which encourage them in their work.

Many Christians in today's world are still being forced to flee from their homes, especially in Africa and the Middle East. There are many Christians who have been forced into hiding because of their faith and are unable to move because of the pandemic lockdown. We pray that in 2023 they will be able to find new places to live out their lives for Christ and we will continue to work to that end as well.

Other Christians face imprisonment, an ongoing trend which continues in Eritrea and other places such as Iran and North Korea. We continue to pray for imprisoned believers and their families, many who remain in need of our practical support.

Release International remains committed to developing the bonds of fellowship we have enjoyed with our persecuted brothers and sisters for so long, delivering over 60 projects in more than 30 countries. As persecution in these countries continues, we will continue to be creative and flexible in ensuring that we provide the fellowship and 'TOOLS' persecuted believers ask for and need.

UK Engagement

In 2023 we are planning to look at our engagement plans in depth, to review the last 5 years. We have our five-year supporter survey planned for 2024 but we have decided to bring that forward to help inform our "Voice" magazine review which will be completed in 2023 .

The last five years have been highly eventful both in the context of the UK but also around the world. Last year we have seen the war in Ukraine start and it still goes on, and with devastating effects to all concerned, including Christians. We have also seen the UK economy in trouble after our exit from the European Union and with another global financial crisis. Inflation and fuel price rises have put additional pressures on communities, including the church and our loyal supporters. We continue to pray for our ministry to be favourable and fruitful.

We are also aware of the recent devastating earthquake which hit Syria and Turkey, killing over 50,000 people. The sheer scale of the loss of life and destruction is terrifying in many ways. We send our prayers to everyone in those countries and to our beloved family in Christ, many of whom will be affected by the extensive damage and chaos that it has left behind.

We at Release International must ensure that we are ready to respond to the challenges that face

us, both at home and overseas. The global financial problems experienced here in the UK are magnified many times overseas for our brothers and sisters, persecuted for their faith. We saw in 2020/21 how the pandemic made difficult and dangerous lives and suffering even worse. This year we are hearing more reports of how food shortages around the world are affecting countries where Christians are already only surviving. Please continue to pray for the global church in the one body of Christ.

That is why the ministry of Release International becomes more and more relevant to us here living out our walk with Christ each year. We seek to raise the voice of persecuted Christians at every opportunity and through every means at our disposal.

In April we launch our new website which will really seek to integrate our social media channels with our website. Re-designed by our friends at EPLS in Winchester, our content has been re-organised to ensure that supporters and donors have the best user journey available. They will be able to find what they need to get involved and take action more easily.

We have developed new partnerships this year with Christian event leaders and we pray that this will come to fruition. Our Christians in Flight exhibition kit is creative and informative as well as interactive. We will feature the plight of those who are forced to flee persecution in many countries around the world including: the Middle East, Iran, Eritrea, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Pakistan and many more.

We look forward to many more excellent performances in churches around the UK by Artless Theatre of the brilliant play *'If Prison Walls Could Speak'* based on the life and witness of our dear brother Petr Jasek, who was imprisoned for his faith in Sudan.

We will be working on a series of speaker tours in the UK again this year. For our Nigeria campaign *Out of these Ashes,* from April to June, we are in discussions with our Nigerian partners. We are also working hard on our next Westminster prayer breakfast with our friends, Christians in Parliament. We are delighted that our partners and friends Bob Fu (China Aid) and Eric Foley (Voice of the Martyrs Korea) will be joining us.

Our new book with Dr Berhane Asmelash of Release Eritrea about his ministry will also be published in the summer and we plan a book tour in the autumn. We are also working on a new booklet on the theology of forgiveness so that we can 'pray for the persecutors that they might be saved.' This is a quote from Richard Wurmbrand's seminal book on persecution *'Tortured for Christ.'*

A new book by Kenneth Harrod is also in preparation entitled *'Providence and Persecution'*. We hope to publish that new title in 2024.

We are looking forward to our major campaign *'Out of these Ashes' - Christian Persecution in Nigeria*. The situation for our brothers and sisters in Nigeria is very insecure and it is heartbreaking. Archbishop Ben Kwashi says "I am asking God that out of these ashes will rise a wave of an uncommon, unseen revival.." Our friends in Nigeria call on us to honour the gospel and pray for them. We are determined to do all we can to do that - to bring glory to God and honour to the King of Kings.

Matthew 6.33:" But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

We have been approached by the trustees of another Christian charity and have been asked if we would accept the gift of a residential property, which has been valued in the region of £800,000. We have in principle decided to accept this gift and, at the time of writing, the transfer of this property is being dealt with by lawyers for Release International and the other charity and we expect this donation to be recognized as income in 2023. The Trustees and the Leadership Team have not yet decided whether to use this building or to sell it and use the proceeds of the sale to further the objects of the charity. However, the Board decided, in December 2022, to designate £100,000 of funds as a reserve to cover the future costs of operating this property, see note 16.

Company Information

The Directors set out below are also the Trustees of the Charity and members of the Company.

Board of Trustees

David Armond CBE QPM	Chair of Trustees
Rev Dr Berhane Asmelash	
David Bentley	(resigned 18 November 2022)
Martin Lee	
Danielle Face	(appointed 13 October 2022)
Mary Print	
Sarah Shearer FCA	
Andrew Wayland	

Company Secretary
Patrick Lineen

Leadership Team

Chief Executive Officer	Paul Robinson
Director of International Ministries	Christopher Badley
Director of Engagement UK & Ireland	Laura Hayes
Director of Finance	Patrick Lineen
Director of Personnel & Internal Operations	Lynnette Feist

Registered Office

Betchworth House, 57-65 Station Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 1DL
For security reasons, as we work with many people under threat of intimidation, violence or detention, our registered address is our auditor's Surrey office.

Auditors	Moore Kingston Smith LLP, 9 Appold Street, London, EC2A 2AP
Bankers	CAF Bank Limited, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4JQ
Solicitors	Edward Connor, 10 The Point, Market Harborough, LE16 7QU

Trustees' Responsibilities in Relation to the Financial Statements

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. The accounts in this report have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Company law requires the Trustees to ensure financial statements are prepared for each financial year. Under that law, the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the income and expenditure of the Company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which are sufficient to show and explain the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities. The Trustees are committed to compliance with the *Charity Governance Code.*

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant information that the Company's auditors are not aware of, and each Trustee has taken all the steps necessary to ensure they are aware of any relevant information, and to establish that the Company's auditors are aware of the information.

Auditors

A resolution to re-appoint Moore Kingston Smith LLP as the independent auditors to the charitable Company was passed at the AGM in June 2022.

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

This report was approved by the Board on 22 June 2023 and signed on its behalf by,

David Armond CBE QPM
Chair of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Release International ('the company' for the year ended 31 December 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs(UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the audit of financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Corporation in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of

this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' annual report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Charities Act 2011 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; [or]
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.[or]
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and from preparing a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 24, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under Section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Companies Act 2006 and Section 151 of the Charities Act 2011 and report to you in accordance with regulations made under those Acts.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are; to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts

(Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council and UK taxation legislation.

- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006; and to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, and in respect of the consolidated financial statements, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 8 of the Charities Act 2011. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters which we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members, as a body, and the charity's trustees, as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinion we have formed.

Moore Kingston Smith LLP

Andrew Stickland (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor

9 Appold Street,

London

EC2A 2AP

Date 27 June 2023

Moore Kingston Smith LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 31st December 2022

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total Funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total Funds £
Income from								
Donations and legacies	3	1,828,566	-	1,200,279	3,028,845	1,640,492	1,450,408	3,090,900
Charitable activities								
Literature and Events		22,534	-	283	22,817	19,633	248	19,881
Interest receivable		18,460	-	-	18,460	1,352	-	1,352
Other		14,378	-		14,378	11,752		11,752
Total income		**1,883,938**	**-**	**1,200,562**	**3,084,500**	**1,673,229**	**1,450,656**	**3,123,885**
Expenditure on								
Costs of raising funds	4							
Fundraising		252,528	-	29,391	281,919	234,948	33,579	268,527
Charitable activities	4							
Providing them the TOOLS		518,779	21,792	1,412,527	1,953,098	388,304	1,249,024	1,637,328
Raising their VOICE		1,010,950	-	24,114	1,035,064	931,478	28,258	959,736
Total expenditure		**1,782,257**	**21,792**	**1,466,032**	**3,270,081**	**1,554,730**	**1,310,861**	**2,865,591**
Net income/ (expenditure)		101,682	(21,792)	(265,470)	(185,580)	118,499	139,795	258,294
Transfers		(20,000)	(98,083)	118,083	-	177,801	(177,801)	-
Net income/ (expenditure) after transfers		**81,682**	**(119,875)**	**(147,387)**	**(185,580)**	**296,300**	**(38,006)**	**258,294**
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2022	16&17	602,684	620,000	686,830	1,909,514	926,383	724,836	1,651,219
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2022	16&17	**684,366**	**500,125**	**539,443**	**1,723,934**	**1,222,683**	**686,830**	**1,909,513**

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Balance Sheet at 31st December 2022

For Release International - Company Number 01506576

	Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		250,865		257,185
Intangible Assets	11		2,100		4,150
Current assets					
Investments held for resale	20	4,876			
Debtors	12	105,620		72,965	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,453,092		1,655,054	
		1,563,588		1,728,019	
Creditors – Amounts falling due within one year	13	(92,619)		(79,841)	
Net current assets			1,470,969		1,648,178
Total assets less current liabilities			1,723,934		1,909,513
Reserves					
Unrestricted funds					
General Fund	16		684,366		602,684
Designated Funds	16		500,125		620,000
Restricted funds	17		539,443		686,829
Total funds			1,723,934		1,909,513

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and with FRS102.

The notes on pages 33 to 47 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board on 22 June 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

David Armond CBE QPM

Chair of Trustees

Statement of Cashflows for year ended 31st December 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Net cash (used in)/generated by operating activities		(215,157)	296,119
Cashflows from Investing Activities			
Purchase of property plant and equipment		(5,265)	(251,760)
Purchase of intangible fixed assets		-	(4,200)
Interest received		18,460	1,352
Net cash generated by/(used in) investing activites		13,195	(254,608)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash	10	(201,962)	41,511
Cash at the beginning of the year		1,655,054	1,613,543
Cash at the end of the year		1,453,092	1,655,054

Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2022 £	2021 £
Net Income / (Expenditure)	(185,580)	258,294
Adjusted for		
Depreciation charge	11,586	15,383
Amortisation charge	2,050	2,587
(Profit)/Loss on disposal of assets	-	7,237
Receipt of gift of investment for resale	(4,875)	-
Interest from deposits	(18,460)	(1,352)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(32,655)	18,725
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	12,778	(4,755)
Net cash used in operating activities	(215,157)	296,119

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting Policies

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) - Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

1.1 Going Concern

The Trustees have assessed whether the use of going concern is appropriate and made this assessment for a period of at least one year from the date of the approval of these financial statements. The Trustees have given due consideration to the current risks facing the Ministry. Income increased in 2022 due to the loyal donor base and increased legacy and ICA donations. The Ministry's reserves were above the planned level (page 18). Income estimates for 2023 and 2024 are cautious. Having reviewed forecasts prepared by management the Trustees are confident that the Ministry will continue to meet its obligations as they fall due and that therefore the going concern basis continues to be appropriate.

1.2 Basis of Accounting

Release International Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

1.3 Fund Accounting

Funds held are either

- Unrestricted general funds which are funds that can be used within the charitable objectives at the Trustees' discretion. Some of these funds have been designated by the Trustees for specific purposes.
- Restricted funds which are funds that can only be used for specified purposes. The restriction may be imposed by the donor or the terms under which the funds were raised.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations, interest and rent are recognised in the accounts on a received basis. For donations made under the gift aid scheme, the gift aid is recognised in the year in which the gift is received. Gifts in kind are valued at their value to the Charitable Company.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the Charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably, and the Charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds are costs incurred in encouraging voluntary contributions to the Charitable Company and their associated support costs.
- Expenditure on charitable activities are costs directly relating to the objects of the Charitable Company and include grants made, direct costs incurred, and an apportionment of support costs as shown in note 7.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the Charity but do not directly undertake charitable

activities. Support costs include office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the Charity's activities. The Charity initially identifies the costs of its support functions. It then identifies those costs which relate to the governance function. Having identified its governance costs, the remaining support costs together with the governance costs are apportioned between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities pro rata to staff full time equivalents.

Grants payable are payments made to third parties in the furtherance of the charitable objectives of the Charitable Company. The grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which the awards are made. Grants where the beneficiary has not been informed or has to meet certain conditions before the grant is released are not accrued but are noted as financial commitments.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

1.6 Tangible Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are all used for charitable purposes and are shown at cost less depreciation. The threshold at which purchases are not normally capitalised is £1,000. Depreciation on assets is calculated to write off the cost over their estimated economic useful lives. Assets are depreciated annually on a straight-line basis over 4 years for computer equipment, 5 years for office equipment and the remainder of the lease for leasehold improvements. The leasehold property is amortised monthly over the remainder of the lease.

1.7 Intangible Fixed Assets

Intangible assets are the development costs for specific IT projects which are capitalised at cost, provided it is likely to bring future economic benefit to the Charity. If the criteria for recognition as assets are not met, the expense is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which it is incurred. Capitalised IT costs include all direct and indirect costs that are directly attributable to the development process. The costs are amortised using the straight-line method over 4 years being their estimated useful lives.

1.8 Foreign Currencies

Income and expenditure in foreign currencies are converted into sterling at the rates of exchange ruling on the date of transaction. Amounts held at the balance sheet date are converted at the rates prevailing at the balance sheet date.

1.9 Pension Costs

The Charity operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees which is funded by contributions from the employee and employer contributions payable to scheme and employees' personal pension plans are charged in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate. Further details of the scheme are given in note 15.

1.10 Operating Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

1.11 Financial Instruments

The Charitable Company only has basic financial instruments measured at amortised cost, with no financial instruments classified as 'other' or basic instruments measured at fair value.

1.12 Investments

The charity has a policy of selling donated shares upon receipt of donation. However, where for any reason donated shares are not sold at the balance sheet date these are listed as investments, at their market value at the balance sheet date.

Realised and unrealised gains or losses for the period are accounted for through the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which they occur.

2. Critical Estimates

In the view of the Trustees applying the accounting policies adopted, no judgements were required apart from those listed below.

- the allocation of support costs
- useful economic lives of intangible fixed assets
- depreciation rates of fixed assets
- estimation of legacy accrual

3. Donations and Gifts

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £
Individuals	1,407,981	581,246	1,989,227	1,344,773	657,827	2,002,600
Churches & other groups	132,082	130,075	262,157	151,706	86,557	238,263
Trusts	30,802	18,991	49,793	24,006	5,110	29,116
ICA partner ministries		469,967	469,967		700,914	700,914
Legacies	257,701	-	257,701	120,007	-	120,007
	1,828,566	1,200,279	3,028,845	1,640,492	1,450,408	3,090,900

There was a gift in kind of some shares in a public company in 2022 of £4,876(2021: £Nil).

4. Expenditure

	Grants	Direct costs	Support costs	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£
	(see note 5)	(see note 6)	(see note 7)	
Costs of raising funds				
Fundraising	-	245,288	36,631	281,919
Charitable activities				
Providing them the TOOLS	1,420,508	423,855	108,735	1,953,098
Raising their VOICE	-	888,419	146,645	1,035,064
	1,420,508	1,557,562	292,011	3,270,081

	Grants	Direct costs	Support costs	2021 Total
Costs of raising funds	£	£	£	£
Fundraising	(see note 5)	(see note 6)	(see note 7)	
Charitable activities	-	224,448	44,080	268,528
Providing them the TOOLS	1,185,981	362,480	88,867	1,637,328
Raising their VOICE	-	784,976	174,759	959,735
	1,185,981	1,371,904	307,706	2,865,591

5. Grants made

Grant payments made were for the charitable purposes of Release International. They provided support for:

- Families of Christian martyrs
- Prisoners of faith and their families
- Christians suffering oppression and violence
- Christians forced to flee

The Ministry has taken advantage of the exemption available in the Charity SORP not to disclose specific information in relation to grant making, on the grounds that the disclosure could result in serious prejudice to the grant maker and/or the recipient institution, individuals working for the recipient institution or individuals.

No support costs have been allocated to the total amount of the grants.

	Total 2022		Total 2021	
	No.	£	No.	£
Central Asia	10	66,426	8	54,330
Middle East/Gulf	34	318,483	17	220,680
North East Africa	22	409,450	26	426,201
West Africa	27	151,768	17	125,635
South Asia	118	258,675	40	219,499
South East Asia	19	144,763	23	139,636
Other	13	70,943	0	-
	243	1,420,508	131	1,185,981

6. Direct costs

	2022			2021		
*See note 8	Staff costs*	Other costs	Total costs	Staff costs*	Other costs	Total costs
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Costs of raising funds						
Fundraising	117,316	127,972	245,288	108,390	116,058	224,448
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	244,774	179,081	423,855	226,626	135,854	362,480
Raising their VOICE	564,182	324,237	888,419	522,589	262,387	784,976
	926,272	631,290	1,557,562	857,605	514,299	1,371,904

7. Support costs

*See note 8	2022 Staff costs* £	Other costs £	Total costs £	2021 Staff costs* £	Other costs £	Total costs £
Costs of raising funds						
Fundraising	28,986	7,645	36,631	28,076	16,004	44,080
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	68,797	18,145	86,943	56,602	32,265	88,867
Raising their VOICE	116,039	30,606	146,645	111,308	63,451	174,759
	213,823	56,396	270,219	195,986	111,720	307,706

8. Staff costs

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries		942,604	838,864
Social security costs		94,255	79,758
Pension costs		93,810	96,054
Redundancy		-	29,246
Group Life policy		9,425	9,668
		1,140,094	1,053,590

Total split as follows:	Direct (note 6)	Support (note 7)	2022 Total staff costs	Direct (note 6)	Support (note 7)	2021 Total staff costs
Costs of raising funds	117,316	28,986	146,302	108,390	28,076	136,466
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	244,774	68,798	313,571	226,626	56,602	283,228
Raising their VOICE	564,182	116,039	680,221	522,589	111,308	633,897
	926,271	213,823	1,140,094	857,605	195,986	1,053,591

The Trustees receive no remuneration. During 2022 Trustee received out of pocket expenses of £718(2021:Nil) . During the year donations from 5 Trustees (2021: 5) were received totalling £4,406 (2021: £5,312)

The remuneration and benefits received by key management personnel in the year were £309k (2021: £319k). During the year there was 1 employee whose remuneration was in the bracket £60,000 - £69,999. (2021: 1).

At 31st December 2022, the Charitable Company included in creditors accrued holiday pay not taken of £19k (2021: £17k).

The average number of employees was:	2022	2021
Management	5	5
Administration and support	6	4
Overseas project management and UK information and education	18	17
	29	26

9. Net Income/Expenditure for the Year

The net income/ expenditure for the year is stated after charging:

		2022	2021
		£	£
Depreciation of assets	(see note 11)	13,635	17,970
Auditors' remuneration		15,990	14,019
Hire of equipment		6,794	6,674

10. Analysis of cash, cash equivalents and net debt

2022	As at 1 Jan 2022	Cash flows	Non cash movements	As at 31 Dec 2022
Cash at bank	665,179	(427,413)	-	237,766
Cash on deposit	989,875	225,451	-	1,215,326
Net Cash	1,655,054	(201,962)	-	1,453,092

2021	As at 1 Jan 2021	Cash flows	Non cash movements	As at 31 Dec 2021
Cash at bank	522,684	142,495	-	665,179
Cash on deposit	1,090,860	(100,985)	-	989,875
Net cash	1,613,544	41,510	-	1,655,054

11. Fixed Assets

	Property	Computer Equipment	Office Equipment	Leasehold Improvements	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost					
At 1st January 2022	250,000	77,517	33,338	-	360,855
Additions	-	5,265	-	-	5,265
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
At 31st December 2022	250,000	82,782	33,338	-	366,120
Depreciation					
At 1st January 2022	1,140	70,027	32,503	-	103,670
Charge for year	3,420	7,330	835		11,585
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
At 31st December 2022	4,560	77,357	33,338	-	115,255
Net book values					
At 31st December 2022	245,440	5,425	(0)	-	250,865
At 31st December 2021	248,860	7,490	835	-	257,185

Depreciation rates: Straight-line

Property- remainder of lease

Computers- 33.3% per annum

Office equipment- 25% per annum

Intangible Assets

	Software Development	Total
	£	£
Cost		
At 1st January 2022	25,345	25,345
Additions	-	-
Disposals	-	-
At 31st December 2022	25,345	25,345
Depreciation		
At 1st January 2022	21,195	21,195
Charge for year	2,050	2,050
Disposals	-	-
At 31st December 2022	23,245	23,245
Net book values		
At 31st December 2022	2,100	2,100
At 31st December 2021	4,150	4,150

Depreciation rates: Straight-line 25% p.a.

12. Debtors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Due within one year		
Other debtors	54,068	27,954
Prepayments	25,852	29,271
Accrued legacies	25,700	15,740
	105,620	72,965

13. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within One Year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade creditors	28,504	24,912
Other creditors	18,725	19,201
Accruals	45,390	35,728
	92,619	79,841

14. Members' Liability

The Charitable Company is limited by guarantee and each of the members is bound to contribute a sum not exceeding £10 in certain circumstances as set out in clause 7 of the Articles of Association.

15. Pension Commitments

The Charitable Company participates in the Global Connections pension scheme which is a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets are held separately from those of the Charitable Company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge representing contributions payable by the Charitable Company to the scheme and to other personal pension schemes amounted to between 7% or 10% of gross salaries depending on whether the staff member also contributes (2021: 7% or 10%). At 31st December 2022 there were no significant contributions outstanding payable to the scheme. The Charitable Company's pension arrangements comply with its statutory obligations in respect of auto-enrolment.

16. Unrestricted Funds

	Balance 01-Jan-22	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-22
	£	£	£	£	£
General Reserve Fund	602,684	1,883,938	(1,782,256)	(20,000)	684,366
Designated Fund - Grant Reponse Fund	200,000	-	-	(198,083)	1,917
Designated Fund - Property reserve	250,000	-		-	250,000
Designated Fund- Property repairs	170,000	-	(21,791)	-	148,209
Designated Fund- new property	-	-	-	100,000	100,000
	1,222,684	1,883,938	(1,804,047)	(118,083)	1,184,492

	Balance 01-Jan-21	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-21
	£	£	£	£	£
General Reserve Fund	726,383	1,608,729	(1,490,229)	(242,199)	602,684
Designated Fund - Grant Reponse Fund	200,000	64,500	(64,500)	-	200,000
Designated Fund - Property reserve	-	-	-	250,000	250,000
Designated Fund Property repairs	-	-	-	170,000	170,000
	926,383	1,673,229	(1,554,729)	177,801	1,222,684

The reserve policy is explained on page 18 of the trustee report.

The Grant Response Fund allows Release International to be more agile and give grants to overseas partners, usually funded by restricted gifts in anticipation of funds being received later in the year.

It is anticipated that the Property Repairs designated fund will be spent in 2023.

The Property fund relates to the office building purchased in September 2021 and has been set aside as a designated fund, so that it does not form part of general reserves.

The New Property fund relates to the gift of a residential property, see discussion on page 23 of the Annual Report.

17. Restricted Funds

These are donations received for specific purposes as requested by the donors. The first four funds are for the taxonomy of persecution (page 5 of the trustee report) The other funds are many and varied and where appropriate have been grouped into geographical areas. They are all within our objectives as described on page 5.

	Balance 01-Jan-22	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-22
	£	£	£	£	£
Christians forced to flee	2,023	169,322	(87,895)	(62,359)	21,091
Families of Christian martyrs	93,108	32,736	(113,220)	(12,624)	0
Prisoners of faith and their families	45,901	100,876	(106,991)	-	39,786
Christians suffering oppression and violence	78,702	78,221	(223,622)	66,699	(0)
Central Asia	1,898	37,215	(64,750)	27,501	1,864
Middle East/Gulf	12,286	83,402	(102,993)	12,538	5,233
North East Africa	329,112	445,672	(376,971)	462	398,275
West Africa	13,199	11,175	(37,548)	22,543	9,369
South Asia	46,496	71,025	(140,148)	58,673	36,046
South East Asia	18,183	19,211	(12,118)	113	25,389
Personal Support	195	38,907	(37,915)	-	1,187
Generic funds and other	45,726	32,206	(81,268)	4,539	1,203
	686,829	1,119,968	(1,385,439)	118,085	539,443

	Balance 01-Jan-21	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-21
	£	£	£	£	£
Families of Christian martyrs	51,208	143,198	(101,298)	-	93,108
Prisoners of faith and their families	78,369	74,031	(106,499)	-	45,901
Christians suffering oppression and violence	38,629	90,165	(126,771)	-	2,023
Christians forced to flee	26,981	203,584	(151,863)	-	78,702
Central Asia	7,193	18,233	(23,528)	-	1,898
Middle East/Gulf	25,602	119,340	(132,656)	-	12,286
North and East Africa	329,774	383,489	(384,151)	-	329,112
West Africa	28,321	55,420	(70,542)	-	13,199
South Asia	65,798	91,152	(110,454)	-	46,496
South East Asia	34,166	23,735	(39,718)	-	18,183
Personal Support	196	43,354	(43,355)	-	195
Generic funds and other	38,599	204,955	(20,027)	(177,801)	45,726
	724,836	1,450,656	(1,310,862)	(177,801)	686,829

During 2022 funds have been transferred from general restricted funds to cover overspends in specific restricted funds. Unrestricted funds have been transferred to cover shortfalls in other restricted funds.

The transfer in 2021 relates to a donation for the purchase of the office building where it was agreed with the donor that once the building had been purchased the restriction on the donation was fulfilled.

18. Analysis of Net Assets Between Funds

	Fixed assets	Cash	Net Current assets	Totals
	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	-	529,198	10,245	539,443
Unrestricted funds	252,965	923,893	7,632	1,184,491
	252,965	1,453,091	17,877	1,723,934

2021	Fixed assets	Cash	Net Current assets	Totals
	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	-	678,742	8,068	686,829
Unrestricted funds	261,335	976,312	(14,964)	1,222,684
	261,335	1,655,054	(6,896)	1,909,513

19. Other Financial Commitments

	2022		2021	
	Office Equipment	Premises Rental	Office Equipment	Premises Rental
Operating Leases	£	£	£	£
Due under 1 year	6,674	225	6,674	225
Due between 2 to 5 years	13,348	900	18,353	900
Due after more than 5 years	-	15,019	-	15,007
	20,022	16,144	25,027	16,132

The premises rental is ground rent for the leasehold property.

20 Investments held for re-sale

	2022	2021
	£	£
Shares in publicly quoted company	4,876	-

The above shares are in Treatt Plc and were gifted by a donor.

21. Taxation

As a Charity Release International benefits from exemptions on income and gains falling within Sections 466-493 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 to the extent they are derived from charitable activities.

22. Related party transactions

Revd Dr Berhane Asmelash, who is a Trustee, receives no remuneration for his role as Trustee. He was paid as a consultant on Eritrea £7,275 (2021: £7,200)

23. Capital Commitments

There were no capital commitments not provided for in the financial statements (2021: none).

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL

England & Wales - Charity number 280577

Accounts

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL
Voice
of Persecuted Christians

Release International

The Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the Year ended 31st December 2021

A Company Limited by Guarantee. Company No. 01506576

Registered Charity No. 280577 and Registered in Scotland No. SCO40456

Registered with
FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR

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Trustees' Annual Report

The Trustees have the pleasure of presenting their Annual Report together with the Financial Statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 December 2021, which are also prepared to meet the requirements of a Directors' Report and Accounts for Companies Act purposes. Release International is a Christian Ministry and will often be referred to in this report as the Ministry.

Message from the Chair



I am very pleased to have the opportunity to present the Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2021. Last year was another challenging period due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, though our systems and processes for remote working enabled us to continue to do our utmost to follow God's calling to serve persecuted Christians.

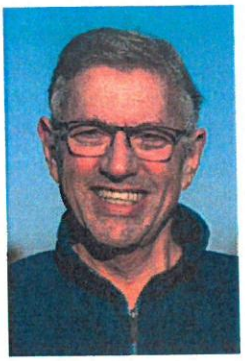
As I wrote last year's introduction, we were still subject to COVID restrictions, with international travel difficult, if not impossible, and a requirement to conduct our activities 'virtually'. We praise God that most of those restrictions have now been removed, that our churches are open, that our meetings can again be face to face, and that our staff have started to travel overseas once more to meet with those we support. But I write now with a heavy heart due to the unfolding horrific circumstances in Ukraine and I am sure that you are joining me in prayers for God's intervention and protection, not only for the large community of Christian believers affected, but for all of the people of Ukraine. It has also caused me to reflect on the huge numbers of our brothers and sisters around the world affected by war or its consequences at this time - in Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea and Ethiopia and elsewhere, whose plight is not as well highlighted in our media as the unfolding tragedy in Europe. The need is astronomical. We are privileged at Release International, whether as permanent staff, volunteers, supporters or prayer warriors, to have the opportunity to play a small role in supporting and serving them.

Through God's grace, the sacrificial generosity of our many supporters has continued this year and we remain in a very strong financial position, which has enabled us to deliver the strong programme of work outlined by Paul, our CEO, in his introduction to this report. During 2021, our CEO and Leadership Team delivered the recommendations of a Strategic Review, which included the incorporation of learning gained during the pandemic relating to our working practices. As a result, a significant restructuring of our staff team was implemented to ensure we are best able to fulfil our Mission and Calling going forwards. We reviewed each existing role, making changes as required, and recruited to vacant and new posts. Our increased and innovative use of online communications technology during the pandemic has enabled us to adopt a flexible hybrid working model, allowing staff to work effectively from a variety of different locations, with most now working from home for part of the week and at our offices for the remainder. We have already seen the benefits of increased efficiencies, as well as significant improvements to employees' work-life balance.

Our Board of Trustees has continued to meet throughout the year, with the September meeting being our first face-to-face event of the year. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce a new member of the Board of Trustees, Martin Lee, the former Director of Global Connections, who brings a very broad set of skills and experience to the team. Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the continuing witness, service and commitment of the Release International team of staff members and volunteers, who have worked tirelessly with our Partners around the world to ensure that the voice of persecuted Christians is heard more widely. I also give glory and thanks to God for you, our huge network of supporters, whose faithful prayer, time and financial support make this work possible.

David Armond CBE QPM
Chair of Trustees

Chief Executive's Introduction



I began last year's Report by writing, *"As a Christian Ministry which deals with the unexpected around the world on a regular basis, we were well placed to respond to the news of an emerging global pandemic..."!* We have again faced obvious pandemic-related challenges but are now well versed in how to manage its changing dynamic, while at the same time continuing to do all we can to fulfil our privileged God-given calling – *to love and serve persecuted Christians.*

Occasions for international travel were again quite limited in 2021 but, apart from the all-important personal visits to our Partners and persecuted brothers and sisters, our international ministry remains effective and targeted through the use of our well-developed *Taxonomy of Persecution,* which constrains us to *prayerfully, pastorally and practically* help: *Families of Christian martyrs*; *Prisoners of faith and their families*; *Christians suffering oppression and violence*; and *Christians forced to flee.*

I'm writing this introduction immediately after spending time with Christians and leaders from the Horn of Africa, once again being an eyewitness to the ways our indigenous Partners in more than 28 countries give of themselves sacrificially to ensure persecuted Christians get the *'tools' they need to live for Jesus Christ*. Amid real suffering, it is wonderful to see again the victory of Christ in the lives of those who suffer and yet continue to live fully for Him. It is so good to be able to travel overseas again but our use of online technology has become so well developed that it is now a vital part of maintaining our long-term relationships with those we serve.

Our main role in the UK and Ireland is to present the first-person VOICE of those being persecuted, hoping Christians here will become even more engaged with those suffering around the world for the sake of Christ. So, during the various lockdowns and restrictions we continued to deliver much needed prayer opportunities and engagement resources, including live online *overseas speaker tours* in which we welcomed Jamal Liddawi from Iraq in November, and, earlier in the year, Lazarus Yeghnazar from 222 Ministries, which works to support Iranian Christians.

We invested in appointing a new Volunteering Ambassador and have written a new volunteering plan. God has brought tremendous volunteers to us to help us in ministry and we look forward to developing our volunteering capabilities still further.

Despite the ongoing impact of the pandemic, 2021 was a truly remarkable year in terms of God's gracious provision towards us through our faithful supporters, with total income increasing significantly, enabling us to provide more financial support to our overseas Partners and also make our ministry in the UK and Ireland even more effective.

Having already seized the opportunity afforded by pandemic restrictions to undertake routine maintenance of the building we have been renting, and to reconfigure its interior to allow for more flexible *hybrid* working, our faith was exercised when the opportunity arose to purchase the lease. We would never spend donors' sacrificial giving on such a huge capital cost but, after much prayer and consideration, we received a single, unexpected, major donation for this exact purpose and so the purchase was completed in September 2021. God's wonderful provision through His faithful servants means we effectively own the building! To God be the glory!

Paul Robinson

Chief Executive

Our Charitable Objects

- The advancement of the Christian faith;
- The relief of poverty amongst peoples worldwide, who are suffering persecution or marginalisation for their Christian beliefs;
- The furtherance of the charitable work of the Charity by the advancement of such other charitable purposes as the Trustees shall from time to time decide.

The Objects are to be carried out as a proclamation of the beliefs set out in our Statement of Faith, which is available on our website releaseinternational.org.

About Release International

Release International was founded in 1968 as the Christian Mission to the Communist World, inspired by Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, who was imprisoned and tortured by Romanian secret police under brutal Communism. Following the demise of Communism in Eastern Europe and the increase in the persecution of Christians elsewhere in the world, the Ministry broadened its activities and changed its name to Release International.

Our Calling and Mission

Our Calling

Through the ministry of Pastor Richard Wurmbrand and Hebrews 13:3 we have been called by God to **Love and Serve Persecuted Christians**.

Our Mission (five Strategic Purposes)

Our Mission is to love and serve persecuted Christians by:

- Giving them the **'TOOLS'** they need to live for Jesus Christ.
- Raising their **VOICE**.
- Calling UK Christians into **FELLOWSHIP** with them.
- Learning lessons of Christian **DISCIPLESHIP** with them.
- Maintaining Christian **STEWARDSHIP** to honour them.

Our Taxonomy of Persecution

Around the world, we prayerfully, pastorally, and practically help:

- Families of Christian martyrs
- Prisoners of faith and their families
- Christians suffering oppression and violence
- Christians forced to flee

How our Activities Deliver Public Benefit

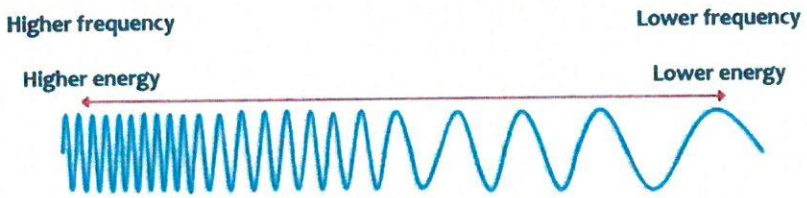
The Trustees confirm they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission. Release International seeks to prayerfully, pastorally, and practically help those who are persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ, and to help Christians, churches, faith-based organisations and the general public understand and engage with the reality of persecution. Those who benefit from our activities are Christians globally whose religious freedoms have been curtailed or abused, and any member of the public wanting to be educated about the circumstances of persecuted Christians and/or become involved in supporting and helping them. Our approach stems from our Charitable Objects (page 5). The Trustees consider Release International's, Calling, Mission, and Operational Strategies fulfil the duty and are confident the Charitable Company's activities are delivering public benefit.

Our Achievements and Performance

Strategic Purpose: Giving them the 'TOOLS' they need to live for Jesus Christ

Release International delivers the international aspects of its ministry by working in-country through local churches or organisations, with whom we have established formal partnerships. Where possible these Partners are indigenous to the area in which our Ministry operates, but sometimes the work is carried out through Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) where they are well connected with the local church. These partnerships form the main connections between Release International and persecuted Christian communities. The very nature of this work makes it difficult to report on it without endangering those being served. However, we can share some stories that demonstrate what we've being doing to benefit persecuted Christians overseas.

History has shown that persecution comes and goes around the world. There are a variety of different types of persecutors, who have varied reasons for persecuting. No matter who, when or where, the intensity of persecution in the Christian life could be likened to the radio frequency spectrum (see diagram below): at one end, Christians face a high frequency of terrible persecution, at the other end occurrences are rare and Christians pay little or no cost for following Christ.



Our international work is focused on the high frequency end of the persecution spectrum. Our own Taxonomy of Persecution is used to ensure the Ministry remains in the right place for the foreseeable future. We have identified four clear areas of ministry: Families of Christian martyrs; Prisoners of faith and their families; Christians suffering oppression and violence, and Christians forced to flee. Having ministered to and with Christians at this high end of the persecution spectrum, Release International is able to continue presenting the first-person VOICE of persecution to those at the lower end of the spectrum, with the hope and prayer that they will become engaged with those suffering and be better prepared should they face serious persecution themselves! (2 Tim 3:12).

The stories below demonstrate current examples from each element of the Taxonomy.

Families of Christian martyrs

Christians in northern and eastern Burkina Faso are suffering because of Islamist attacks. For years, the country's diverse religious groups lived in relative peace. This situation changed in 2016 with the rise of the activity of Islamist militants linked to ISIS and al-Qaeda. It began with occasional attacks in various villages in the northern part of the country, targeting the general population: Christians, Animists, and Muslims alike. Initially, the situation was not so critical and affected only the lives of a small number of Christians from the far north. With time, when the attacks of terrorist groups started to become more intense, some of the radical groups determined to target Christians only. The campaign against Christians was first launched by jihadist groups in April 2019 and has continued ever since. In 2021 Release International engaged with this situation by providing educational support to orphans and children who lost a parent, as well as food packages for those displaced by the violence.

Prisoners of faith and their families

In Eritrea 2021 saw the release of many Christian prisoners of faith; however it also saw large numbers of arrests and the forced return and internment of many believers who were living in refugee camps in Ethiopia, near the Eritrean border, because of the Eritrean army's involvement in the conflict in Tigray. It was encouraging to see many long-term prisoners released, despite some being re-arrested later in the year. However, the needs of these prisoners do not stop after they leave prison.

As well as providing support to prisoners, families of prisoners and ex-prisoners, we have also provided vocational training to some of the ex-prisoners. This support has helped them find jobs or start businesses. For example, one prisoner was 15 when she was arrested and was a secondary school student. She had no chance to finish her school or college education, and now, at the age of 30, after being in prison for 15 years, she needed some support to start work. She took some tailoring classes and we paid for her lessons. Now she is ready to start her own shop and asked us to buy her a sewing machine.

Christians suffering oppression and violence

During and since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, Release International has continued to support the production and distribution of inspirational multi-media resources, including materials for seekers and believers often located in difficult and isolated situations. There is also provision for follow-up of those who respond by phone, text message and email, together with training of believers in ministry and/or leadership.

Many of the Afghan people who contact this service have talked about the peaceful situation in their locations: for them life is going on almost as normal. But there are those who are extremely troubled by the Taliban's takeover. As followers of Jesus they are fearful for their lives, wondering if someone will denounce them to the Taliban. Some are still looking for ways to get out of the country.

Christians forced to flee

Many Christians had to leave their homes because of persecution in 2021, in the Middle East, Asia

and Africa. The traumatic events in the summer, when coalition forces left Afghanistan and the Taliban sought to retake control of the country, saw another exodus of Christians.

A relatively small number of Christians who fled Syria and parts of Iraq to Kurdistan (in Northern Iraq) during the ISIS invasion have been able to return home. However, those who remain in Kurdistan are in great need of hope for their future. Joseph is one such example: he was 23 when he was forced to flee from Syria. In Kurdistan he looked for work to support himself, but sadly did not find anything because he couldn't speak Kurdish or English. He had his few belongings stolen, leaving him with no money or shelter. He reached a state of extreme despair, but the Lord guided him to our partner's organisation in Erbil, the capital of Kurdistan, where he was provided with food, financial aid and a place to stay until he found a job. During 2021 he enrolled onto our partner's vocational training course to improve his job prospects. Most important, he is still going to our partner for Christian discipleship.

Strategic Purpose: Raising their VOICE

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." (Luke 6:38)

In 2021, the UK church and Christians across the country continued to adapt and seek to navigate the 'new normal' in Lockdown due to the ongoing Coronavirus Pandemic. This global health crisis impacted the ministry of Release International, as churches remained closed for much of the year and were reluctant to re-open. We learned more about how to develop online events using platforms such as Zoom and to raise the voice of persecuted Christians through our expanding digital social channels. In Spring 2021 we therefore launched our Lockdown Church 2 resources campaign, which followed on from our successful Lockdown Church campaign which was published in April 2020. Our new campaign culminated in a national online worship event for persecuted Christians on Maundy Thursday entitled '*Behold the Lamb*', which attracted over 600 supporters.

We worked again with our friends, Christians in Parliament, for their second online National Prayer Breakfast, which attracted over 2,000 delegates. Our seminar '*Blessed are those who are Persecuted: Hearing Christian Voices around the World*' was very well attended and we invited our partners on the ground to share their witness and testimony. We heard from Christians working in North Korea, Nigeria and Eritrea about persecution there.

Lockdown was finally lifted in England in July 2021, but not in time to rescue the extensive programme of summer Christian events and conferences, which would usually have attracted large support. There were also differing rules and standards across the devolved nations which added to the complex picture. We decided therefore to focus on online events for the remainder of the year, due to the uncertainty and continued cancellations. We were very pleased, however, to be part of the Bangor Worldwide Missionary Convention in Northern Ireland at that time, as one of only a few Christian live events held that year.

Our direct mail channels of engagement continued to remain strong and flourished throughout the year. The *Voice* Magazine performed well and continued to strengthen both readership and income. We also reduced costs and increased our return on investment from 2:1 to 6:1, a significant improvement.

Our appeals also continued to flourish and grow during 2021 with additional support from emails

and the web alongside our print schedules. We focused particularly on fundraising for projects linked to Christians enduring oppression and violence for Jesus.

We launched our *'All for Jesus'* Study Course which attracted very strong sales from individuals and from churches, selling over 1400 copies. We continued to promote our *'Where is Raymond Koh'* global petition, to raise awareness of the kidnapping and disappearance of a highly respected pastor in Malaysia. The petition attracted over 65,000 signatures worldwide.

Our press and media coverage received unprecedented attention with the crisis in Afghanistan unfolding in August 2021. We were able to share the testimony of our partners who work there and work to help the efforts to relocate Christians in fear of their lives from the Taliban. Social media statistics continued to strengthen with increased followers on all channels.

We were pleased to launch our delayed theatre production in partnership with the Christian *Artless Theatre Company* in September 2021 at Brentwood Theatre in Essex. The book *Imprisoned with Isis* by Petr Jasek was turned into a dynamic one-man play about the life of a prisoner of faith in Sudan. The drama company toured in the South of England in 2021 and will continue to tour into 2022.

Strategic Purpose: Calling UK Christians into FELLOWSHIP with them

This Strategic Purpose is integrated into the activities of raising their VOICE, and so has not been reported separately on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 25).

Due to continued Lockdown into the Summer of 2021, we worked to bring our partners into fellowship with our volunteers and supporters through digital channels. Our two speaker tours held during the year were very well attended and raised online funds through web donations and text giving. From March 8th to 11th we invited our partner, Lazarus Yeghnazar, as our guest speaker for *'Christian Persecution in Iran: Strengthening the Church in the Midst of Oppression.'* And then, from November 1st – 4th, we invited our partner, Jamal Liddawi, as our guest speaker for *'Christian Persecution in Iraq: When Faith is Forced to Flee'*. We held four Zoom events on consecutive nights in the four countries of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and our host was Paul Robinson, our Chief Executive.

We had to cancel our supporter and volunteers' overseas trip however, for a second year. This was a disappointment to those who had been looking forward to visiting our partners since November 2019. We aim to take selected long-standing and trusted friends and donors out to other countries, to meet with partners and to facilitate fellowship with them. This exchange builds our relational ministry both here and in hostile and restricted countries. Many supporters find these visits fruitful, in terms of understanding persecution at first hand and seeing spiritual resilience being built. We do hope to resume overseas ministry for supporters in 2022.

As part of the Strategic Review held in the summer of 2021, we made the decision to move away from sub-brands of Release International to an integrated model of engagement. Release Women communications were therefore phased out and Release Potential moved to online social media delivery only. Prisoners of Faith was integrated into our international projects programme.

Strategic Purpose: Learning lessons of Christian DISCIPLESHIP with them

This Strategic Purpose is integrated into the activities of raising their VOICE, and so has not been reported separately on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 25).

Growing Christian discipleship in the UK continues to be a strategic communications priority for

Release International's Engagement Team. Our calling and mission, to love and serve persecuted Christians, involves a direct call to our supporters and volunteers to journey with us in faith; and with a living and active commitment to Jesus. We have been praying into a new theological strand of work entitled *'Persecuted Discipleship'* to further articulate the evangelistic message of salvation in Christ through faith, and as expressed and lived out by our beneficiaries, persecuted Christians around the world. In 2022 we will continue to explore this fresh perspective. We plan to further develop our publishing portfolio into 2023 to build on this commitment to help Christians to understand mature gospel discipleship through the experience of persecution.

Strategic Purpose: Maintaining Christian STEWARDSHIP to honour them

This Strategic Purpose is integrated into all the activities, and so it is not reported separately on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 25).

During the year as part of implementing the recommendations of the Strategic Review, the Release International staff team was restructured. Some new roles were created, and other roles were changed. Some staff moved to new or changed roles; three staff were made redundant. A recruitment plan for new roles has been implemented. Working arrangements for all staff were reviewed, to determine where each role needed to be located in terms of being home-based, office-based or office-based with some agreed flexibility to work from home. In September, in line with some easing of the COVID-restrictions, we implemented the restructure and the new working arrangements and returned to the office but with a much more 'hybrid' approach, with a combination of people working and meeting remotely and in-person. We have sought to provide a safe working environment for staff, at home or in the office. We are committed to professional development and have provided relevant training opportunities for all staff, with a continued focus on developing our line managers. We were very pleased to be able to hold two relational in-person Staff Days for all staff, in September and December, along with other regular opportunities online to meet together for worship, devotions, training and to socialise.

In September 2021 with the help of a substantial donation, Release International purchased the lease of the offices we had been renting. This will ensure that the Ministry no longer has to be concerned about whether the short-term lease will be renewed. In addition, instead of paying rent we will now be receiving rent from part of the building that is sub-let. Substantial progress was made on the IT systems which are used to manage international projects and also the digital media used to raise the VOICE.

Volunteers

As part of the Strategic Review in 2021, we appointed to a new post of Volunteering Ambassador, with the Revd Imtiaz Ashraf taking up the challenge in September. We wanted to increase our staffing capacity and complement the administrative role of the Volunteering Co-ordinator. The new Volunteering Ambassador has already started to meet with volunteers and continued our programme of recruitment and retention of proactive volunteers. Our focus for 2021 was to recruit new volunteer speakers and volunteer fundraisers. We decided that we need to overhaul the volunteer speakers' course first of all. That work took place and we are looking to 2022 to roll out this new training. We focused particularly on planning the recruitment of new volunteer fundraisers for the Robert de Berry Bike Pilgrimage, which we started to work on in 2020 and continued developing throughout 2021. The Bike pilgrimage will take place from 14th May 2022 and finish on 25th June.

We were very encouraged that we continued to recruit new volunteers. At the end of 2020 we had a total of 206 volunteers and by the close of 2021 we recorded 235 volunteers. We also had an additional 40 volunteers sign up to support the Bike Pilgrimage.

Praise the Lord for His great blessings and thank you to all our amazing volunteers for all you do.

Fundraising

Our engagement and fundraising plans are approved by Trustees and monitored by the Leadership Team. Most of our income is generated through charitable donations we receive from individuals, churches, trusts and foundations (note 3, page 30). In addition, we work in partnership with several International Christian Association (ICA) Ministries, who contribute to our project work.

Our fundraising activities are conducted by our staff team, drawing on the expertise of external fundraising advisors for selected campaigns. We do not contract out fundraising to third parties. We maintain oversight of all third-party suppliers and have written agreements where necessary with them under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation 2021.

We are committed to the highest standards in fundraising practice. We are regulated by the Fundraising Regulator and abide by the Fundraising Code of Practice which includes guidelines on how to fundraise with people in vulnerable circumstances. In 2021 we handled 11 fundraising complaints (2020: 8) through our Supporters' Complaints Procedure, which were all resolved. We have a fundraising policy, which gives a clear commitment to protect supporters from unreasonably persistent or obtrusive fundraising practice. We do not undertake donor profiling or sell data to third parties at any time.

Risk Management

The Board recognises that avoiding and mitigating risk is better than simply being covered by insurance. Release International operates a risk management strategy which identifies generic risks and which is reviewed annually each September. Dynamic or current risks are assessed and reported each quarter, together with strategies to mitigate those risks. This approach has proved helpful in focusing attention on areas which require additional monitoring or action.

A major risk to the Ministry is a significant reduction in income. The fact that our income sources are spread over many individuals and churches mitigates the likelihood of a sudden dramatic change, but we monitor this risk closely. Accordingly, our financial and data systems assess income each month to identify any significant variation and to determine if specific action is required.

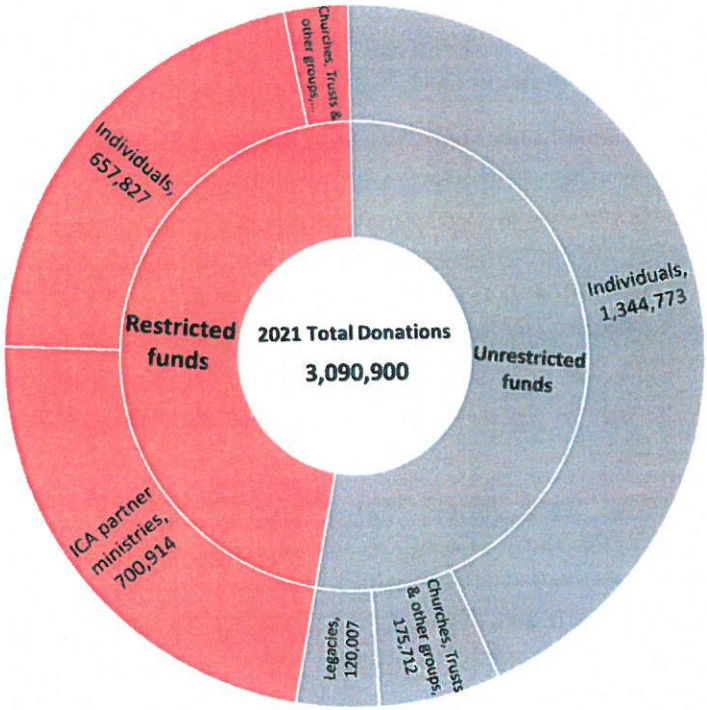
As for all organisations, there is a significant risk of a malicious attack on our IT systems. This is mitigated by security measures, including proactive testing. Staff are regularly trained and reminded about IT security, particularly phishing attacks.

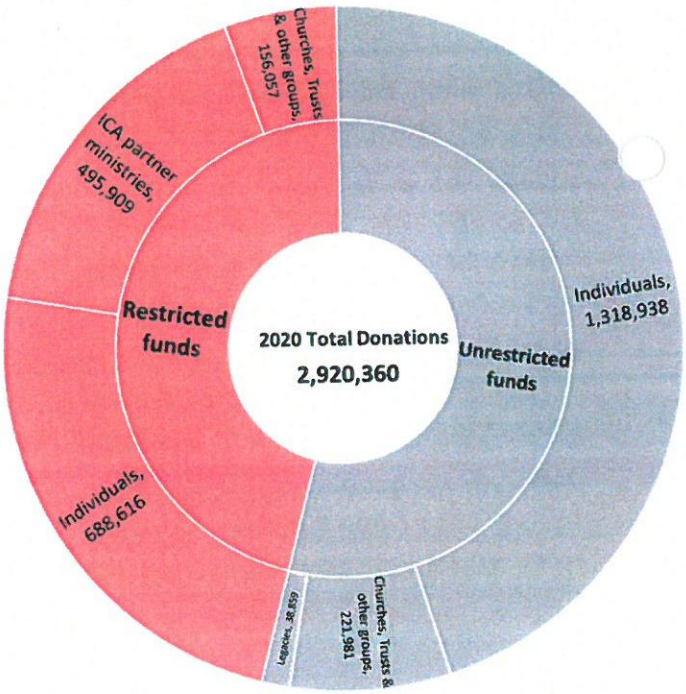
Staff have not been travelling internationally for most of 2021, but due to the nature of the Ministry there is a risk when travelling to visit Partners in contexts where they are being persecuted. This is mitigated by good communication with Partners to assess the current situation, extensive pre-trip briefing and security training.

Financial Review Year ended 31st December 2021

2021 has been a good year financially for the Ministry. We thank God for his provision through our many faithful supporters. The Trustees express their gratitude for their continuing generosity.

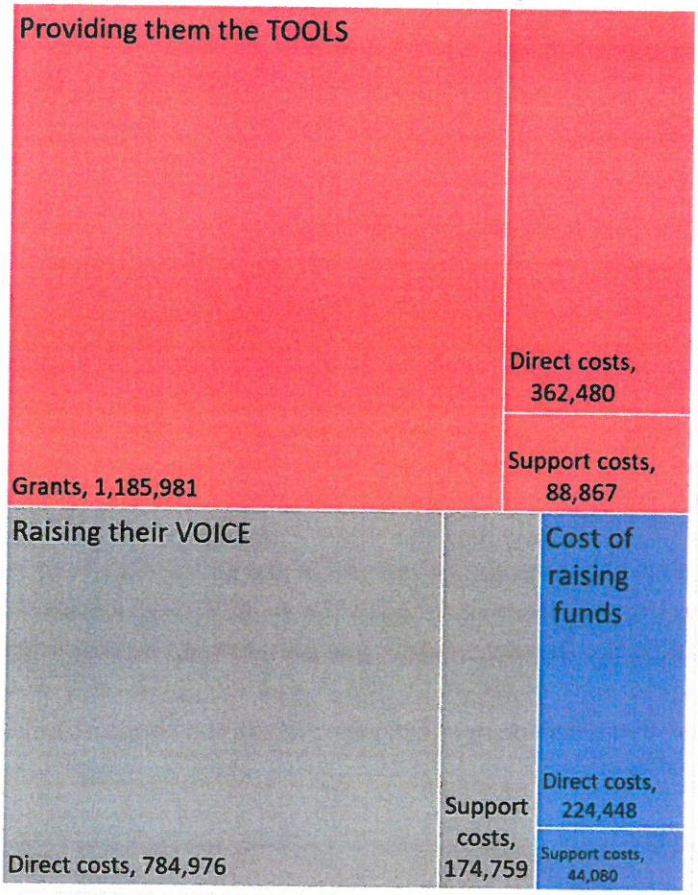
The diagrams below show the different sources of donations. Total income increased by 5% to £3,124k (2020: £2,978k). Unrestricted and restricted donations from individuals, churches and trusts increased by 4% and 8% respectively (note 3, 30). Donations from ICA Partner Ministries (see page 15 of the trustee annual report) increased by 40%; the Trustees gratefully acknowledge the receipt of a donation of £178k in September 2021 which helped to enable the Ministry to purchase the long-term head lease of our offices at Priory Buildings in Orpington, see the comments below in the Reserves Policy section (see page 14 of the trustee annual report).



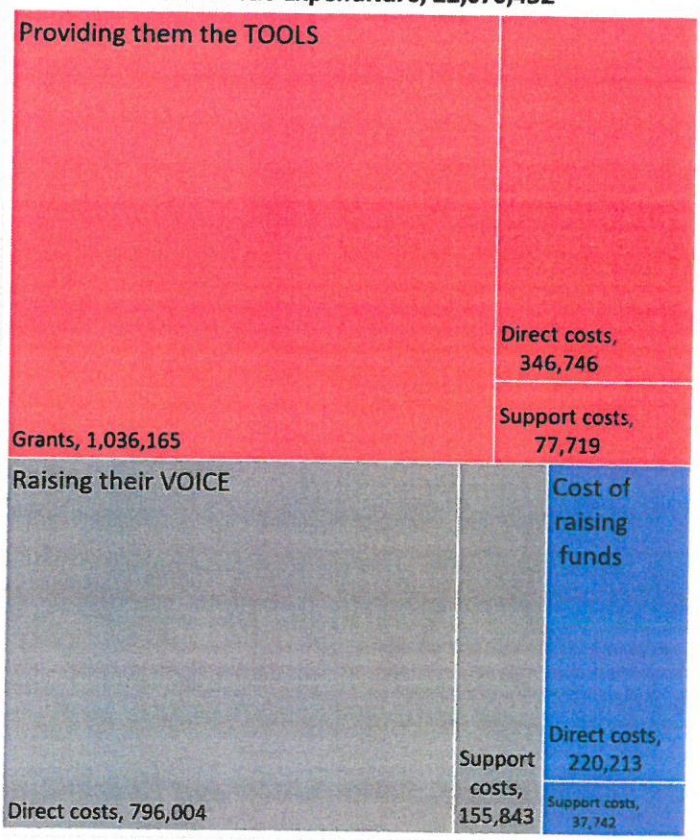


The diagrams below show the expenditure for the year. Total expenditure increased by 7% to £2,866k (2020: £2,670k). While many activities were curtailed due to the pandemic, the expenditure on grants to Partners increased by 14% to £1,186k (2020: £1,036k). Staff costs increased by 8% to £1,054k (2020: £979k). This included a pay increase of 1.5% and an increase in pension contributions of 1%. The Board have agreed a 3% pay increase from 1st January 2022.

Total 2021 Expenditure, £2,865,926



Total 2020 Expenditure, £2,670,432



Restricted Funds at the year-end were £687k (2020: £725k), a reduction of £38k. It should be noted that Release International's overseas projects funds relate to a broad range of international projects, some of which are longer term, multi-year projects. Release International's policy is to spend balances held in restricted funds as soon as is practicable, once all the grant conditions have been met. For further information on restricted funds see note 17 of the financial statements.

Grants Policy

A significant proportion of the overseas work of the Ministry is carried out through agencies local to areas of persecution that are usually indigenous. Grants are made for specific named purposes to agencies that share our objectives. Receipts and reports of the work carried out are obtained. Staff members usually carry out visits to evaluate potential projects, monitor existing projects, and assess the outcome of completed projects on a sample basis. COVID-19 travel restrictions meant that for most of 2021 evaluation and monitoring was online rather than in person.

Reserves Policy

After considering the Charity Commission's guidance CC19 (Charities and Reserves) the Trustees have agreed to maintain a 'range' as the basis for the level of General funds, which are 'free reserves'. At the Board meeting in December 2021, it was agreed to maintain this range at £350k to £450k. This would allow the Ministry to keep operating if donations from individuals and churches dropped by 10 -15% from current levels and income from legacies and ICA partners, which are more unpredictable, dropped 20%. The donation for the building has been excluded from the calculation, due to this being a one-off amount.

The Trustees also agreed at the December 2021 Board meeting to designate £250k as a property reserve which was the value paid for the long lease of the office in September 2021. In addition, the Trustees designated a further £170k for property repairs to the office which a listed building.

The free reserves, after adjusting for fixed assets, as at 31st December 2021 amounted to £591,349, which is 31% above target. The Trustees have agreed a deficit budget for 2022 of £332k which includes additional grant expenditure of £104k from unrestricted funds. This expenditure will reduce free reserves to £412k, which is within target. Trustees deemed this to be a good position and a welcome provision at this time of uncertainty.

Investment Policy

Income is largely received through voluntary donations and cannot be guaranteed; the Ministry has no permanent endowment. The only funds that are not expendable within 12 months of receipt are those held for reserves or money associated with international projects that remain active beyond the year end. The Board has considered this position and seeks to place funds in savings accounts to achieve a balance between accessibility and higher returns. Funds may be invested in accounts with up to 12 months' notice, but it is not considered prudent at this time to invest income for the longer term. The funds are now spread across five institutions, Barclays, CAF Bank, Charity Bank, Nationwide Building Society and Epworth Investment.

Structure, Governance and Management

Release International is a Christian Ministry, which is a registered Charity, regulated by the Charity Commission for England and Wales and also registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. It is constituted as a Company limited by guarantee. The Company operates under its Articles of Association, which were updated in January 2022. Release International was founded in 1968 as the Christian Mission to the Communist World, legally changing its name to Release International in June 2017.

The Board of Trustees normally meets four times each year and administers the Charity through its four committees: International Ministries, UK Engagement, Finance and Resources. The Leadership Team holds executive responsibility for implementing the policies and strategies approved by the Board and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), appointed by the Board, manages the day-to-day operations of the Company.

The Board has an established process for identifying and interviewing potential new Trustees. Vacancies are identified where there are gaps in experience and skills. All prospective Trustees will be practising Christians, who uphold Release International's Statement of Faith, Ethos Statement, and Trustee Code of Conduct. Nominations arising from this process are considered by the Board as

a whole and they may subsequently be invited to join the Board. Trustees serve no minimum or maximum terms of service but retire by rotation with the opportunity to stand for re-election.

New Trustees go through an induction and training process to familiarise them with Release International, the persecution sector and their responsibilities as Trustees and Directors under Charity and Company law. New Trustees are referred to the Charity Commission's guide *The Essential Trustee (CC3)* and they also meet with the Leadership Team and other Trustees. Each year the Chair and the CEO plan areas for trustee training which, with the Board's agreement, are covered in conjunction with other meetings.

Pay for key management personnel

The key management personnel in charge of directing and running the operations of the Charity comprise the Trustees and Leadership Team, as set out on page 16. All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration from the charitable Company as Trustees (Rev Dr B. Asmelash is paid a retainer as a consultant on Eritrea see note 22, page 38). Expenses reimbursed to Trustees are disclosed in note 8, page 32.

Salaries for all staff, including key management staff, are determined on appointment to post in line with Release International's agreed 5-level salary banding, and in line with the requirements and responsibilities of the role. All roles are reviewed annually through the appraisal system to ensure that any significant changes which may affect remuneration are addressed. In 2021 the staff team was restructured and as part of this some roles were added, changed and made redundant. Salaries were reviewed as part of this process. The Trustees will periodically carry out a review of all salaries across the Ministry through a benchmarking exercise to ensure that they remain reasonable and competitive.

International Associations

Release International is a member of the International Christian Association (ICA). The purpose of the ICA is to provide a relational link between Christian Ministries around the world whose foundings were inspired by Pastor Richard Wurmbrand. In doing so member Ministries seek to maintain a focus upon the Biblical mandate of Hebrews 13:3, *'Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow-prisoners, and those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering'* (NIV).

As a member of the ICA, Release International co-operates in a range of international projects and shares information and resources with other members. An Annual General Meeting is the decision-making forum for ICA business. Release International is a voting delegate.

Through ICA membership, Release International is directly able to support many more persecuted Christians throughout the world than it could in isolation. Currently Release International's CEO, Paul Robinson, is an elected member of the Executive Committee of the ICA, which helps co-ordinate the activity of the ICA Ministries.

Release International is also a member of The Evangelical Alliance, Middle East Concern, The Religious Liberties Partnership, and Global Connections.

Company Information

The Directors set out below are also the Trustees of the Charity and members of the Company.

Board of Trustees

David Armond CBE QPM — Chair of Trustees
Rev Dr Berhane Asmelash
David Bentley
Susan Harrison
Martin Lee — (appointed 11 November 2021)
Mary Print
Sarah Shearer FCA
Andrew Wayland

Company Secretary

Imogen Cole (resigned 20 December 2021)
Patrick Lineen (appointed 20 December 2021)

Leadership Team

Chief Executive Officer	Paul Robinson
Director of International Ministries	Christopher Badley
Director of Engagement UK & Ireland	Laura Hayes
Director of Finance	Patrick Lineen (appointed 1 December 2021)
Director of Finance	Imogen (Jenny) Cole (leaving 30 June 2022)
Director of Personnel & Internal Operations	Lynnette Feist

Registered Office

Betchworth House, 57-65 Station Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 1DL
For security reasons, as we work with many people under threat of intimidation, violence or detention, our registered address is our auditor's Surrey office.

Auditors	Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Devonshire House, 60 Goswell Road, London, EC1M 7AD
Bankers	CAF Bank Limited, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4JQ
Solicitors	Edward Connor, 10 The Point, Market Harborough, LE16 7QU
	Bates Wells, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1BE

Plans for the Future

The primary role of our International Partners is to extend the kingdom of God and His loving care in their communities, whatever the situation they may face. We will continue to support them by listening to their VOICE and providing the ministry 'TOOLS' that they ask for.

We have expanded the staff team at the beginning of 2022, making us better equipped for travel in the post-lockdown world. We will visit partners and encourage them in their callings, sharing in fellowship and hearing their VOICE. We will continue to develop and monitor projects with them that ensure the gospel of Christ will be proclaimed in the hardest of places around the world. As funds allow, we hope to continue building the team to support more partners and projects.

Release International is a relationship-based Ministry and it will be vital that there are opportunities to develop and maintain relationships in person with our Partners around the world. This is the core and underpinning reason for our travel and why much of our work is conducted in person.

There are other reasons why travel is an important aspect of this Ministry; for example: it enables us to be an authoritative source for what is happening around the world, speaking out in a timely manner and to produce media, which helps to inform and educate people in the UK about matters relating to the persecution of Christians; it is a crucial part of exercising the due diligence and good governance we need to monitor the projects we support. We also want to create opportunities to enhance the Ministries of our Partners through visits, which they testify are beneficial to them and which encourage them in their work.

Technology will continue to play a significant part in how we will communicate globally. We will be exploring opportunities to further develop digital tools that will benefit our partners and help them to express their VOICE.

Many Christians in today's world are still being forced to flee from their homes, especially in Africa and the Middle East. There are many Christians who have been forced into hiding because of their faith and are unable to move because of the pandemic lockdown. We pray that in 2022 they will be able to find new places to live out their lives for Christ and we will continue to work to that end as well.

Other Christians face imprisonment, an ongoing trend in Eritrea and other places such as Iran and North Korea. We pray on for imprisoned believers and their families, many who remain in need of our practical support.

Christians in the Sahel region of Africa are set to face more violence and martyrdom at the hands of several Islamist militant groups such as Boko Haram and others aligned to Al-Qaeda and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara. Release International will be expanding its work in this area to help the Church, especially in Burkina Faso. We will continue to support the church in Nigeria, which saw attacks continue throughout 2021. Some 4,000 Christians lost their lives, more than 50 villages were destroyed and nearly 5,000 people were displaced, according to our partners on the ground. These attacks could escalate in 2022, as political campaigning gets underway ahead of the 2023 general election. Sadly, this pattern of violence is being replicated in other parts of Sub-Saharan Africa too.

Release International remains committed to developing the bonds of fellowship we have enjoyed with our persecuted brothers and sisters for so long, delivering over 60 projects in more than 30 countries. As persecution in these countries continues, we will go on being creative and flexible to ensure we provide the fellowship and 'TOOLS' persecuted believers ask for and need.

As we move into 2022, we are deeply encouraged and thankful to God for all the blessings He has bestowed upon us during the last year, especially as we have emerged into the New Year with most pandemic restrictions ending. We are still mindful that so many Christian churches and supporters remain understandably careful and wary of returning to events in person, so as we go to print with our Annual Report, we continue to pray for wisdom and guidance, especially for making decisions about choosing live or online engagements. We are also deeply aware of the growing global concern for our friends in Ukraine, as the Russian military machine has invaded a peaceful sovereign country, causing death and destruction there. We have already been in contact with our partners to support the church through prayers and financial aid, principally via our friends at Voice of the Martyrs Poland, who are close to the front line. Thousands of people have fled into neighbouring countries, and we continue to pray for them and for all our persecuted Christian brothers and sisters, who are forced to flee from or within many restricted and hostile countries.

We held the first of our hybrid speaker tours in March, engaging with our churches around the country and running online national events on Zoom. We will need to evaluate this plan carefully to decide on delivery planned for October. We are pleased to report that we are engaging again with Christian conferences and events, with news of live event bookings at Spring Harvest, New Wine United and Keswick. The last two years have seen most Christian events cancelled and moving to online delivery. However, this year the mood seems to be moving us back to live events once more. This will really help Release International teams and volunteers get out to meet new contacts and share the ministry face to face.

Our programme of engagement activity is always carefully planned and each month we have a clear focus for all our multi-channel activity. We will promote *Voice* magazine over four quarterly editions in March, June, September and December. We plan to look at the magazine in the Summer and review its content, style and delivery. We will be in touch with our supporters and volunteers to feedback and share with us about how we might improve and extend our readership. Our dedicated ministry testimony letters to supporters also go out around four times per year.

Key to our UK church and supporter engagement work for this year are the two major volunteer-led events that we are involved with: The *Robert de Berry Bike Pilgrimage* and the Artless Theatre Company Tour – *Imprisoned with Isis*. The *Bike Pilgrimage* is a major event with cyclists attempting to ride over 900 miles from North Foreland Point Lighthouse in Kent to Lands' End in Cornwall and back. There will be over 40 church worship events en route and more than 50 cycling stages. We pray for retired vicar Robert and his team of volunteer 'bike pilgrims' as they continue to practice for this fantastic challenge. The play *Imprisoned with Isis* is also being performed throughout 2022 across the UK and will continue to tour into 2023, reaching out to over 100 churches. This wonderful drama, based on the life story of prisoner of faith Petr Jasek, has already received very encouraging reviews. Both events will help us share our calling and mission with current and new Christians.

All out for God online and the *Day of the Christian Martyr* are planned again for May and June respectively. For the *Day of the Christian Martyr* for 2022 we are hosting our dear friend Dr Susannah, who will be undertaking a round of speaking engagements in the Midlands and the North

of England region to update our supporters there on the situation in Burkina Faso. We were delighted to welcome a new Engagement Manager for this region in March. Dr Susannah will also be working alongside us at the upcoming live National Parliamentary Prayer breakfast in Westminster Hall London where we will host a seminar for the first time in three years.

As we go into November, we will again be planning for the *International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church.* (IDOP) This year we will focus on the plight of Christians who have had to flee for their lives. We will cover many of the world's most cruel and unjust places for Christians to witness, including Nigeria, China, North Korea, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia and many more.

Trustees' Responsibilities in Relation to the Financial Statements

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. The accounts in this report have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Company law requires the Trustees to ensure financial statements are prepared for each financial year. Under that law, the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the income and expenditure of the Company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which are sufficient to show and explain the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities. The Trustees are committed to compliance with the *Charity Governance Code.* In March 2021, the Trustees attended a seminar which particularly focused on the updates to the *Governance Code* published in December 2020.

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant information that the Company's auditors are not aware of, and each Trustee has taken all the steps necessary to ensure they are aware of any relevant information, and to establish that the Company's auditors are aware of the information.

Auditors

A resolution to re-appoint Moore Kingston Smith LLP as the independent auditors to the charitable Company was passed at the AGM in June 2021.

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

This report was approved by the Board on 23 June 2022 and signed on its behalf by,



David Armond CBE QPM
Chair of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Release International ('the company' for the year ended 31 December 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2021 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs(UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the audit of financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Corporation in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of

this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' annual report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Charities Act 2011 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; [or]
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.[or]
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and from preparing a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 20, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under Section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Companies Act 2006 and Section 151 of the Charities Act 2011 and report to you in accordance with regulations made under those Acts.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are; to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts

(Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council and UK taxation legislation.

- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006; and to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, and in respect of the consolidated financial statements, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 8 of the Charities Act 2011. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters which we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members, as a body, and the charity's trustees, as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinion we have formed.

Moore Kingston Smith LLP

Andrew Stickland (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor

Devonshire House
60 Goswell Road
London
EC1M 7AD

Date: 26 July 2022

Moore Kingston Smith LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 31st December 2021

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total Funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total Funds £
Income from							
Donations and legacies	3	1,640,492	1,450,408	3,090,900	1,579,778	1,340,582	2,920,360
Charitable activities							
Literature and Events		19,633	248	19,881	23,737	611	24,348
Interest receivable		1,352	-	1,352	3,199	-	3,199
Other		11,752		11,752	30,279	-	30,279
Total income		**1,673,229**	**1,450,656**	**3,123,885**	**1,636,993**	**1,341,193**	**2,978,186**
Expenditure on							
Costs of raising funds	4						
Fundraising		234,948	33,579	268,527	222,658	35,297	257,955
Charitable activities	4						
Providing them the TOOLS		388,303	1,249,025	1,637,328	370,154	1,090,477	1,460,631
Raising their VOICE		931,478	28,258	959,736	919,395	32,452	951,847
Total expenditure		**1,554,729**	**1,310,862**	**2,865,591**	**1,512,207**	**1,158,226**	**2,670,433**
Net income/ (expenditure)		118,500	139,794	258,294	124,786	182,967	307,753
Transfers		177,801	(177,801)	-	-	-	-
Net income/ (expenditure) after transfers		**296,301**	**(38,007)**	**258,294**	**124,786**	**182,967**	**307,753**
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2021	16&17	926,383	724,836	1,651,219	801,597	541,869	1,343,466
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2021	16&17	**1,222,684**	**686,829**	**1,909,513**	**926,383**	**724,836**	**1,651,219**

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Balance Sheet at 31st December 2021

For Release International - Company Number 01506576

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		257,185		28,045
Intangible Assets	11		4,150		2,537
Current assets					
Debtors	12	72,965		91,690	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,655,054		1,613,543	
		1,728,019		1,705,233	
Creditors – Amounts falling due within one year	13	(79,841)		(84,596)	
Net current assets			1,648,178		1,620,637
Total assets less current liabilities			1,909,513		1,651,219
Reserves					
Unrestricted funds					
General Fund	16		602,684		726,383
Designated Fund	16		620,000		200,000
Restricted funds	17		686,829		724,836
Total funds			1,909,513		1,651,219

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and with FRS102.

The notes on pages 28 to 38 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board on 23 June 2022 and signed on its behalf by:



David Armond CBE QPM

Chair of Trustees

Statement of Cashflows for year ended 31st December 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Net cash used in operating activities	20	296,119	683,512
Cashflows from Investing Activities			
Purchase of property plant and equipment		(251,760)	-
Purchase of intangible fixed assets		(4,200)	-
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets		-	4,801
Interest received		1,352	3,199
Net cash used by investing activites		(254,608)	8,000
Net increase/ (decrease) in cash	10	41,511	691,512
Cash at the beginning of the year		1,613,543	922,031
Cash at the end of the year		1,655,054	1,613,543

Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2021 £	2020 £
Net Income / (Expenditure)	258,294	307,753
Adjusted for		
Depreciation charge	15,383	16,246
Amortisation charge	2,587	3,286
(Profit)/Loss on disposal of assets	7,237	(4,801)
Interest from deposits	(1,352)	(3,199)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	18,725	367,812
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(4,755)	(3,585)
Net cash used in operating activities	296,119	683,512

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting Policies

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) - Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

1.1 Going Concern

The Trustees have assessed whether the use of going concern is appropriate and made this assessment for a period of at least one year from the date of the approval of these financial statements. The Trustees have given due consideration to the current risks facing the Ministry. Income increased in 2021 due to the loyal donor base and increased legacy and ICA donations. The Ministry's reserves were above the planned level (page 14). Income estimates for 2022 and 2023 are cautious as with the continued cancellation of many events in 2021 there has been a reduction in the number of new donors, which is being actively addressed. Having reviewed forecasts prepared by management the Trustees are confident that the Ministry will continue to meet its obligations as they fall due and that therefore the going concern basis continues to be appropriate.

1.2 Basis of Accounting

Release International Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

1.3 Fund Accounting

Funds held are either

- Unrestricted general funds which are funds that can be used within the charitable objectives at the Trustees' discretion. Some of these funds have been designated by the Trustees for specific purposes.
- Restricted funds which are funds that can only be used for specified purposes. The restriction may be imposed by the donor or the terms under which the funds were raised.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations, interest and rent are recognised in the accounts on a received basis. For donations made under the gift aid scheme, the gift aid is recognised in the year in which the gift is received. Gifts in kind are valued at their value to the Charitable Company.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the Charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably, and the Charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds are costs incurred in encouraging voluntary contributions to the Charitable Company and their associated support costs.
- Expenditure on charitable activities are costs directly relating to the objects of the Charitable Company and include grants made, direct costs incurred, and an apportionment of support costs as shown in note 7.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the Charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the Charity's activities. The Charity initially identifies the costs of its support functions. It then identifies those costs which relate to the governance function. Having identified its governance costs, the remaining support costs together with the governance costs are apportioned between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities pro rata to staff full time equivalents.

Grants payable are payments made to third parties in the furtherance of the charitable objectives of the Charitable Company. The grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which the awards are made. Grants where the beneficiary has not been informed or has to meet certain conditions before the grant is released are not accrued but are noted as financial commitments.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

1.6 Tangible Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are all used for charitable purposes and are shown at cost less depreciation. The threshold at which purchases are not normally capitalised is £1,000. Depreciation on assets is calculated to write off the cost over their estimated economic useful lives. Assets are depreciated annually on a straight-line basis over 4 years for computer equipment, 5 years for office equipment and the remainder of the lease for leasehold improvements. The leasehold property is amortised monthly over the remainder of the lease.

1.7 Intangible Fixed Assets

Intangible assets are the development costs for specific IT projects which are capitalised at cost, provided it is likely to bring future economic benefit to the Charity. If the criteria for recognition as assets are not met, the expense is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which it is incurred. Capitalised IT costs include all direct and indirect costs that are directly attributable to the development process. The costs are amortised using the straight-line method over 4 years being their estimated useful lives.

1.8 Foreign Currencies

Income and expenditure in foreign currencies are converted into sterling at the rates of exchange ruling on the date of transaction. Amounts held at the balance sheet date are converted at the rates prevailing at the balance sheet date.

1.9 Pension Costs

The Charity operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees which is funded by contributions from the employee and employer contributions payable to scheme and employees' personal pension plans are charged in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate. Further details of the scheme are given in note 15.

1.10 Operating Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

1.11 Financial Instruments

The Charitable Company only has basic financial instruments measured at amortised cost, with no financial instruments classified as 'other' or basic instruments measured at fair value.

2. Critical Estimates

In the view of the Trustees applying the accounting policies adopted, no judgements were required apart from those listed below.

- the allocation of support costs
- useful economic lives of intangible fixed assets
- depreciation rates of fixed assets
- estimation of legacy accrual

3. Donations and Gifts

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total funds £
Individuals	1,344,773	657,827	2,002,600	1,318,938	688,616	2,007,554
Churches & other groups	151,706	86,557	238,263	153,991	141,897	295,888
Trusts	24,006	5,110	29,116	62,690	14,160	76,850
ICA partner ministries	-	700,914	700,914	5,300	495,909	501,209
Legacies	120,007	-	120,007	38,859	-	38,859
	1,640,492	1,450,408	3,090,900	1,579,778	1,340,582	2,920,360

There were no gifts in kind in 2021 (2020: £5,300 books donated by an ICA Partner Ministry).

4. Expenditure

	Grants £ (see note 5)	Direct costs £ (see note 6)	Support costs £ (see note 7)	2021 Total £
Costs of raising funds				
Fundraising	-	224,448	44,080	268,527
Charitable activities				
Providing them the TOOLS	1,185,981	362,480	88,867	1,637,328
Raising their VOICE	-	784,976	174,759	959,736
	1,185,981	1,371,904	307,706	2,865,591

	Grants £ (see note 5)	Direct costs £ (see note 6)	Support costs £ (see note 7)	2020 Total £
Costs of raising funds				
Fundraising	-	220,213	37,742	257,955
Charitable activities				
Providing them the TOOLS	1,036,165	346,746	77,720	1,460,631
Raising their VOICE	-	796,004	155,843	951,847
	1,036,165	1,362,963	271,305	2,670,433

5. Grants made

Grant payments made were for the charitable purposes of Release International. They provided support for:

- Families of Christian martyrs
- Prisoners of faith and their families
- Christians suffering oppression and violence
- Christians forced to flee

The Ministry has taken advantage of the exemption available in the Charity SORP not to disclose specific information in relation to grant making, on the grounds that the disclosure could result in serious prejudice to the grant maker and/or the recipient institution, individuals working for the recipient institution or individuals.

Included in the table below were 5 grants to individuals in South, South East Asia and Other totalling £13,420 (2020: 5 grants South and South East Asia totalling £14,986).

No support costs have been allocated to the total amount of the grants.

	Total 2021		Total 2020	
	No.	£	No.	£
Central Asia	8	54,330	5	38,558
Middle East/Gulf	17	220,680	33	316,863
North East Africa	25	425,201	24	357,357
West Africa	17	125,635	16	113,434
South Asia	40	219,499	39	120,222
South East Asia	23	139,636	22	88,973
Other	1	1,000	1	758
	131	1,185,981	140	1,036,165

6. Direct costs

*See note 8	Staff costs* £	Other costs £	2021 Total costs £	Staff costs* £	Other costs £	2020 Total costs £
Costs of raising funds						
Fundraising	108,390	116,058	224,448	100,658	119,555	220,213
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	226,626	135,854	362,480	211,018	135,728	346,746
Raising their VOICE	522,589	262,387	784,976	486,875	309,129	796,004
	857,605	514,299	1,371,904	798,550	564,413	1,362,963

7. Support costs

*See note 8	Staff costs* £	Other costs £	2021 Total costs £	Staff costs* £	Other costs £	2020 Total costs £
Costs of raising funds						
Fundraising	28,076	16,004	44,080	25,063	12,679	37,742
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	56,602	32,265	88,867	51,611	26,108	77,719
Raising their VOICE	111,308	63,451	174,759	103,492	52,352	155,844
	195,986	111,720	307,706	180,166	91,139	271,305

8. Staff costs

	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	838,864	808,386
Social security costs	79,758	76,176
Pension costs	96,054	85,025
Redundancy	29,246	-
Group Life policy	9,668	9,130
	1,053,590	978,716

Total split as follows:	Direct (note 6)	Support (note 7)	2021 Total staff costs	Direct (note 6)	Support (note 7)	2020 Total staff costs
Costs of raising funds	108,390	28,076	136,465	100,658	25,063	125,72
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	226,626	56,602	283,227	211,018	51,611	262,629
Raising their VOICE	522,589	111,308	633,898	486,875	103,492	590,366
	857,605	195,986	1,053,590	798,550	180,166	978,716

The Trustees receive no remuneration. During 2021 and 2020 no Trustee received out of pocket expenses. During the year donations from 5 Trustees (2020: 5) were received totalling £5,312 (2020: £5,656)

The remuneration and benefits received by key management personnel in the year were £319k (2020: £310k). During the year there was 1 employee whose remuneration was in the bracket £60,000 - £69,999. (2020: 1).

At 31st December 2021, the Charitable Company included in creditors accrued holiday pay not taken of £17k (2020: £21k).

The average number of employees was:	2021	2020
Management	5	5
Administration and support	5	4
Overseas project management and UK information and education	18	17
	28	26

9. Net Income/Expenditure for the Year

The net income/ expenditure for the year is stated after charging:

		2021 £	2020 £
Depreciation of assets	(see note 11)	17,970	19,532
Auditors' remuneration		14,019	14,587
Hire of equipment		6,674	3,584

10. Analysis of cash, cash equivalents and net debt

2021	As at 1 Jan 2021	Cash flows	Non cash movements	As at 31 Dec 2021
Cash at bank	522,683	142,495	-	665,178
Cash on deposit	1,090,860	(100,985)	-	989,875
Net Cash	1,613,543	41,511	-	1,655,054

2020	As at 1 Jan 2020	Cash flows	Non cash movements	As at 31 Dec 2020
Cash at bank	298,970	223,713	-	522,683
Cash on deposit	623,061	467,799	-	1,090,860
Net cash	922,031	691,512	-	1,613,543

11. Fixed Assets

	Property	Computer Equipment	Office Equipment	Leasehold Improvements	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost					
At 1st January 2021	-	77,842	34,076	30,476	142,394
Additions	250,000	1,760	-	-	251,760
Disposals	-	(2,085)	(738)	(30,476)	(33,299)
At 31st December 2021	250,000	77,517	33,338	-	360,855
Depreciation					
At 1st January 2021	-	61,879	31,298	21,172	114,350
Charge for year	1,140	10,233	1,942	2,068	15,383
Disposals	-	(2,085)	(738)	(23,240)	(26,063)
At 31st December 2021	1,140	70,027	32,503	-	103,670
Net book values					
At 31st December 2021	248,860	7,490	835	-	257,185
At 31st December 2020	-	15,963	2,777	9,304	28,044
Depreciation rates:					
Straight-line	Remainder of lease	25% p.a.	20% p.a.	Remainder of lease	

Intangible Assets

	Software Development	Total
	£	£
Cost		
At 1st January 2021	21,145	21,14
Additions	4,200	4,200
Disposals	-	-
At 31st December 2021	25,345	25,345
Depreciation		
At 1st January 2021	18,608	18,608
Charge for year	2,587	2,587
Disposals	-	-
At 31st December 2021	21,195	21,195
Net book values		
At 31st December 2021	4,150	4,150
At 31st December 2020	2,537	2,537
Depreciation rates:		
Straight-line	25% p.a.	

12. Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Due within one year		
Other debtors	27,954	60,829
Prepayments	29,271	30,361
Accrued legacies	15,740	500
	72,965	91,690

13. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within One Year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	24,912	37,406
Other creditors	19,201	13,662
Accruals	35,728	33,527
	79,841	84,596

14. Members' Liability

The Charitable Company is limited by guarantee and each of the members is bound to contribute a sum not exceeding £10 in certain circumstances as set out in clause 7 of the Articles of Association.

15. Pension Commitments

The Charitable Company participates in the Global Connections pension scheme which is a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets are held separately from those of the Charitable Company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge representing contributions payable by the Charitable Company to the scheme and to other personal pension schemes amounted to between 7% or 10% of gross salaries depending on whether the staff member also contributes (2020: 7% or 9%). At 31st December 2021 there were no significant contributions outstanding payable to the scheme. The Charitable Company's pension arrangements comply with its statutory obligations in respect of auto-enrolment.

16. Unrestricted Funds

	Balance 01-Jan-21	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-21
	£	£	£	£	£
General Reserve Fund	726,383	1,608,729	(1,490,229)	(242,199)	602,684
Designated Fund - Grant Reponse Fund	200,000	64,500	(64,500)	-	200,000
Designated Fund - Property reserve	-	-	-	250,000	250,000
Designated Fund - Property repairs	-	-	-	170,000	170,000
	926,383	1,673,229	(1,554,729)	177,801	1,222,684

	Balance 01-Jan-20	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-20
	£	£	£	£	£
General Reserve Fund	801,597	1,636,993	(1,512,207)	(200,000)	726,3
Designated Fund - Grant Reponse Fund	-	-	-	200,000	200,000
	801,597	1,636,993	(1,512,207)	-	926,383

The reserve policy is explained on page 14 of the trustee report. The Grant Response Fund allows Release International to be more agile and give grants to overseas partners, usually funded by restricted gifts in anticipation of funds being received later in the year. The property fund relates to the office building purchased in September 2021.

17. Restricted Funds

These are donations received for specific purposes as requested by the donors. The first four funds are for the taxonomy of persecution (page 5 of the trustee report) The other funds are many and varied and where appropriate have been grouped into geographical areas. They are all within our objectives as described on page 5.

	Balance 01-Jan-21	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-21
	£	£	£	£	£
Families of Christian martyrs	51,208	143,198	(101,298)	-	93,108
Prisoners of faith and their families	78,369	74,031	(106,499)	-	45,901
Christians forced to flee	38,629	90,165	(126,771)	-	2,023
Christians suffering oppression and violence	26,981	203,584	(151,863)	-	78,702
Central Asia	7,193	18,233	(23,528)	-	1,898
Middle East/Gulf	25,602	119,340	(132,656)	-	12,286
North East Africa	329,774	383,489	(384,151)	-	329,112
West Africa	28,321	55,420	(70,543)	-	13,198
South Asia	65,798	91,152	(110,454)	-	46,496
South East Asia	34,166	23,735	(39,718)	-	18,183
Purchase of long lease of office building	-	177,801		(177,801)	-
Personal Support	196	43,354	(43,355)	-	196
Generic funds and other	38,599	27,154	(20,027)		45,726
	724,836	1,450,656	(1,310,862)	(177,801)	686,829

	Balance 01-Jan-20	Income	Expenditure	Balance 31-Dec-20
	£	£	£	£
Families of Christian martyrs	29,316	104,005	(82,112)	51,208
Prisoners of faith and their families	42,079	169,843	(133,553)	78,369
Christians suffering oppression and violence	7,020	77,568	(57,607)	26,981
Christians forced to flee	-	159,942	(121,312)	38,629
Central Asia	1,935	12,526	(7,268)	7,193
Middle East/Gulf	35,171	158,899	(168,468)	25,602
North and East Africa	283,355	365,034	(318,616)	329,774
West Africa	44,081	42,842	(58,603)	28,321
South Asia	44,484	92,542	(71,228)	65,798
South East Asia	19,540	20,694	(6,069)	34,166
Personal Support	-	50,221	(50,025)	196
Generic funds and other	34,888	87,074	(83,364)	38,599
	541,869	1,341,193	(1,158,226)	724,836

The transfer in 2021 relates to a donation for the purchase of the office building where it was agreed with the donor that once the building had been purchased the restriction on the donation was fulfilled.

18. Analysis of Net Assets Between Funds

2021	Fixed assets	Cash	Net Current assets	Totals
	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	-	678,742	8,088	686,830
Unrestricted funds	261,335	976,312	(14,964)	1,222,684
	261,335	1,655,054	(6,876)	1,909,514

2020	Fixed assets	Cash	Net Current assets	Totals
	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	-	708,173	16,663	724,836
Unrestricted funds	30,582	905,369	(9,568)	926,383
	30,582	1,613,543	7,094	1,651,219

19. Other Financial Commitments

	2021		2020	
	Office Equipment	Premises Rental	Office Equipment	Premises Rental
Operating Leases	£	£	£	£
Due under 1 year	6,674	225	7,060	28,000
Due between 2 to 5 years	18,353	900	26,475	61,833
Due after more than 5 years	-	15,007	-	-
	25,027	16,132	33,535	89,833

The premises rental is ground rent for the leasehold property.

21. Taxation

As a Charity Release International benefits from exemptions on income and gains falling within Sections 466-493 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 to the extent they are derived from charitable activities.

22. Related party transactions

Revd Dr Berhane Asmelash, who is a Trustee, receives no remuneration for his role as Trustee. He was paid as a consultant on Eritrea £7,200 (2020: £7,050)

23. Capital Commitments

There were no capital commitments not provided for in the financial statements (2020: none).

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL

England & Wales - Charity number 280577

Accounts

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL

voice of Persecuted Christians

Release International

The Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the Year ended 31st December 2020

A Company Limited by Guarantee. Company No. 01506576

Registered Charity No. 280577 and Registered in Scotland No. SCO40456

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

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Trustees' Annual Report

The Trustees have the pleasure of presenting their Annual Report together with the Financial Statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 December 2020, which are also prepared to meet the requirements of a Directors' Report and Accounts for Companies Act purposes. Release International is a Christian Ministry and will often be referred to in this report as the Ministry.

Message from the Chair



It gives me great pleasure to have the opportunity to present the Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2020. It has undoubtedly been a challenging year for all of us due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with many people losing loved ones or livelihoods, and others suffering from illness or loneliness, due to separation from their families and friends. Our young people have been unable to attend school and our churches have, in the main, been closed. But what an opportunity this has been to pause, think, pray and to re-evaluate our priorities in life! To count our many blessings and to give thanks for them!

As I wrote last year's report the first lockdown had just started. We were all adjusting to the 'new normal'. I reflected then on the fact that however difficult our personal circumstances in the UK appeared to be, they paled into insignificance compared to the daily experience of our Christian brothers and sisters in many parts of the world who are persecuted, imprisoned, tortured or even murdered for their faith. I continue to be inspired by their stories and amazing witness and continue to give thanks to God for the opportunity to play a small role in supporting them.

And what an amazing year 2020 turned out to be, despite the challenges! God has truly been gracious in every sense. In his introduction to this report, Paul, our Chief Executive Officer, details the many ways in which Release International has quickly adapted to changing circumstances, with staff mainly working from home, and increased use of technology to run a comprehensive programme of 'virtual' events and meetings. These changes have not only enabled the team to successfully continue our ministry in the UK and Ireland to engage people with their persecuted brothers and sisters worldwide, but to deliver more overseas ministry through our international Partners than was originally envisaged at the start of the year. Thanks to the sacrificial generosity of our many supporters, our financial position is very healthy, going against national trends which have seen many charities lose financial support. We praise God for His provision!

The Board of Trustees has continued to meet 'virtually' and has seen some changes in composition in recent months. I take this opportunity to welcome David Bentley and Sue Harrison to the Board, and to thank Dave Landrum, who has resigned from his position, for his contribution and service.

In conclusion I would like to pay tribute to the continuing witness, service and commitment of the Release International team of staff members and volunteers, who have worked tirelessly with our Partners around the world to ensure that the voice of persecuted Christians is heard more widely. I also give glory and thanks to God for our huge network of supporters, whose faithful prayer, time and financial support makes this work possible.

David Armond CBE QPM

Chair of Trustees

Chief Executive's Introduction



2020 – what a year! As a Christian Ministry which deals with the unexpected around the world on a regular basis, we were well placed to respond to the news of an emerging global pandemic. Even before the UK Government began to hint at the need for a national lockdown, we were preparing for it, and by the end of the first lockdown's initial day, our teams were set up to be working from home. We did have a small team going into the office twice a week to manage office-based elements but, apart from that, thanks to the work we had already done as part of a multiyear digital strategy, all our operations were almost immediately being delivered from home.

Unknown to us, that situation would continue for a whole year and being a deeply relational Ministry we were initially concerned our relationships here and overseas would begin to suffer. That has not been the case, in fact it has been interesting to observe how the various strategies we implemented to maintain relationships have proven successful. It has been remarkable to note that even people who are 'new' to us, who we have still not yet met in person, really have become part of the Release International 'family'. However, we do look forward to enjoying fellowship with them in 'three-dimensions' rather than seeing them only on flat screens!

The Ministry's Leadership Team, accountable to the Board of Trustees, has managed the changing nature of the COVID-19 restrictions very well since they began, keeping all team members safe and motivated to go on fulfilling our Calling, *to Love and Serve persecuted Christians,* without any break or slow-down in operational activity. Indeed, as can be seen through the detail of this Report, we have delivered more overseas ministry through our International Partners than we envisaged at the start of 2020, and our ministry in the UK and Ireland to engage people with their persecuted brothers and sisters has successfully been brought mainly 'online'. Though nationally some charities have lost financial support, our supporters have yet again gone above-and-beyond in giving sacrificially to express their love and support for their persecuted brothers and sisters worldwide. The generosity of our supporters reveals God's heart of compassion for our persecuted family and that he will meet all their needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus (Phil 4:19 NIV).

Repeatedly over the years, our International Partners have commented on how much they value the ways in which Release International 'journeys' with them prayerfully, pastorally and practically. Our greatest desire is to continue to be obedient to our Calling, constantly seeking to 'see what the Father is doing' (cf. John 5:19), and a huge part of that is being able to draw alongside our Partners as they draw alongside those being persecuted for Jesus' sake. Though we managed very well to frequently 'be with them' digitally during 2020 our hope is that in 2021 we will be able to resume international travel to physically be with them in person, to listen to them, hear their voice, discern their needs, provide the 'tools' they need to go on living for the Lord right where they are, and to raise their voice effectively in the Church here at home. Finally, whatever comes our way in 2021, as instructed by the Lord in Hebrews chapter 13 and verse 3, we are as determined as ever to continue to remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since we also are in the body. (ESV)

Paul Robinson

Chief Executive

Our Charitable Objects

- The advancement of the Christian faith;
- The relief of poverty amongst peoples worldwide who are suffering persecution or marginalisation for their Christian beliefs;
- The furtherance of the charitable work of the Ministry by the advancement of such other charitable purposes as the Trustees shall from time to time decide.

The Objects are to be carried out as a proclamation of the beliefs set out in our Statement of Faith which is available on our website releaseinternational.org.

About Release International

Release International was founded in 1968 as the Christian Mission to the Communist World, inspired by Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, who was imprisoned and tortured by Romanian secret police under brutal Communism. Following the demise of Communism in Eastern Europe and the increase in the persecution of Christians elsewhere in the world, the Ministry broadened its activities and changed its name to Release International.

Our Calling and Mission

There was an exciting project in 2019 to revisit and define our Calling and Mission and the taxonomy of persecution, which now defines our Ministry.

Our Calling

Through the ministry of Pastor Richard Wurmbrand and Hebrews 13:3 we have been called by God to **Love and Serve Persecuted Christians**.

Our Mission (five Strategic Purposes)

Our Mission is to love and serve persecuted Christians by:

- Raising their **VOICE.**
- Giving them the **'TOOLS'** they need to live for Jesus Christ.
- Calling UK Christians into **FELLOWSHIP** with them.
- Learning lessons of Christian **DISCIPLESHIP** with them.
- Maintaining Christian **STEWARDSHIP** to honour them.

Our Taxonomy of Persecution

Around the world, we prayerfully, pastorally, and practically help:

- Families of Christian martyrs
- Prisoners of faith and their families
- Christians suffering oppression and violence
- Christians forced to flee

How our Activities Deliver Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission. Release International seeks to prayerfully, pastorally, and practically help those who are persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ, and to help Christians, churches, faith-based organisations and the general public understand and engage with the reality of persecution. Those who benefit from our activities are Christians globally whose religious freedoms have been curtailed or abused, and any member of the public wanting to be educated about the circumstances of persecuted Christians and/or become involved in supporting and helping them. Our approach stems from our Charitable Objects (page 5). The Trustees consider Release International's, Calling, Mission, and Operational Strategies fulfil the duty and are confident the Charitable Company's activities are delivering public benefit.

Our Achievements and Performance

Strategic Purpose: Raising their VOICE.

Our primary mission is to raise the VOICE of persecuted Christians with Christians in the UK and through evangelical Christian churches. In 2020 we had the first lockdown of the UK in living memory, which closed churches, workplaces and stopped travel. This had a major impact on our ability to share our message in traditional ways, through live events in church settings. However, we were very fast at recalibrating our engagement plans using online and digital channels which proved very successful. We praise God for his amazing blessings in 2020.

We worked hard to focus on our prayer ministry in 2020, as this is our overarching call to the UK church to pray for our persecuted brothers and sisters. We continued with our prayer alerts by email, updating supporters on critical news from our Partners working in-country around the world and giving clear prayer points to share with their fellowships or home groups. We also became a lead ministry with Christians in Parliament for their online National Prayer Breakfast in June 2020 which attracted over 3,000 Christians on YouTube. In 2020 we expanded our Prayers for Partners weekly email and continued to deliver children's prayer resources.

As we were in a new world of lockdowns, our regional Development Managers' team worked to develop a new series of digital resources for churches in April 2020 entitled 'Lockdown Church'. This campaign was launched with new short films from Partners, new prayers, fundraising ideas raising funds for prison ministry and Bible studies. This was our main campaign in 2020 and we looked to bring our supporters alongside our persecuted brothers and sisters by making the connection with restrictions here, and restrictions for practicing your faith overseas.

Our *VOICE* magazine continued to be our flagship engagement tool which provided strong content quarterly to our supporters. We launched our annual Persecution Trends 2020 Report in December which attracted much media attention and interest.

Our important ministry with many Christians conferences and festivals had to be cancelled during 2020. However, we were invited to take part in many online versions of conferences, including making a film for the Keswick Convention, and we translated our 'Great Outdoor Church Service' church events into a fantastic online campaign on social media, renamed 'All out for God'.

We worked with our some of our related Ministries in the International Christian Association on our first global petition "Where's Raymond?" Pastor Raymond Koh disappeared four years ago and was

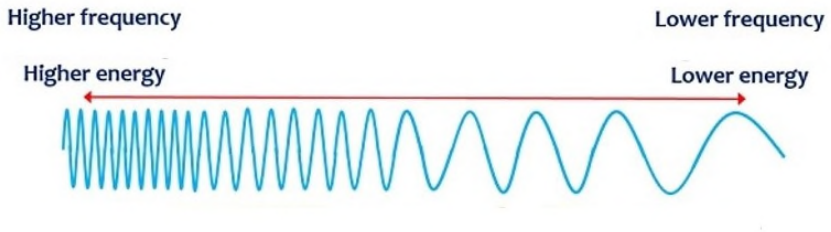
captured on CCTV being kidnapped with military precision. It is alleged that Malaysian security forces were involved. The petition opened in the summer 2020 and is still open. It currently has around 75,000 signatures from 185 countries. (www.releaseraymond.com.)

Key to our work in raising the VOICE of persecuted Christians is our social media, film, web and podcasting output, which continued to be developed in 2020. We were unable to go to meet Partners overseas due to lockdown, so we moved interviews online to generate content for our campaigns and fundraising. Our press and media work with Christian radio and TV also expanded significantly in 2020. We were particularly thankful to Revelation TV who showcased our Ministry on their main broadcast programming on Christmas Day. We also thank Premier Christian Radio who partnered with Release International over the Summer to raise the VOICE of persecuted Christians suffering severe and increased persecution due to COVID-19 and lockdown.

Strategic Purpose: Giving them the 'TOOLS' they need to live for Jesus Christ

Release International delivers the international aspects of its ministry by working in-country through local churches or organisations, with whom we have established formal partnerships. Where possible these Partners are indigenous to the area in which our Ministry operates, but sometimes the work is carried out through Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) where they are well connected with the local church. These partnerships form the main connections between Release International and persecuted Christian communities. The very nature of this work makes it difficult to report on it without endangering those being served. However, we can share some stories that demonstrate what we've being doing to benefit persecuted Christians overseas.

History has shown that persecution comes and goes around the world. There are a variety of different types of persecutors who have varied reasons for persecuting. No matter who, when or where, the intensity of persecution in the Christian life could be likened to the radio frequency spectrum (see diagram below); at one end, Christians face a high frequency of terrible persecution, at the other occurrences are rare and Christians pay little or no cost for following Christ.



Our international work is focused on the high frequency end of the persecution spectrum. Our own Taxonomy of Persecution is used to ensure the Ministry remains in the right place for the foreseeable future. From the elements of the Taxonomy come four clear areas of ministry: Families of Christian martyrs; Prisoners of faith and their families; Christians suffering oppression and violence, and Christians forced to flee. Having ministered to and with Christians at this high end of the persecution spectrum, Release International is able to continue presenting the first-person VOICE of persecution to those at the lower end of the spectrum, with the hope and prayer that they will become engaged with those suffering and be better prepared when it becomes their turn! (2 Tim 3:12)

The stories below demonstrate current examples from each element of the Taxonomy.

Families of Christian martyrs

Christians in north east Nigeria have suffered appalling levels of violence for many years. Many have suffered martyrdom because of their faith in Christ. One of Release International's Partners provides trauma counselling to help relatives come to terms with their loss. One attendee wrote, "*During the art exercise, I drew a woman which signifies my cousin named Jenifer who gave birth one year ago. She went out at about 6pm to a friend's house just close to her matrimonial home and on her way coming back home, she was attacked by armed Fulani men who killed her and cut her body into several parts but spared her few months [old] child who cried all night. I received a call at about 4am, where I was informed that a dead body had been found with a child. On arriving the scene, I identified my cousin's corpse and immediately took the baby who had fainted to the hospital. Another brother of mine was killed and beheaded on the same day, on that same road. Today, if I see the baby and remember how the mother left, it burdens my heart. Thank God for sparing the life of the baby*".

Prisoners of faith and their families

Christians in Pakistan are vulnerable to false charges of blasphemy. Release International's Partners in Pakistan provide pastoral care, advice and practical support to those who find themselves caught up in this situation. One such case is that of Pervaiz Masih, who with his wife and three children, had been suffering in this way for five years. Eventually he was released due to the lack of evidence against him but after his release his life was in even more in danger because of Islamic extremists. His wife was also arrested, but not held in custody, as a part of the case and suffered a brutal beating from the police which required medical attention. After Pervaiz's release he was not able to find work. Our Prison Ministry Partners looked after the basic needs of the family and offered ongoing fellowship and counselling. This continued from July 2019 and into 2020, when the family was relocated to secure accommodation at a new location. Happily, this family is now once again able to lead a normal, Christian life. Our Partners still remain in regular contact with the family to make sure they are doing well in their new location, they report, "*He is so grateful for the help and compassion the family has received*".

Christians suffering oppression and violence

Life for Christians in China is getting harder according to reports from our Partners. Some non-registered churches have been raided and closed. Increasing numbers of registered churches have had CCTV cameras installed in their church building and posters proclaiming communist ideals and beliefs. Civil servants, teachers, lecturers and other professionals have been required to study 'Xi Jinping Thought' and sign agreement with it. Teachers, both Chinese and foreign, have been warned not to speak about religion in classes, in school and not even outside of the school or university setting. It seems that students are asked to report on any undesirable words and behaviour. Students are asked if they have religious affiliations and if so warned that this could harm their grades and possible university places or job prospects. Our Partner writes, "*The government under Xi Jinping is increasing its 'clean up' of anything that does not advance the government's communist agenda. They appear to believe that by systematic opposition they can achieve this. They have bought freedom from censure around the world due to many countries trading with China and regarding this trade as essential to their own economy. Continue to inform and encourage more prayer around the world. Continue to support individuals and families working in China*".

Christians forced to flee

Despite reports of ISIS being defeated in the Middle East, our Partners in Iraq continue to struggle with the problem of Christians in flight because of their faith. During 2020, they reported many had been persecuted. Syrian Christians have become refugees; between 600-1000 families and the number is still rising. There are also displaced Iraqi Christian refugees, many report a serious lack of trust in political developments, fearing recent history will repeat itself again. Many have been waiting now for years to be able to emigrate to a more stable environment. In the meantime, our Partner continues to provide support in the form of food, housing, basic education and vocational training, and asks us to pray for safety and protection for their team working in the field, for more funding so they can continue helping persecuted Christian refugees and reach out with the Word of God to those around them.

Strategic Purpose: Calling UK Christians into FELLOWSHIP with them

This Strategic Purpose is integrated into the activities of raising their VOICE, and so has not been reported separately on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 25).

Another critical part of the Mission of Release International is to bring our friends and supporters into FELLOWSHIP with persecuted Christians worldwide. Due to lockdown in 2020 this was very challenging to us. Much of our work building fellowship, is focused on 'live' 'face to face' events in churches or in homes. We particularly had been developing our relational ministry with supporters, by encouraging them to work in their church communities to raise the VOICE of persecuted Christians. All of this was moved online. We did encourage supporters to use Zoom and social media to stay connected.

One success during the lockdown was to expand our publishing outputs and increase our list of testimonies of persecuted Christians for our supporters. In April 2020 we launched the new book by our dear friend Petr Jasek, Ambassador for the International Christian Association. We held an online speaker event with him which was very well attended. We also stocked 'Free at Last' by Asia Bibi which was very popular with supporters.

In November we worked on the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church, our annual campaign in churches. However, again because of lockdown, we developed an online live event on YouTube which attracted over 1700 Christians. We produced a new film about persecution in India from interviews and previous visits, which was very well received.

Our Release Women team continued to work hard during 2020 and moved fundraising events and meetings online. One very creative response to lockdown was to take our 'Esther Experience' live event, and put that online, which proved very successful. Our youth ministry Release Potential also moved live events online.

Strategic Purpose: Learning lessons of Christian DISCIPLESHIP with them

This Strategic Purpose is integrated into the activities of raising their VOICE, and so has not been reported separately on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 25).

Through many of our outputs we increase knowledge of the Biblical perspective on persecution which is critical to an understanding of our Ministry and personal discipleship. At the end of 2020 we finalised a new Bible Study Resource – 'All for Jesus' which is a 5-week self-study or small group resource written by our resident author Kenneth Harrod.

Strategic Purpose: Maintaining Christian STEWARDSHIP to honour them

This Strategic Purpose is integrated into all the activities, and so it is not reported separately on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 25).

We continue to put a great emphasis on a relational approach to our Ministry. Throughout the pandemic we have mainly been working from home. We have sought to care for our staff by risk assessing their home working environments, providing relevant training to our line-managers and offering mental health tips and training. We organised two online staff days with worship, devotional, and training elements. We also hold regular online staff meetings, devotions and opportunities to socialise together.

Due to the investment in laptops and online platforms since 2018 we were able to move quickly and efficiently transition to mainly working from home. From a technology perspective, we continue to strive towards being digital and cloud-based. There has been a small team that has provided cover in the office throughout 2020 to ensure that essential tasks have been maintained.

Volunteers

Volunteering continues to be a significant priority for Release International. Despite the restrictions in 2020 we have continued to actively engage with our volunteers. This proactive approach has seen an increase in volunteers from 197 in 2019 to 218 in 2020 with 34 new volunteers (2019:18). We held our first annual volunteering conference online, which attracted over 120 participants.

We continue the recruitment of specialist volunteers by engaging the following volunteering roles: Church Research and Engagement Volunteer, Project Management Volunteer, Web Analyst Volunteer and Graphic Designer Volunteer. We would like to thank all our volunteers, including Church Representatives, Volunteer Speakers, Events Volunteers and Fundraising Volunteers for their dedicated and loyal service to the Ministry. We also particularly thank our network volunteers, for Release Women, Release Potential (youth ministry aimed at 18-30s) and Prisoners of Faith ministries for their continued loyal support, prayers and giving of their time.

Fundraising

Our engagement and fundraising plans are approved by Trustees and monitored by the Leadership Team. Most of our income is generated through charitable donations we receive from individuals, churches, trusts and foundations (note 3, page 30). In addition, we work in partnership with several International Christian Association (ICA) Ministries who contribute to our international project work.

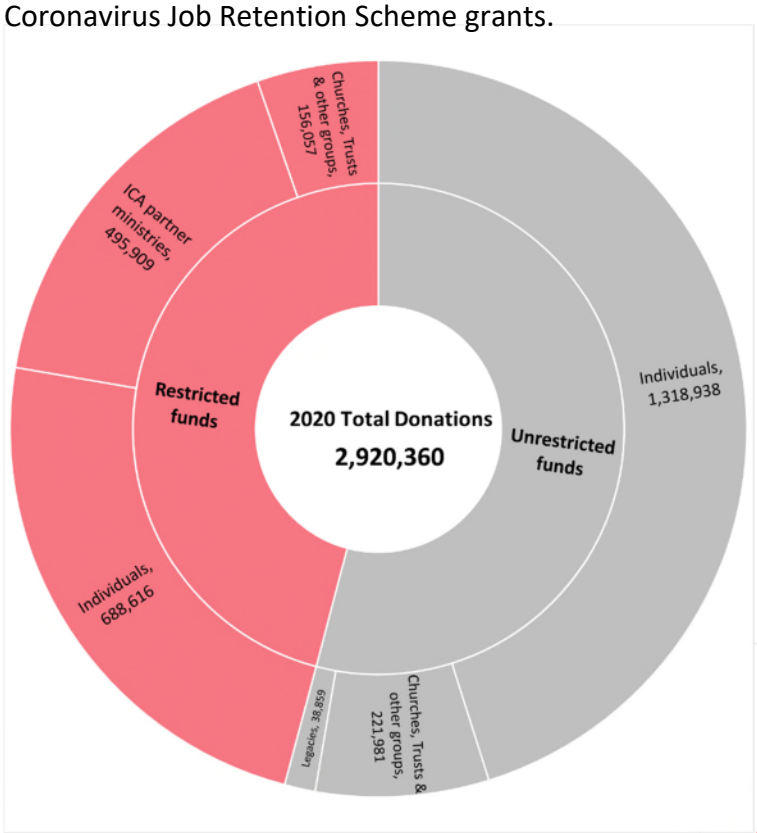
Our fundraising activities are conducted by our staff team, drawing on the expertise of external fundraising advisors for selected campaigns. We do not contract out fundraising to third parties. We maintain oversight of all third-party suppliers and have written agreements where necessary with them under the Data Protection Act 2018.

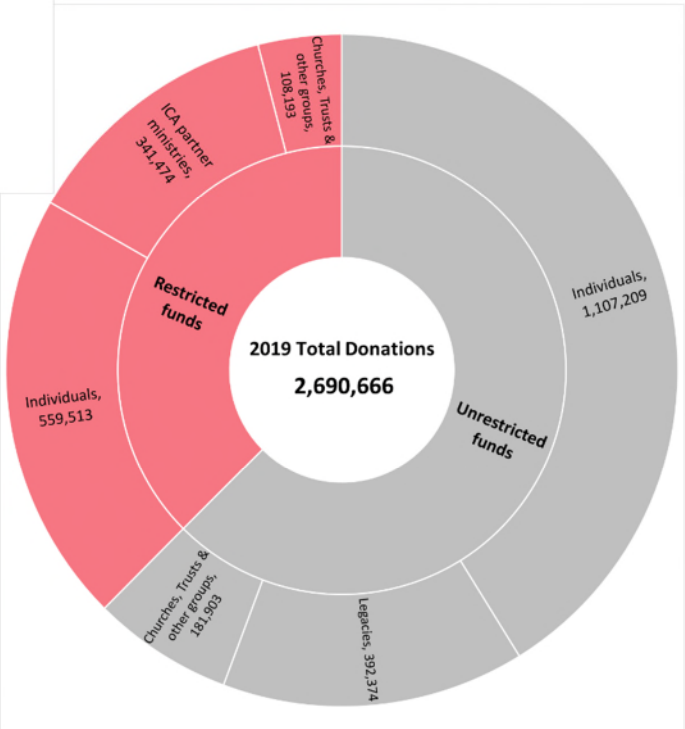
We are committed to the highest standards in fundraising practice. We are regulated by the Fundraising Regulator and abide by the Fundraising Code of Practice which includes guidelines on how to fundraise with people in vulnerable circumstances. In 2020 we handled eight fundraising complaints (2019: 9) through our Supporters' Complaints Procedure which were all resolved. We have a fundraising policy which gives a clear commitment to protect supporters from unreasonably persistent or obtrusive fundraising practice. We do not undertake donor profiling or sell data to third parties at any time.

Financial Review Year ended 31st December 2020

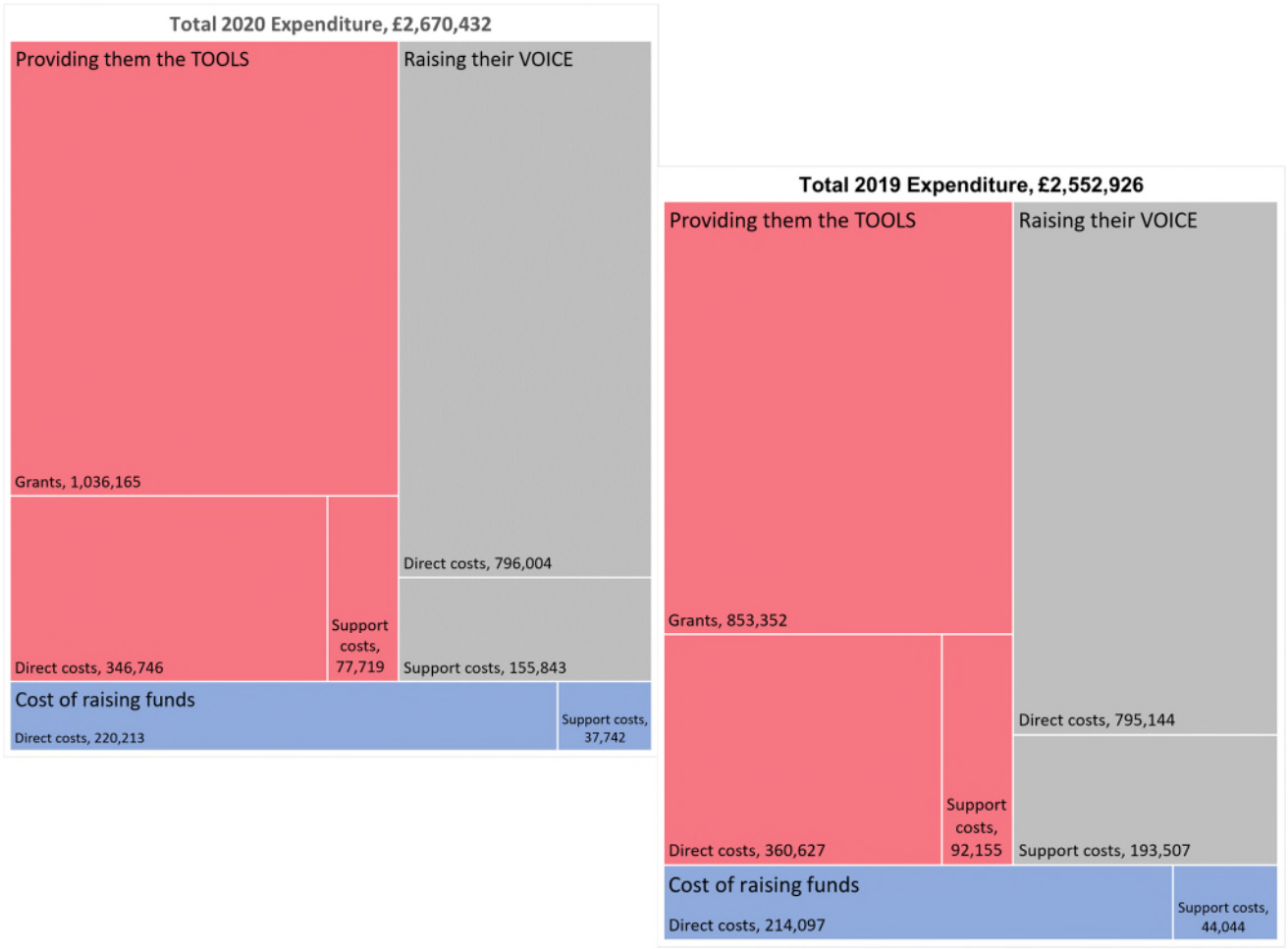
2020 has been a good year financially for the Ministry. Our appeal in May 2020 at the height of the pandemic was our most successful appeal for many years raising over £100k. We thank God for his provision through our many faithful supporters. The Trustees express their gratitude for their continuing generosity.

The diagrams below show the different sources of income. Total income increased by 9% to £2,978k (2019: £2,726k). Legacy income was particularly high in 2019, when legacies are excluded, income increased by 26% to £2,939k (2019: £2,333k). Unrestricted and restricted donations from individuals, churches and trusts increased by 19% and 33% respectively (note 3, page 30). Restricted donations from ICA Partner Ministries (page 15) increased by 47%. Other income includes £25k of Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme grants.





The diagrams below show the expenditure for the year. Total expenditure increased by 5% to £2,670k (2019: £2,553k). While many activities were curtailed due to the pandemic the expenditure on grants to Partners increased by 21% to £1,036k (2019: £853k). Staff costs increased by 4% to £979k (2019: £938k). This includes a pay increase of 2%, an increase in pension contributions of 1% and an increase in the holiday pay accrual (note 8, page 32). The Board have agreed a 1.5% pay increase and a further 1% increase in pension contributions from 1st January 2021.



Restricted Funds at the year-end were £725k (2019: £542k), an increase of £183k. Restricted donations were high at the end of the year, £196k being received in December 2020. It should be noted that Release International's overseas projects funds relate to a broad range of international projects, some of which are longer term, multi-year projects. Release International's policy is to spend balances held in restricted funds as soon as is practicable once all the grant conditions have been met.

Grants Policy

A significant proportion of the overseas work of the Ministry is carried out through agencies local to areas of persecution that are usually indigenous. Grants are made for specific named purposes to agencies that share our objectives. Receipts and reports of the work carried out are obtained. Staff members usually carry out visits to evaluate potential projects, monitor existing projects, and assess the outcome of completed projects on a sample basis. COVID-19 meant that for most of 2020 evaluation and monitoring was online rather than in person.

Reserves Policy

After considering the Charity Commission's guidance CC19 (Charities and Reserves) the Trustees have agreed to maintain a 'range' as the basis for the level of General funds, which are 'free reserves'. At the Board meeting in September 2020, it was agreed to maintain this range at £350k to £450k. This would allow the Ministry to keep operating if donations from individuals and churches dropped by 10 -15% from current levels and income from legacies and ICA partners, which are more unpredictable, dropped one third.

The Trustees agreed at the June 2020 Board meeting to designate £200k as a Grant Response Fund to allow Release International to be more agile and give grants to overseas partners, usually funded by restricted gifts in anticipation of funds being received later in the year.

The total General reserves at 31st December 2020 amounted to £726,383 of which £30,582 represented fixed assets, leaving £695,801 of free reserves, which is 55% above target. The Trustees have agreed a deficit budget for 2021 of £160k to continue restructuring the Ministry to meet our revised strategic purposes and a further £150k is planned to be spent from reserves on future property costs. This expenditure will reduce free reserves to £386k which is within target. Trustees deemed this to be a good position and a welcome provision.

Investment Policy

Income is largely received through voluntary donations and cannot be guaranteed; the Ministry has no permanent endowment. The only funds that are not expendable within 12 months of receipt are those held for reserves or money associated with international projects that remain active beyond the year end. The Board has considered this position and seeks to place funds in savings accounts to achieve a balance between accessibility and higher returns. Funds may be invested in accounts with up to 12 months' notice, but it is not considered prudent at this time to invest income for the longer term. The funds are now spread across five institutions, Barclays, CAF Bank, Charity Bank, Nationwide Building Society and Epworth Investment.

Risk Management

The Board recognises that avoiding and mitigating risk is better than simply being covered by insurance. Release International operates a risk management strategy which identifies generic risks which are reviewed annually each September and from these, dynamic or current risks are assessed and reported each quarter together with strategies to mitigate those risks. This approach has proved helpful in focusing attention on areas which require additional monitoring or action.

A major risk to the Ministry is a significant drop off in income. The fact that our income sources are spread over many individuals and churches mitigates the likelihood of a sudden dramatic change, but we monitor this risk closely. Accordingly, our financial and data systems assess income each month to identify any significant variation and to determine if specific action is required.

The COVID-19 pandemic has not been as significant a risk as was anticipated last year. The leadership/management team have worked hard throughout the year to maintain staff morale and relationships through the prolonged period of working from home.

As for all organisations there is significant risk of a malicious attack on our IT systems. This is mitigated by security measures including proactive testing. Staff are regularly trained and reminded about IT security, particularly phishing attacks.

Staff have not been travelling internationally for most of 2020, but due to the nature of the Ministry there is a risk when travelling to visit Partners in contexts where they are being persecuted. This is mitigated by good communication with Partners to assess the current situation, extensive pre-trip briefing and security training.

Structure, Governance and Management

Release International is a Christian Ministry which is a registered Charity, regulated by the Charity Commission for England and Wales and also registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. It is constituted as a Company limited by guarantee. The Company operates under its Articles of Association which were updated in June 2017. Release International was founded in 1968 as the Christian Mission to the Communist World, legally changing its name to Release International in June 2017.

The Board of Trustees normally meets four times each year and administers the Charity through its four committees: International Development, UK Engagement, Finance & Governance and Resources. The Leadership Team holds executive responsibility for implementing the policies and strategies approved by the Board and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), appointed by the Board, manages the day to day operations of the Company.

The Board has an established process for identifying and interviewing potential new Trustees. Vacancies are identified where there are gaps in experience and skills. All prospective Trustees will be practising Christians who uphold Release International's Statement of Faith, Ethos Statement, and Trustee Code of Conduct. Nominations arising from this process are considered by the Board as a whole and they may subsequently be invited to join the Board. Trustees serve no minimum or maximum terms of service but retire by rotation with the opportunity to stand for re-election.

New Trustees go through an induction and training process to familiarise them with Release International, the persecution sector and their responsibilities as Trustees and Directors under Charity and Company law. New Trustees are referred to the Charity Commission's guide *The Essential Trustee (CC3)* and they also meet with the Leadership Team and other Trustees. Each year the Chair and the CEO plan areas for trustee training which, with the Board's agreement, are covered in conjunction with other meetings.

Pay for key management personnel

The key management personnel in charge of directing and running the operations of the Charity comprise the Trustees and Leadership Team as set out on page 16. All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration from the charitable Company as Trustees (Rev Dr B. Asmelash is paid a retainer as a consultant on Eritrea see note 22, page 39). Expenses reimbursed to Trustees are disclosed in note 8, page 32.

Salaries for all staff, including key management staff, are determined on appointment to post in line with Release International's agreed 5-level salary banding, and in line with the requirements and responsibilities of the role. All roles are reviewed annually through the appraisal system to ensure that any significant changes which may affect remuneration are addressed. The Trustees will periodically carry out a review of all salaries across the Ministry through a benchmarking exercise to ensure that they remain reasonable and competitive.

International Associations

Release International is a member of the International Christian Association (ICA). The purpose of the ICA is to provide a relational link between Christian Ministries throughout the world whose foundations were inspired by Pastor Richard Wurmbrand. In doing so member Ministries seek to maintain a focus upon the Biblical mandate of Hebrews 13:3, *'Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow-prisoners, and those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering'* (NIV).

As a member of the ICA, Release International co-operates in a range of international projects and shares information and resources with other members. An Annual General Meeting is the decision-making forum for ICA business. Release International is a voting delegate.

Through ICA membership, Release International is directly able to support many more persecuted Christians throughout the world than it could in isolation. Currently Release International's CEO, Paul Robinson, is an elected member of the Executive Committee of the ICA, which helps co-ordinate the activity of the ICA Ministries.

Release International is also a member of The Religious Liberty Commission, The Evangelical Alliance, Middle East Concern, The Religious Liberties Partnership, and Global Connections.

Company Information

The Directors set out below are also the Trustees of the Charity and members of the Company.

Board of Trustees

David Armond CBE QPM	Chair of Trustees
Rev Dr Berhane Asmelash	
David Bentley	(appointed 26 June 2020)
Susan Harrison	(appointed 27 September 2020)
Dr Dave Landrum	(resigned 19 November 2020)
Mary Print	
Sarah Shearer FCA	
Andy Wayland	

Company Secretary

Imogen Cole

Leadership Team

Chief Executive Officer	Paul Robinson
Director of International Ministries	Chris Badley
Director of Engagement UK & Ireland	Laura Hayes
Director of Finance	Imogen (Jenny) Cole
Director of Personnel	Lynnette Feist

Council of Reference

Dr Sara Afshari	Rev Prof Philip McCormack MBE
Lindsay Benn	Rt Rev Michael Nazir-Ali
Rt Rev Wallace Benn	Rev Dr Francis (Frog) Orr-Ewing
Anna Bishop	Dr Amy Orr-Ewing
Martin Goldsmith	Dr Ben Pugh

Registered Office

Betchworth House, 57-65 Station Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 1DL
For security reasons, as we work with many people under threat of intimidation, violence or detention, our registered address is our auditor's Surrey office.

Auditors	Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Devonshire House, 60 Goswell Road, London, EC1M 7AD
Bankers	CAF Bank Limited, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4JQ
Solicitors	Wellers, Tenison House, 45 Tweedy Road, Bromley, BR1 3NF
	Edward Connor, 10 The Point, Market Harborough, LE16 7QU

Plans for the Future

2021 is likely to continue to be a challenging year for the ministry of Release International but we trust in God who is always faithful, and we look forward to delivering the outcomes of our completed strategic review, part of which will be to continue investing in being a Christian Ministry that is digital and cloud-first in a way that engages supporters and volunteers and enhances the help we can offer to overseas Partners.

Throughout the whole of the COVID-19 pandemic we have worked dynamically and efficiently to go on loving and serving our persecuted brothers and sisters around the world while, at the same time, raising their VOICE here in the UK and Ireland.

We are cautiously optimistic that there is now a Lockdown Roadmap in place, issued by HM Government in March 2021, which indicates that it believes that lockdown may finally be fully and irreversibly lifted on 21st June 2021. There will be staged returns to social contact over a period of around four months. Nonetheless we will continue with regular COVID-19 management meetings to make sure we are responsive to any change to COVID-19 restrictions, dynamically bringing change to our operations to continue fulfilling our Calling and Mission.

Internationally, the Ministry proved to be well prepared for the changing circumstances brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. We stated this time last year that for the overwhelming majority of our Partners and their projects, it would be a matter of 'business as usual'; this proved to be the case in 2020 and will continue as such in 2021. The primary role of our Partners is to extend the kingdom of God and His loving care in their communities, whatever the situation they may face. We will continue to support them by listening to their VOICE and providing the ministry 'TOOLS' that they ask for.

The increased use of video technology to communicate globally provides us with an excellent facility that will be built upon in the post-lockdown world. Our ability to be able to 'visit' our Partners across the internet is valuable, and we will continue to make good use of that. However, international travel will resume at the earliest opportunity. Release International is a relationship-based Ministry and it will be vital that there are opportunities to develop and maintain relationships in person with our Partners around the world. This is the core and underpinning reason for our travel and why much of our work is conducted in person.

There are other reasons why travel is an important aspect of this Ministry and a return to it will begin as soon as possible, for example: it enables us to be an authoritative source for what is happening around the world, speaking out in a timely manner and to produce media which helps to inform and educate people in the UK about matters relating to the persecution of Christians; it is a crucial part of exercising the due diligence and good governance we need to monitor the projects we support. We also want to create opportunities to enhance the Ministries of our Partners through visits, which they testify are beneficial to them and which encourage them in their work.

Many Christians in today's world are still being forced to flee from their homes, especially in Africa and the Middle East. There are many Christians who have been forced into hiding because of their faith and unable to move because of the pandemic; we pray that in 2021 they will be able to find new places to live out their lives for Christ and we will continue to work to that end as well.

The situation is further complicated for Eritrean Christians by the war raging in Tigray, the border region between their country and Ethiopia. Sadly, large numbers of Christians who had fled to Ethiopia to become refugees have had to flee further into Ethiopia in the first months of 2021. Release International is supporting these believers by sending funds to provide emergency aid, which has proved to be timely and is being well received. Our Partners in Ethiopia write, '*May the grace of the Lord multiply in you. We want to thank you for all your support for our people…*'.

Other Christians face imprisonment which remains an ongoing trend in Eritrea and other places such as Iran and North Korea. We pray on for imprisoned believers and their families, many who remain in need of our practical support.

Nigerian Christians are facing more violence and martyrdom at the hands of Boko Haram and Fulani militants. Sadly this pattern is being replicated in other parts of Africa too. Release International will be expanding its work in this area to help survivors of this deeply concerning situation.

Release International remains committed to developing the bonds of fellowship we have enjoyed with our persecuted brothers and sisters for so long, delivering over 50 projects in more than 30 countries. As persecution in these countries continues, we will go on being creative and flexible to ensure we provide the fellowship and 'TOOLS' persecuted believers ask for and need, with or without the outbreaks of pandemics!

The lockdown has seen the UK Engagement team reworking all their annual plans by developing creative online and digital versions of key events and communications campaigns. We have introduced a new and updated campaign *Lockdown Church 2021*, which picks up on the success of our first Lockdown Church campaign which ran in 2020. For 2021 we are focusing on the oppression of Christians around the world in Lockdown. Release International's original Lockdown Church resources were developed to pick up on the connection between our new experience of facing restrictions and the common everyday experience of persecuted Christians. It was an opportunity for us to both identify and learn from them. In that regard nothing has changed. In fact, in our prolonged experience of lockdown we have an even greater opportunity to identify especially with those of our brothers and sisters who bear the weight of sustained, systemic restrictions because of their faith. Together with them we are learning more about endurance, steadfastness, and hope.

We will also prioritise our prayer resources for 2021 and are embedding prayer into all our campaigns more intentionally. This is because of the importance of prayer to life lived out as a Christian calling. We have always developed prayer resources, but in 2021 we have identified prayer ministry as the top priority. We are looking forward to our *'Behold the Lamb of God'* worship and communion event on Maundy Thursday, 1st April, as we prepare to celebrate Easter. We will be inviting our supporters to join us as well as volunteers and international project Partners. We will continue to ensure that our engagement plans include calls to prayer for our persecuted brothers and sisters worldwide. In May, we will be holding our second annual online event *All Out for God* which we successfully launched in 2021.

In June we are planning another worship event which is now into its third year, The Day of the Christian Martyr 2021 on 29th June. This day of worship and thanksgiving ensures that those of our brothers and sisters in Christ who have laid down their lives for our faith are not forgotten. We are considering at this time, whether we might be able to create a hybrid event, with both live in-church tickets and streaming the event online at the same time, in the hope that churches may once more

be open in June. We will also continue to support and develop the International Day of Prayer for Persecuted Christians in November with our sister organisations CSW and Open Doors. Again, we may be able to hold both an online event and live events in churches around the UK.

In September 2021 we plan to launch our new drama production, *If Prison Walls Could Speak*, which is based on Petr Jasek's testimony of his time in prison in Sudan. His book 'In Prison with ISIS – Faith in the Face of Evil' tells the story of his arrest and ministry. The play is being written and produced by our Partners' Christian Ministry – Artless Theatre Company based in East London. We are delighted that Petr is working with them to develop a script and we have a provisional schedule of 30 dates across the UK for 2021. Again, due to the uncertainty around Lockdown this year, we are planning live church events and online events. There may be hybrid events too, where we stream online and hold live performances.

Finally at the end of November 2021 we will be holding our annual volunteers conference. In 2020 we launched a very successful online event attracting over 100 delegates. We also invited supporters interested in volunteering to that event. Once again, we do pray that we will be able to hold this event live in-church as we would always want to do, in London. But we will also make sure we have an online option for those who wish to join from home.

God has proved his faithfulness yet again during 2020, and we continue to pray that we will go on being obedient to 'doing what we see our Father doing' (see. John 5:19) through our Ministry into 2022.

Trustees' Responsibilities in Relation to the Financial Statements

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. The accounts in this report have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Company law requires the Trustees to ensure financial statements are prepared for each financial year. Under that law, the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the income and expenditure of the Company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which are sufficient to show and explain the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities. The Trustees are committed to compliance with the *Charity Governance Code.* In March 2021 the Trustees attended a seminar which particularly focused on the updates to the *Governance Code* published in December 2020.

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant information that the Company's auditors are not aware of, and each Trustee has taken all the steps necessary to ensure they are aware of any relevant information, and to establish that the Company's auditors are aware of the information.

Auditors

A resolution to re-appoint Moore Kingston Smith LLP as the independent auditors to the charitable Company was passed at the AGM in June 2020.

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

This report was approved by the Board on 24 June 2021 and signed on its behalf by,



David Armond CBE QPM
Chair of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Release International ('the company') for the year ended 31 December 2020 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2020 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs(UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the audit of financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are

required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' annual report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Charities Act 2011 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 20, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under Section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Companies Act 2006 and Section 151 of the Charities Act 2011 and report to you in accordance with regulations made under those Acts.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in

aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are; to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, and UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council and UK taxation legislation.
- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006; and to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, and in respect of the consolidated financial statements, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 8 of the Charities Act 2011. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters which we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members, as a body, and the charity's trustees, as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinion we have formed.

Moore Kingston Smith LLP

Andrew Stickland (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor

Devonshire House
60 Goswell Road
London
EC1M 7AD

Date: 1st July 2021

Moore Kingston Smith LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Statement of Financial Activities

Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 31st December 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total Funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2019 Total Funds £
Income from							
Donations and legacies	3	1,579,778	1,340,582	2,920,360	1,681,486	1,009,180	2,690,666
Charitable activities							
Literature and Events		23,737	611	24,347	17,259	-	17,259
Interest receivable		3,199	-	3,199	4,495	-	4,495
Other		30,279	-	30,279	13,400	-	13,400
Total income		**1,636,993**	**1,341,193**	**2,978,186**	**1,716,640**	**1,009,180**	**2,725,820**
Expenditure on							
Costs of raising funds	4						
Fundraising		222,658	35,297	257,955	216,051	42,090	258,141
Charitable activities	4						
Providing them the TOOLS		370,154	1,090,476	1,460,630	361,245	944,889	1,306,134
Raising their VOICE		919,395	32,452	951,847	949,228	39,423	988,651
Total expenditure		**1,512,206**	**1,158,226**	**2,670,432**	**1,526,524**	**1,026,402**	**2,552,926**
Net income/ (expenditure)		124,787	182,967	307,754	190,116	(17,222)	172,894
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2020	16&17	801,597	541,869	1,343,466	611,481	559,091	1,170,572
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2020	16&17	**926,383**	**724,836**	**1,651,219**	**801,597**	**541,869**	**1,343,466**

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Balance Sheet at 31st December 2020

For Release International - Company Number 01506576

	Notes	2020 £	2020 £	2019 £	2019 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		28,045		44,291
Intangible Assets	11		2,537		5,823
Current assets					
Debtors	12	91,690		459,502	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,613,543		922,031	
		1,705,233		1,381,533	
Creditors – Amounts falling due within one year	13	(84,596)		(88,181)	
Net current assets			1,620,637		1,293,352
Total assets less current liabilities			1,651,219		1,343,466
Reserves					
Unrestricted funds					
General Fund	16		726,383		801,597
Designated Fund	16		200,000		-
Restricted funds	17		724,836		541,869
Total funds			1,651,219		1,343,466

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and with FRS102.

The notes on pages 28 to 39 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board on 24 June 2021 and signed on its behalf by:



David Armond CBE QPM

Chair of Trustees

Statement of Cashflow

	Notes	2020 £	2019 £
Net cash used in operating activities	20	683,512	(53,600)
Cashflows from Investing Activities			
Purchase of property plant and equipment		-	(25,219)
Purchase of intangible fixed assets		-	(4,000)
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets		4,801	-
Interest received		3,199	4,495
Net cash used by investing activites		8,000	(24,724)
Net increase/ (decrease) in cash	10	691,512	(78,324)
Cash at the beginning of the year		922,031	1,000,355
Cash at the end of the year		1,613,543	922,031

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting Policies

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) - Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

1.1 Going Concern

The Trustees have assessed whether the use of going concern is appropriate and made this assessment for a period of at least one year from the date of the approval of these financial statements. The Trustees have given due consideration to the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak and Brexit. Income increased in 2020 due to the loyal donor base and together with a significant legacy received in 2019 the Ministry has been largely sheltered from adverse financial effects of the pandemic. The Ministry's reserves were above the planned level (page 13). Income estimates for 2021 and 2022 are cautious as with the cancellation of many events in 2020 and 2021 there has been a reduction in the number of new donors, which is being actively addressed. Having reviewed forecasts prepared by management the Trustees are confident that the Ministry will continue to meet its obligations as they fall due and that therefore the going concern basis continues to be appropriate.

1.2 Basis of Accounting

Release International Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

1.3 Fund Accounting

Funds held are either

- Unrestricted general funds which are funds that can be used within the charitable objectives at the Trustees' discretion.
- Restricted funds which are funds that can only be used for specified purposes. The restriction may be imposed by the donor or the terms under which the funds were raised.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations and interest are recognised in the accounts on a received basis. For donations made under the gift aid scheme, the gift aid is recognised in the year in which the gift is received. Gifts in kind are valued at their value to the Charitable Company.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the Charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably, and the Charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds are costs incurred in encouraging voluntary contributions to the Charitable Company and their associated support costs.
- Expenditure on charitable activities are costs directly relating to the objects of the Charitable Company and include grants made, direct costs incurred, and an apportionment of support costs as shown in note 6.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the Charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the Charity's activities. The Charity initially identifies the costs of its support functions. It then identifies those costs which relate to the governance function. Having identified its governance costs, the remaining support costs together with the governance costs are apportioned between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities pro rata to staff full time equivalents.

Grants payable are payments made to third parties in the furtherance of the charitable objectives of the Charitable Company. The grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which the awards are made. Grants where the beneficiary has not been informed or has to meet certain conditions before the grant is released are not accrued but are noted as financial commitments.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

1.6 Tangible Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are all used for charitable purposes and are shown at cost less depreciation. In 2020 the threshold at which purchases are not normally capitalised was increased from £300 to £1,000. Depreciation on assets is calculated to write off the cost over their estimated economic useful lives. Assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over 4 years for computer equipment and motor vehicles, 5 years for office equipment and the remainder of the lease for leasehold improvements.

1.7 Intangible Fixed Assets

Intangible assets are the development costs for specific IT projects which are capitalised at cost, provided it is likely to bring future economic benefit to the Charity. If the criteria for recognition as assets are not met, the expense is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which it is incurred. Capitalised IT costs include all direct and indirect costs that are directly attributable to the development process. The costs are amortised using the straight-line method over 4 years being their estimated useful lives.

1.8 Foreign Currencies

Income and expenditure in foreign currencies are converted into sterling at the rates of exchange ruling on the date of transaction. Amounts held at the balance sheet date are converted at the rates prevailing at the balance sheet date.

1.9 Pension Costs

The Charity operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees which is funded by contributions from the employee and employer contributions payable to scheme and employees' personal pension plans are charged in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate. Further details of the scheme are given in note 15.

1.10 Operating Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

1.11 Financial Instruments

The Charitable Company only has basic financial instruments measured at amortised cost, with no financial instruments classified as 'other' or basic instruments measured at fair value.

2. Critical Estimates

In the view of the Trustees applying the accounting policies adopted, no judgements were required apart from those listed below.

- the allocation of support costs
- useful economic lives of intangible fixed assets
- depreciation rates of fixed assets
- estimation of legacy accrual

3. Donations and Gifts

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2019 Total funds £
Individuals	1,318,938	688,616	2,007,554	1,107,209	559,513	1,666,722
Churches & other groups	153,991	141,897	295,888	160,911	104,725	265,636
Trusts	62,690	14,160	76,850	20,992	3,468	24,460
ICA partner ministries	5,300	495,909	501,209	-	341,474	341,474
Legacies	38,859	-	38,859	392,374	-	392,374
	1,579,778	1,340,582	2,920,360	1,681,486	1,009,180	2,690,666

There were gifts in kind of £5,300 (2019: £0) which were books donated by an ICA Partner Ministry

4. Expenditure

	Grants £ (see note 5)	Direct costs £ (see note 6)	Support costs £ (see note 7)	2020 Total £
Costs of raising funds				
Fundraising	-	220,213	37,742	257,955
Charitable activities				
Providing them the TOOLS	1,036,165	346,746	77,719	1,460,630
Raising their VOICE	-	796,004	155,843	951,847
	1,036,165	1,362,963	271,304	2,670,432

	Grants £ (see note 5)	Direct costs £ (see note 6)	Support costs £ (see note 7)	2019 Total £
Costs of raising funds				
Fundraising	-	214,097	44,044	258,141
Charitable activities				
Providing them the TOOLS	853,352	360,627	92,155	1,306,134
Raising their VOICE	-	795,144	193,507	988,651
	853,352	1,369,868	329,706	2,552,926

5. Grants made

Grant payments made were for the charitable purposes of Release International. They provided support for:

- Families of Christian martyrs
- Prisoners of faith and their families
- Christians suffering oppression and violence
- Christians forced to flee

The Ministry has taken advantage of the exemption available in the Charity SORP not to disclose specific information in relation to grant making, on the grounds that the disclosure could result in serious prejudice to the grant maker and/or the recipient institution, individuals working for the recipient institution or individuals.

Included in the table below were 5 grants to individuals in South, South East Asia and Other totalling £14,986 (2019: 9 grants South and South East Asia totalling £9,519).

No support costs have been allocated to the total amount of the grants.

	Total 2020		Total 2019	
	No.	£	No.	£
Central Asia	5	38,558	7	34,825
Middle East/Gulf	33	316,863	26	200,962
North East Africa	24	357,357	30	305,601
West Africa	16	113,434	17	75,641
South Asia	39	120,222	83	170,670
South East Asia	22	88,973	20	65,328
Other	1	758	1	325
	140	1,036,165	184	853,352

6. Direct costs

*See note 8	2020			2019		
	Staff costs* £	Other costs £	Total costs £	Staff costs* £	Other costs £	Total costs £
Costs of raising funds						
Fundraising	100,658	119,555	220,213	96,585	117,512	214,097
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	211,018	135,728	346,746	199,733	160,894	360,627
Raising their VOICE	486,875	309,129	796,004	459,480	335,664	795,144
	798,550	564,413	1,362,963	755,798	614,070	1,369,868

7. Support costs

*See note 8	Staff costs* £	Other costs £	2020 Total costs £	Staff costs* £	Other costs £	2019 Total costs £
Costs of raising funds						
Fundraising	25,063	12,678	37,742	24,301	19,743	44,044
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	51,611	26,108	77,719	50,847	41,308	92,155
Raising their VOICE	103,492	52,352	155,843	106,769	86,738	193,507
	180,166	91,138	271,304	181,917	147,789	329,706

8. Staff costs

	Notes	2020 £	2019 £
Wages and salaries		808,386	782,782
Social security costs		76,176	75,076
Pension costs		85,025	73,654
Group Life policy		9,130	6,203
		978,716	937,715

Total split as follows:	Direct (note 6)	Support (note 7)	2020 Total staff costs	Direct (note 6)	Support (note 7)	2019 Total staff costs
Costs of raising funds	100,658	25,063	125,721	96,585	24,301	120,886
Charitable activities						
Providing them the TOOLS	211,018	51,611	262,629	199,733	50,847	250,580
Raising their VOICE	486,875	103,492	590,366	459,480	106,769	566,249
	798,550	180,166	978,716	755,798	181,917	937,715

The Trustees receive no remuneration. During the year no Trustee received out of pocket expenses (2019: 1 Trustee £230). During the year donations from 5 Trustees (2019: 5) were received totalling £5,656 (2019: £3,115)

The remuneration and benefits received by key management personnel in the year were £310k (2019: £289k). During the year there was 1 employee whose remuneration exceeded £60k. (2019: 1)

At 31st December 2020, the Charitable Company included in creditors accrued holiday pay not taken of £21k (2019: £12k).

The average number of employees was:	2020	2019
Management	5	5
Administration and support	4	4
Overseas project management and UK information and education	17	17
	26	26

9. Net Income/Expenditure for the Year

The net income/ expenditure for the year is stated after charging:

		2020 £	2019 £
Depreciation of assets	(see note 11)	19,532	26,200
Auditors' remuneration		14,587	11,968
Hire of equipment		3,584	9,138

10. Note to Cashflow

2020	As at 1 Jan 2020	Cash flows	Non cash movements	As at 31 Dec 2020
Cash at bank	298,970	223,713	-	522,683
Cash on deposit	623,061	467,799	-	1,090,860
Net Cash	922,031	691,512	-	1,613,543

2019	As at 1 Jan 2019	Cash flows	Non cash movements	As at 31 Dec 2019
Cash at bank	399,670	(100,700)	-	298,970
Cash on deposit	600,685	22,376	-	623,061
Net cash	1,000,355	(78,324)	-	922,031

11. Fixed Assets

	Computer Equipment	Office Equipment	Leasehold Improvements	Motor Vehicles	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost					
At 1st January 2020	97,026	46,203	30,476	12,484	186,189
Additions	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	(19,184)	(12,127)	-	(12,484)	(43,795)
At 31st December 2020	77,842	34,076	30,476	-	142,394
Depreciation					
At 1st January 2020	69,714	41,629	18,071	12,484	141,898
Charge for year	11,349	1,796	3,101		16,246
Disposals	(19,184)	(12,127)	-	(12,484)	(43,795)
At 31st December 2020	61,879	31,298	21,172	-	114,349
Net book values					
At 31st December 2020	15,963	2,778	9,304	-	28,045
At 31st December 2019	27,312	4,574	12,405	-	44,291
Depreciation rates: Straight-line	25% p.a.	20% p.a.	Remainder of lease	25% p.a.	

Intangible Assets

	Software Development	Total
	£	£
Cost		
At 1st January 2020	21,145	21,145
Additions	-	-
Disposals	-	-
At 31st December 2020	21,145	21,145
Depreciation		
At 1st January 2020	15,322	15,322
Charge for year	3,286	3,286
Disposals	-	-
At 31st December 2020	18,608	18,608
Net book values		
At 31st December 2020	2,537	2,537
At 31st December 2019	5,823	5,823
Depreciation rates: Straight-line	25% p.a.	

12. Debtors

	2020	2019
	£	£
Due within one year		
Other debtors	60,829	67,573
Prepayments	30,361	30,929
Accrued legacies	500	361,000
	91,690	459,502

13. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within One Year

	2020	2019
	£	£
Trade creditors	37,406	27,932
Other creditors	13,662	36,858
Accruals	33,527	23,391
	84,596	88,181

14. Members' Liability

The Charitable Company is limited by guarantee and each of the members is bound to contribute a sum not exceeding £10 in certain circumstances as set out in clause 7 of the Articles of Association.

15. Pension Commitments

The Charitable Company participates in the Global Connections pension scheme which is a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets are held separately from those of the Charitable Company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge representing contributions payable by the Charitable Company to the scheme and to other personal pension schemes amounted to 7% or 9% of gross salaries depending on whether the staff member also contributes (2019: 7% or 8%). At 31st December 2020 there were no significant contributions outstanding payable to the scheme. The Charitable Company's pension arrangements comply with its statutory obligations in respect of auto-enrolment.

16. Unrestricted Funds

	Balance 01-Jan-20	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31-Dec-20
	£	£	£	£	£
General Reserve Fund	801,597	1,636,993	(1,512,206)	(200,000)	726,383
Designated Fund - Grant Reponse Fund	-	-	-	200,000	200,000
	801,597	1,636,993	(1,512,206)	-	926,383

	Balance 01-Jan-19	Income	Expenditure		Balance 31-Dec-19
	£	£	£		£
General Reserve Fund	611,481	1,716,640	(1,526,524)	-	801,597
	611,481	1,716,640	(1,526,524)	-	801,597

The reserve policy is explained on page 13. The Grant Response Fund allows Release International to be more agile and give grants to overseas partners, usually funded by restricted gifts in anticipation of funds being received later in the year.

17. Restricted Funds

These are donations received for specific purposes as requested by the donors. The first four funds are for the taxonomy of persecution (page 5) The other funds are many and varied and have been grouped into geographical areas. They are all within our objectives as described on pages 5.

	Balance 01-Jan-20	Income	Expenditure	Balance 31-Dec-20
	£	£	£	£
Families of Christian martyrs	29,316	104,005	(82,112)	51,208
Prisoners of faith and their families	42,079	169,843	(133,553)	78,369
Christians forced to flee	7,020	77,568	(57,607)	26,981
Christians suffering oppression and violence	-	159,942	(121,312)	38,629
Central Asia	1,935	12,526	(7,268)	7,193
Middle East/Gulf	35,171	158,899	(168,468)	25,602
North East Africa	283,355	365,034	(318,616)	329,774
West Africa	44,081	42,842	(58,603)	28,321
South Asia	44,484	92,542	(71,228)	65,798
South East Asia	19,540	20,694	(6,069)	34,166
Personal Support	-	50,221	(50,025)	196
Generic funds and other	34,888	87,074	(83,364)	38,599
	541,869	1,341,193	(1,158,226)	724,836

	Balance 01-Jan-19	Income	Expenditure	Balance 31-Dec-19
	£	£	£	£
Families of Christian martyrs	38,209	97,411	(106,304)	29,316
Prisoners of faith and their families	8,542	97,050	(63,513)	42,079
Christians suffering oppression and violence	-	73,463	(73,463)	-
Christians forced to flee	-	22,977	(15,957)	7,020
Central Asia	9,761	27,730	(35,556)	1,935
Middle East/Gulf	22,759	148,195	(135,783)	35,171
North and East Africa	355,626	204,862	(277,133)	283,355
West Africa	7,532	48,605	(12,056)	44,081
South Asia	65,374	83,910	(104,800)	44,484
South East Asia	14,746	39,372	(34,578)	19,540
Personal Support	-	59,901	(59,901)	-
Generic funds and other	36,542	105,704	(107,358)	34,888
	559,091	1,009,180	(1,026,402)	541,869

18. Analysis of Net Assets Between Funds

2020	Fixed assets	Cash	Net Current assets	Totals
	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	-	708,173	16,663	724,836
Unrestricted funds	30,582	905,369	(9,568)	926,383
	30,582	1,613,543	7,094	1,651,219

2019	Fixed assets	Cash	Net Current assets	Totals
	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	-	528,828	13,041	541,869
Unrestricted funds	50,114	393,203	358,280	801,597
	50,114	922,031	371,321	1,343,466

19. Other Financial Commitments

	2020		2019	
	Office Equipment	Premises Rental	Office Equipment	Premises Rental
Operating Leases	£	£	£	£
Due under 1 year	7,060	28,000	6,674	28,000
Due between 2 to 5 years	26,475	61,833	26,696	89,833
Due after more than 5 years	-	-	5,005	-
	33,535	89,833	38,375	117,833

20. Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2020	2019
	£	£
Net Income / (Expenditure)	307,754	172,894
Adjusted for		
Depreciation charge	16,246	22,914
Amortisation charge	3,286	3,287
Profit on sale of assets	(4,801)	-
Interest from deposits	(3,199)	(4,495)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	367,812	(236,917)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(3,585)	(11,283)
Net cash used in operating activities	683,512	(53,600)

21. Taxation

As a Charity Release International benefits from exemptions on income and gains falling within Sections 466-493 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 to the extent they are derived from charitable activities.

22. Related party transactions

Revd Dr Berhane Asmelash who is a Trustee receives no remuneration for his role as Trustee. He was paid as a consultant on Eritrea £7,050 (2019: £7,000)

23. Post Balance Sheet Events

There are no post balance sheet events.