



**suas**

Annual Report  
2019



**suas**

Suas | literacy changes everything

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# Our Mission, Vision & Activities



## Mission:

To transform the lives of children and young people through education.

## Vision:

A world in which all children and young people have the opportunity to realise their rights and achieve their full potential.

## Activities:

**1. Children in disadvantaged settings, in Ireland and internationally, have a quality education, including 21st century skills, and greater life opportunities:**

- Children have improved educational achievements and 21st century skills through quality education inputs.
- Children empowered to know their rights and believe in their own agency.
- Children become empowered through interaction with positive youth role models.

**2. Young people and other concerned citizens, in Ireland and internationally, are educated as global citizens and take action to promote educational and other opportunities for children and young people in disadvantaged settings:**

- Young people are empowered to know their rights and to believe in and use their own agency to bring about change.
- Students and other young people take positive action on global issues in Ireland and internationally.
- Quality non-formal Education for Global Citizenship interventions are implemented in collaboration with third level institutions.



# The Year at a Glance

**200%**

Average rate of improvement in children's literacy relative to the national average

**1,273**

Number of children in Irish disadvantaged schools who received support with their reading and/or maths in the 2018/19 school year – up 26% on the previous year.

**16,939**

Number of young people across Ireland engaged with our global citizenship activities in 2019 – the highest to date.

**56**

Number of volunteers who worked as teaching assistants with Suas' partner organisations in India and Zambia in 2019.

**6,648**

Number of children in disadvantaged community schools in Zambia supported through the capacity building of teachers and technology.



# CEO Review: Kevina Maddick

In Ireland, we continued to provide one-to-one literacy and numeracy mentoring to children in disadvantaged schools, supporting 1,273 children by the end of the 2018/19 school year – the highest number of children supported to date.

Our Irish Aid-funded global citizenship programme ('STAND') recorded the highest levels of participation in the organisation's history. Over 16,900 young people across Ireland engaged with our activities in 2019.

Internationally, we continued the delivery of our pilot Fast Forward programme in Zambia. This programme, which began in 2018 and is due to end its current phase in 2020, provides technology-mediated training and support to teachers and children in under-resourced community schools. 75 teachers received intensive teacher training to improve learning outcomes for their students.

We have strengthened our funding relationships with existing corporate partners and philanthropic donors, and established several new relationships, which include a new three-year partnership with retail company Eason, and two-year programmes with both Rethink Ireland, and The Ireland Funds, to enable literacy supports for children in disadvantaged communities in Ireland.

2019 was also a year for Suas to step back, review progress and look to the future in the final year of Suas' 2016-2019 Strategic Plan, and we began the process of developing Suas' 2020-2022 Strategic Plan (to be concluded in 2020). Our new strategy needs to reflect the real and potential impacts of COVID-19, and ensure that we are focusing on the needs and long-time interests of disadvantaged children at this incredibly challenging time.

I would like to take this opportunity to say that the work and successes of Suas are only possible because of the commitment of our staff, Board members, partner organisations, volunteers and donors. Thank you to all involved for your continued support in helping us bring about change in the lives of children and young people in disadvantaged settings.

Best wishes,

*Kevina*



# Chairperson Review: David Moffitt

2019 saw Suas achieve against our strategic and operational objectives, continue to build upon strong financial performance in recent years and progress upon a transformation plan for the organisation.



At the end of 2019 John Logue vacated the Suas CEO role after 2.5 years, leaving the organisation with a strong platform on which to build. The Suas Board concluded its Interim CEO selection process and appointed Kevina Maddick who joined the Suas team at the beginning of March 2020. Kevina returned recently from Thailand where she was Interim Country Director for "Right to Play." She has a proven track record in team management and capacity building, programme development and delivery, and proposal writing and grants management. She also has extensive experience of working with vulnerable children in education, child protection, and life-skills development using participatory and play-based learning approaches.

The Board and staff are currently working to finalise our new organisational strategic plan in the light of COVID-19, which has significantly changed the external environment. While we need to adapt to COVID-19, our aim is to continue to expand our work in disadvantaged schools in Ireland through effective collaborations and online supports as well as volunteer inputs. We also want to improve the quality and reach of our Global Citizenship Programme through a strong team of staff and volunteers and a partnership with the Union of Students in Ireland. We are reviewing our international volunteer programme and how this can be developed / adapted going forward. We hope to continue the rollout of the Fast Forward Zambia programme and we are exploring funding opportunities to do so.

While the pandemic is incredibly challenging, it compels us to be creative. We are using it as an opportunity to review and rethink our programmes for maximum impact. For instance, we are now exploring how we can creatively use technology to expand our literacy supports for Irish children to an even larger audience, that we would have been unable to reach with our existing model. What is clear is that disadvantaged children and communities are most vulnerable to the effects of this pandemic and we must all work together to protect both their short-term and long-term interests. I am very grateful for the continued support of our donors, Board, staff, volunteers and partner organisations, and keen for us all to rise to the challenge at hand.

Best wishes, *David*







## **Directors' Report:** Structure, Governance & Risk Management

The members of the Board hereby present their annual report for the year 2019.

### **Status**

Suas Educational Development is an Irish company incorporated under the Companies Act 2014. It is a company limited by guarantee registered under part 18 of the Companies Act, 2014 and does not have a share capital. The company has been granted charitable status by the Revenue Commissioners. All income received is applied solely towards the promotion of the charitable objectives of the company.

**Registered Company Number:** 36231

**Registered Charity Number:** 14931

### **Principal Activities**

Suas's principal activity is to support quality education in disadvantaged communities in Ireland and in developing countries. The company works with and supports partner organisations to deliver, monitor and evaluate quality educational programmes. The company engages and prepares volunteers to support the delivery of the educational programmes.

### **Suas' Board and Management**

Suas is governed by members of the Board who are elected for three-year terms, which are renewable once (a total of six years). The Directors, who are non-executive, represent a diverse range of relevant expertise.

#### *Suas Board Members*

Bob Semple (retired 10.06.19)	David Moffit
Michael King (retired 10.06.19)	Ronan O' Loughlin
Mary Rose Greville (retired 10.06.19)	Sarah Gibney
Shane Twomey (appointed 01.04.20)	
Ciara O' Callaghan (appointed 30.04.20)	
Niamh deLoughry (appointed 27.05.20)	

#### *Executive Management Team*

Kevina Maddick: CEO
Joanne Malone: Head of Programmes
Alex Brock: Volunteer Programme Manager

## **Directors' Report:** Structure, Governance & Risk Management

The Board meets an average of six times each year and has responsibility for all the business of the organisation. The Board is supported by a Board committee structure which deals effectively with specific aspects of the business of the company. The Board committees in place are the Audit and Risk Management Sub Committee, Finance Oversight Working Group and Nominations Committee.

The Board delegates the day-to-day management of Suas to an Executive Management team, which comprises the Chief Executive, and a senior management team and other management groupings. No member of the Board received payment or reimbursement of expenses for 2019.

### **Corporate Governance**

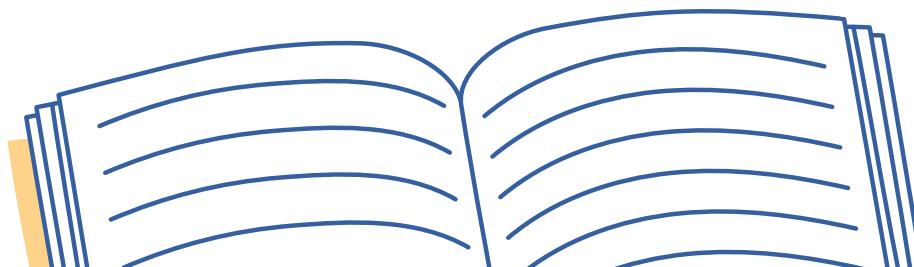
The Board is committed to maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance.

There are clear distinctions between the roles of the Board and the executive management team.

The company complies with the following codes of practice:

- CRA Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public
- Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages
- Comhlámh Code of Good Practice for Sending Organisations.

Suas conducted an initial assessment of compliance against the new Charities Regulator Governance Code in October 2019 and is committed to being fully compliant with it by the end of 2020.



## **Directors' Report:** Structure, Governance & Risk Management

### **Covid-19 Pandemic**

The spread of the COVID-19 outbreak has caused severe disruption in the Irish and global economies and could potentially create widespread business continuity issues of a yet unknown magnitude and duration for the charity sector. The Board and Suas Executive are closely monitoring the potential impact of COVID-19 on Suas's 2020 financial results and cashflows, and have prepared a detailed assessment and revised projections. Our top priority remains the health and safety of our staff, volunteers and other stakeholders.

We expect that the most significant impact on our 2020 financial results and cashflows resulting from COVID-19 will be the suspension of the 2020 volunteer programme, the inability to access schools in the national literacy programme, and, potentially, impact on donor commitments. We are implementing several measures to reduce our costs and preserve cash to offset the lower income. We have actively engaged with our donors to inform them of our plans and to outline our revised planned activities, in order to secure and maintain funding commitments. We are developing a pilot digital programme in schools to support the continuity of the literacy programme and thereby enable continued donor funding.

As the duration of the pandemic is unknown, the Board plans on actively managing Suas's finances and undertaking additional review, as needed. As a result of these measures, the Board is able to ensure that Suas will have adequate cash to fund its operations and meet its financial obligations.

### **Risks and uncertainties – and their mitigation**

Apart from the COVID-19 virus, raising funds to support the activities of the organisation continues to be the major challenge and risk. The Board and Management have secured both multi-annual funding agreements and a significant pipeline of funds to address the needs of the organisation. This pipeline is monitored at each board meeting.



## **Directors' Report:** Structure, Governance & Risk Management

Suas has in place a Risk Management Policy and Risk Register. The Risk Register is used to identify and prioritise all categories of risks (strategic, financial, operational and compliance) to the organisation so as to manage, monitor and minimise those risks. The identified risks are reviewed by the Board on a regular basis.

### **Reserves Policy**

The Board has established a policy of retaining sufficient reserves to ensure the continuity of operations and to absorb periodic setbacks, while committing the maximum amount available for the operation of programmes. This policy states that the unrestricted reserves should equate to three months running costs to protect against a possible delay or reduction of receipt of income. Currently the reserves fall short of the target level although the reserves have increased in 2019. The Board are keeping this situation under review.

### **Going Concern**

The Board has responsibility for ensuring the preparation of the annual report and the financial statements. It is the view of the Board to the best of our current knowledge, that COVID-19 will not have a material adverse impact on Suas's ability to continue as a going concern. This view is based on Suas's 2020 financial forecast, which has been updated to incorporate revised projections of income, expenditure and cash flow and the specific actions taken to address the impacts of COVID-19. As a result of this assessment and actions taken, the Board believes it appropriate to continue to adopt the going-concern basis in preparing the financial statements.



## **Directors' Report:** Structure, Governance & Risk Management

### **Results for the year and review of operations**

The Statement of Financial Activities for the year and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2019 are set out in our Financial Statements. There was a surplus of income over expenditure of €7,231 for the year and reserves of €123,596 at 31 December 2019. The Board considers these results satisfactory. The company is precluded from paying a dividend from reserves.

### **Health & Safety at work**

It is the policy of the company to ensure the health and safety of its employees by maintaining a safe place and systems of work. The policy is based on the requirements of employment legislation, including the Safety, Health & Safety at Work Act 2005. The policy is reviewed regularly.

### **Political contributions**

There were no political contributions during the year. Consequently, no disclosures are required under the Electoral Act 1997.





## **Directors' Report:** Structure, Governance & Risk Management

### **Accounting records**

The Board Members believe that they have complied with the requirements of Section 281 to 285 of the Companies Act, 2014 with regard to accounting records by employing personnel with appropriate expertise and by providing adequate resources to the financial function.

The accounting records of the company are maintained at the Company's registered office at Suas Educational Development, Floor 1/2 Unit 3, Whitefriars, Aungier St, Dublin 2.

These documents are prepared in accordance with the Companies Act, 2014 and, voluntarily in the absence of statutory reporting standards for charities in Ireland, in accordance with international best practice [Charities SORP (FRS 102)] as recommended by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

### **Auditors and disclosure of information to the auditors**

In accordance with the Companies Act 2014, section 383(2), Browne Murphy & Hughes, continue in office as auditors of the company.

The directors who held office at the date of approval of the Financial Statements confirm that, so far as they are each aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Company's auditor is unaware; and each director has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken as a director to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Company's auditor is aware of that information.



## **Our Work:** Suas Ireland

### **Introduction**

Suas is Ireland's leading charity to improve literacy and numeracy for children in Ireland's most disadvantaged schools. Suas has been supporting schools across Ireland to address the national crisis in literacy and numeracy for children in disadvantaged areas.

One in ten children in Irish schools has serious difficulty with reading or writing. However, in some disadvantaged schools this is as high as one in three students. In the most recent PISA tests, the maths performance of Irish students was at "below average" standard. This all points to a national crisis in literacy and numeracy that must be addressed immediately.

Suas delivers measurable, evidence-based literacy and numeracy interventions to prevent school failure and reduce dropout. In partnership with designated disadvantaged (DEIS) schools, we support 8 – 14-year olds most at risk of failing in the Irish education system. Volunteer mentors are at the heart of the programme. They work one-to-one with girls and boys from DEIS schools nationwide.

Our Paired Reading intervention is an evidence-based intervention, which provides a model of fluent reading and helps children learn decoding skills. Our maths intervention was developed following a request by schools. It provides children struggling with maths with an opportunity for repeated practice, further explanation and reinforcement, delivered in a one-to-one coaching session.

## 2019 Highlights

- We continued to provide one-to-one reading and maths mentoring to children in disadvantaged schools, supporting 1,273 children by the end of the 2018/19 school year – our highest number of children to date and a 26% increase on the number of children supported in the 2017/18 school year.

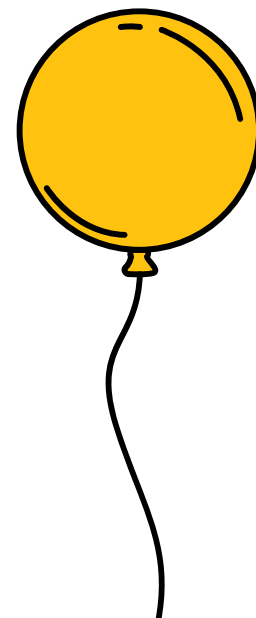
### **Results for these children were as follows:**

- The average reading age of children across our Paired Reading projects increased by 4 months over the 2-month duration of the project. This is based on their ability to read and also their ability to understand what they are reading.
- The average maths age of children in our Paired Maths projects increased by 4 months over the 1.6-month duration of the project.
- 65% of children read more often.
- 52% of children felt happier to read out loud.
- 85% of children agreed they were better at reading.
- 64% said they enjoy solving maths problems.
- 78% felt they are better at maths.
- 74% said they are happier to take part in maths class.
- Our Paired Maths programme was independently evaluated and validated in autumn 2019.

## What's next?

We were on track to support 1500 children in the 2019/20 school year prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 in Ireland, which forced the suspension of our programmes in schools. Suas moved quickly to identify alternative supports for the children involved in our programmes, and we trialled new online reading and maths support programmes with a view to rolling these out in autumn 2020 if necessary.

Our new programme strategy (completed in June 2020) confirms our commitment to quality, impactful volunteering and our ambition to grow our volunteer base, but we've deliberately created some flexibility in our plans for the next year so that we are able to respond to schools' needs and the evolving situation. We are exploring the potential for remote support to children i.e. online volunteering. Our aspiration would be that, within three years, we would be able to offer effective online as well as in-person volunteer support to partner schools based on demand.







## **Our Work:** Suas International

### **Introduction**

Suas runs two major programmes – a volunteering programme and a technology-mediated teacher training programme.

Our International Volunteer Programme offers young people the opportunity to volunteer as teaching assistants, working alongside local teachers in our partner organisations and schools in disadvantaged communities in India and Zambia. Teaching assistants focus primarily on English lessons with children aged between 4 - 18 years old.

Volunteers undergo intensive training that helps them to prepare for living and working with their teams overseas.

The Global Perspectives strand of the programme helps volunteers understand the complex root causes behind the issues facing the communities in which they are working, and how they can continue to take action for change after the programme has ended.

Our technology-mediated teacher training programme, Fast Forward, aims to improve educational achievements and life opportunities for children in disadvantaged settings in sub-Saharan Africa. The programme is designed to address the barriers to quality education in disadvantaged communities – particularly the lack of educational resources, and lack of training for teachers.

## 2019 Highlights

- We continued our delivery of a new, technology-mediated teacher training programme called Fast Forward to three districts in Zambia. The programme is supporting 75 teachers in 15 schools and benefitting over 6,600 children through 'cascade' training for other teachers in these schools.
- In 2019 we sent 56 volunteer teaching assistants to locations in India and Zambia.
  - Three teams in Kolkata, India working with our partners Development Action Society, Sabuj Sangha and Thoughtshop Foundation.
  - One team in the Sundarbans region, India working with Sabuj Sangha.
  - One team in Southern Province, Zambia working with our partners in the Chikuni Jesuit Mission.
  - One team working in the town of Kabwe in the Central Province of Zambia.

**Our volunteers supported the education of over 2013 children in total**



## What's next?

Following the escalation of the COVID-19 crisis, we quickly suspended the deployment phase of our international volunteer programme in 2020. We have provisionally agreed to suspend the programme for 2021 given the risks associated with delivering this programme in the current context and the fact that preparations would need to begin in 2020. The final decision will be taken at the next meeting of the Board of Directors in July 2020. We are currently developing a long-term programme strategy.

The Fast Forward project was also affected by school closures in Zambia in spring 2020. However, our programme was due to end its current phase in May 2020 so the disruption was time limited. We are currently completing the internal evaluation of this programme to guide our work in this area going forward and the results to date are encouraging. The future of this programme will also be considered at the next meeting of our Board of Directors in July 2020.



# STAND

FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN



I'm hoping to see some really innovative ideas.



## Our Work: STAND

### Introduction

Our Global Citizenship Programme, STAND, seeks to support the progressive engagement of third level students with global justice issues through an integrated programme of activities that correspond to different 'stages' of participation and learning:

#### **'Inspire'**

Activities to reach out to a new audience on campus, that might not have previously engaged with global issues.

#### **'Educate'**

Activities give students the opportunity to learn more about global development issues in an accessible way. They are framed as 'introduction to development' courses which don't assume knowledge on behalf of participants.

#### **'Engage'**

Activities for students who want to take action on an issue that they are passionate about. Typically these students have gained a deeper understanding of an issue, sometimes from having taken part in an 'Inspire' or 'Educate' event.

Activities include the STAND 8x8 Festival, STAND Global Issues Course, STAND Ideas Collective and STAND News.



## 2019 Highlights

- **16,939 young people engaged with our activities in 2019, with activities delivered in 13 third level institutions across Ireland.**

### Key achievements in 2019 included:

- Increased numbers participating in and engaging with STAND online – an increase of 36% and 79% respectively compared to 2018
- Increased presence on social media platforms – with an increase of 136% following STAND on Instagram in 2019 compared to 2018 when our Instagram page was set up
- Higher number of students completing the Global Issues courses – an increase of 79% completing the course compared to 2018 and an increase of 16% compared to 2017.
- Our highest number of students engaged at our STAND Student Festival to date – an increase of 4% from 2018



## What's next?

In 2019, we saw the expansion of the Global Citizenship Programme team – with three full-time staff now dedicated to our STAND programmes. This increase on the programme team has allowed for greater capacity to develop our activities and increase our student reach overall. In 2020 we are adapting our programme for greater online delivery in the context of COVID-19, enabling us to reach a wider audience in the process.

A photograph of a man in a blue sweater standing in a classroom, gesturing while speaking to a group of students. The students are seated at desks, and a whiteboard is visible in the background. The image is partially obscured by a large blue graphic overlay containing the text 'STAND'.

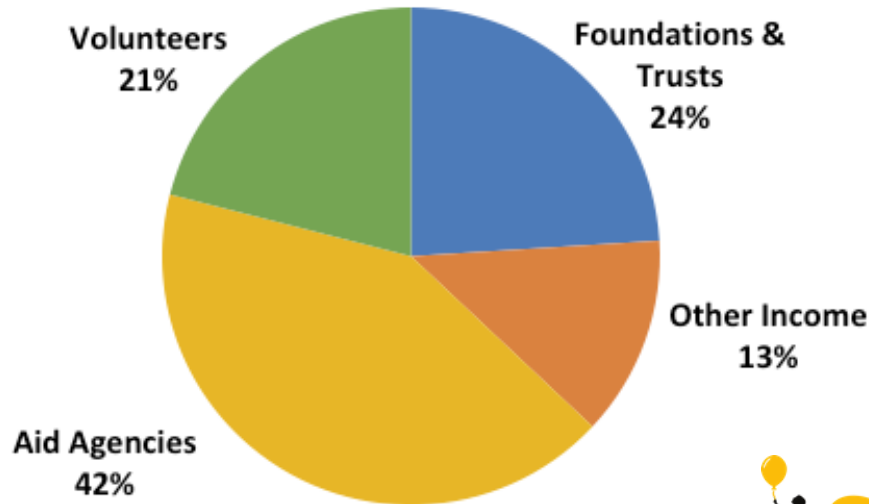
# STAND

FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN

## **Finances: Income**

Total income for 2019 amounted to €1,049,640 of which €976,880 (93% approx.) was in the form of restricted funds. The remaining €72,760 was unrestricted. Income decreased by €171,389 (14%) compared to the previous year, largely due to lower donated services. In 2019, Suas received increased funding from Aid Agencies, including a further extension of Irish Aid funding to support the Global Citizenship Programme.

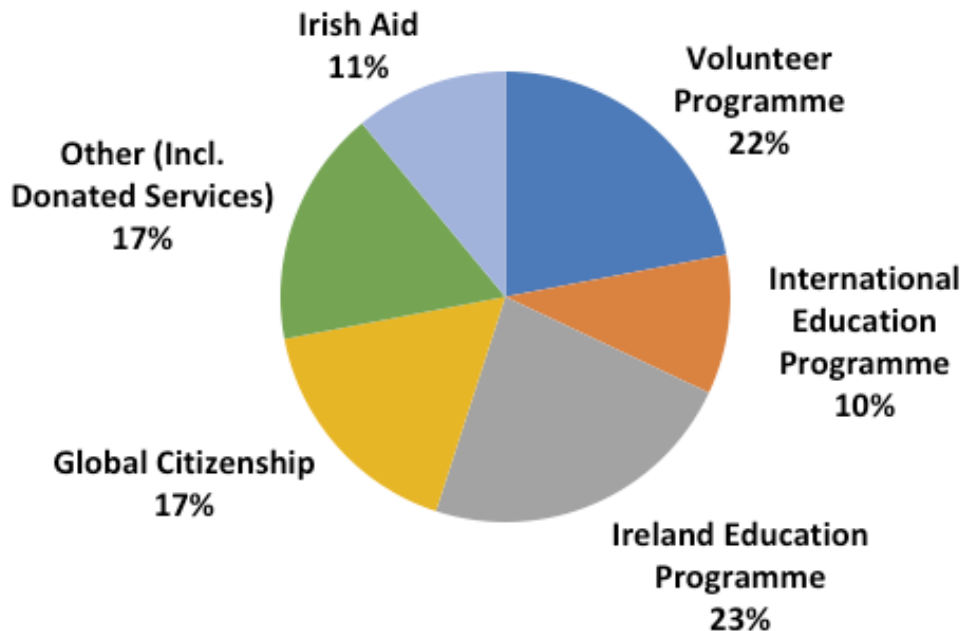
### **SOURCES OF INCOME:**



## **Finances: Expenditure**

Total expenditure for 2019 amounted to €1,042,409, a decrease of €133,262 (11%) on the prior year expenditure of €1,175,671. This decrease was due mainly to a reduction in Donated Services which fell by €192,455 between 2018 and 2019. Volunteer programme costs dropped from €288,664 in 2018 to €232,751 in 2019. There were increases in Education, Global Citizenship and Irish Aid Public Awareness programme expenditure. Other expenditure also increased compared to 2018.

### **SOURCES OF EXPENDITURE:**





Suas | literacy changes everything





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Pictures used in this publication have been taken in relation to Suas activities & events.