

# Annual Review 2011

Empowering Women, Driving Growth



“ Giving women the chance to become financially independent and make the most of their talents is the key to higher living standards and stronger economies. ”

Cherie

Cherie Blair, Founder

Photo by Kate Holt (and cover)

# A message from the Chairman

The Cherie Blair Foundation for Women provides women with the skills, technology, networks and access to finance that they need to become successful small and growing business owners, so that they can contribute to their economies and have a stronger voice in their societies. Women who are financially independent have greater control over their own and their children's lives. Economic security gives women more influence in tackling injustice and discrimination in their communities and wider society.

Women entrepreneurs around the world still lack the business skills, technology, networks and access to capital they need to be successful in the long term. Less than 2% of the titled land in the world is owned by women; many women in East Africa are unable to take out a loan without their husband's signature; and women in South Asia face barriers in access to technology, with a gap of 37% in mobile phone ownership between men and women in the region. This discrimination is not only harmful to the women who face it but it is also a missed opportunity for their families and communities.

However, there has been some progress in women's empowerment over the past decade and the Foundation firmly believes that equal opportunities for women is a realistic goal. The steps made towards reaching the third Millennium Development Goal are encouraging, particularly in relation to educational achievements for women. The Cherie Blair Foundation for Women is building on this progress. Thanks to our supporters, this year we have directly reached some 6,000 women from as far apart as India, Kenya and Lebanon, supporting them to develop their skills, build their confidence and increase their income. In addition, our research and advocacy activities have enabled us to share knowledge with others working towards women's economic development and influence policy-makers to do more in this field. Over the next year, we look forward to increasing the reach of our programmes, and making a real difference to even more women entrepreneurs.

None of this would be possible without the generous support of our donors, members, mentors and partners, for which we are profoundly grateful. The board of trustees would also like to thank the charity's founder, Cherie Blair, for contributing her time, resources and expertise to the Foundation.



**Robert Clinton**  
Chairman



“ This is a great opportunity to further my development and fulfil my potential. It is my hope that I will be able to give more and prove the importance and value of supporting women in business around the world. ”

Neta Or, Entrepreneur

# A message from the CEO

With the generous contributions we have received in the past year, we have been able to give women a helping hand to raise their own status. This vital work makes a real difference to women's lives and also creates role models for future generations of women. Thank you for your continued support which makes this possible.

With the contributions of our supporters, this year the Foundation has furthered its reach, expanding its projects across 25 countries throughout Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Working with partners, we have been able to provide women business owners with much-needed skills training, connections to wider networks and access to finance and technology. Seeing the changes in the women entrepreneurs we support has made this a very rewarding year. We would not have achieved this without the commitment, professionalism and enthusiasm of the Foundation's staff: Helen Abnett, Margaret Burgess, Giulia Corinaldi, Jillian Convey, Priya Patel and Simona Spazzini, as well as our many volunteers.

Early in 2011, I spoke at the Democracy that Delivers for Women Conference in Washington, DC about the '3 C's' of women's economic empowerment: capability, confidence and capital. The Foundation has chosen these three indicators to ensure our programmes take an impact-focused approach. We aim to improve women's livelihoods so that they can have a better quality of life and a strong sense of independence, which is all too often undervalued. It is widely recognised that investing in women yields substantial returns for their families too. By focusing on women's capability, confidence and capital, we are raising the status of women and supporting them to take on a greater role in their communities and economies.

I have been inspired by many of the women's stories. Dolphine in Kenya is making more sales in a shorter period of time using her mobile phone for banking and managing transactions with suppliers. Additionally, with the business training delivered in partnership with CARE International, Dolphine has been able to expand her businesses and hire five new employees. Nehaya in Palestine has set up her own catering business and hired two employees with the support from her mentor. In India, our conference inspired women like Ankita, providing them with access to high level business leaders and building their confidence.

I have seen for myself how the generous support the Foundation has received has resulted directly in a better status for many of the women in our programmes. We want to reach more women entrepreneurs in the next year. I look forward to building on our existing partnerships and forging new ones to help us take on the challenges ahead. Thank you for your continued support.



Henriette Kolb  
CEO



## Expanding our reach

The women we support are an inspiring and diverse group. Those pictured here are just a few examples from thousands across Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Some are older with large families to support; some are just starting their journey as young businesswomen. Their businesses range from fashion to recycling to farming.

Through our three programmes, these talented women are able to excel to new heights and serve as role models for future generations.



# Sustainable impact

Our projects are designed to have a lasting impact, sustainably lifting families out of poverty by supporting women's economic inclusion and development.

We provide women in developing and emerging markets with the support they need to become successful small and growing business owners. This enables them to contribute to their economies and have a stronger voice in their societies.

We support women entrepreneurs through **business skills training, networks, technology & access to finance.**

The Foundation leverages **partnerships** to maximise resources for women entrepreneurs in developing and emerging markets.

The Foundation has reached nearly **6,000** women entrepreneurs and business students across **25 countries.**

We support women in building up their **capability** so they can become more efficient managers and find new ways to succeed.

Through our programmes, the women we work with gain the **confidence** to tackle the challenges they face as entrepreneurs.

Ultimately, with improved capability and confidence, comes increased **capital** for the women entrepreneurs, which is in turn re-invested in their families and communities.

# Mentoring

Combining technology with 1:1 support to unlock the potential of women entrepreneurs in Africa, Asia and the Middle East

Our Mentoring Women in Business Programme was developed in collaboration with Google to enhance the success of women-led businesses in developing and emerging markets. Together, we built a virtual community for women entrepreneurs to support each other and receive online mentoring and business advice.

The magic is in the matching. Each entrepreneur is carefully paired with a mentor, taking into account a number of factors such as personality, expertise, experience and interests. This ensures the mentee has high quality, one-to-one support tailored to her specific needs.

The programme started off with a pilot group of 23 mentees and 30 mentors in 2010 to test the technology and determine best practice. After successful completion of the pilot in 2011, we commissioned an independent evaluation by mentoring experts, Clutterbuck Associates. The final evaluation demonstrated benefits for mentees, including improved self-confidence, business knowledge, marketing know-how and new technology skills. The evaluation also found that the mentors benefited too from a rich inter-cultural exchange and revitalised interest in their own businesses.

Based on the success of the pilot, we have since scaled up the programme to reach larger numbers of mentees. Overall, we supported over 90 women entrepreneurs during the financial year through e-mentoring and we hope to grow this number to 1,000 in the next three years.

## Countries

Afghanistan  
Bangladesh  
China  
India  
Israel  
Kenya  
Malaysia  
Palestine  
Swaziland  
UAE

## Minoo in India

Minoo had an established small business in India but wanted to expand. She was paired with Philip, an entrepreneur in the UK. Together, they worked to identify two key goals: to expand in the domestic market and generate more business with existing clients. With Philip's support, Minoo quantified her growth objectives and developed a strategy that resulted in 25 new customers and increasing business volumes from existing customers.



“

*Developing skills and talent is at the heart of Accenture's business. The opportunity to expand this to be a mentor with the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women has enabled me to see the real change mentoring can make.*

**Zoe Lewis, Accenture**

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# Mobile technology

Harnessing the benefits of mobile technology to support women entrepreneurs in developing and emerging economies

Following the Foundation's report, *Women and Mobile: A Global Opportunity*, produced in partnership with the GSMA, the Foundation has been instrumental in fostering a global discussion about mobile phones for women's economic development. As a result, a number of NGOs, governments and corporations have begun working together on initiatives for women's empowerment through mobile technology.

In addition, the Foundation has continued to develop the Mobile Technology Programme, first announced in October 2010 as part of a global effort to close the mobile gender gap in partnership with the GSMA Development Fund. The newly created programme leverages mobile technology to provide women entrepreneurs with support in three key areas: access to finance, retail channel participation and customised applications to scale up their businesses. We work in partnership with mobile network operators, corporations, local NGOs and thought leaders in this space. Ultimately, the programme is aimed at improving the capability, confidence and capital of women entrepreneurs.

So far, over 5,000 women have benefited directly from this programme and the research we've produced stands to benefit hundreds of thousands more in the long term.

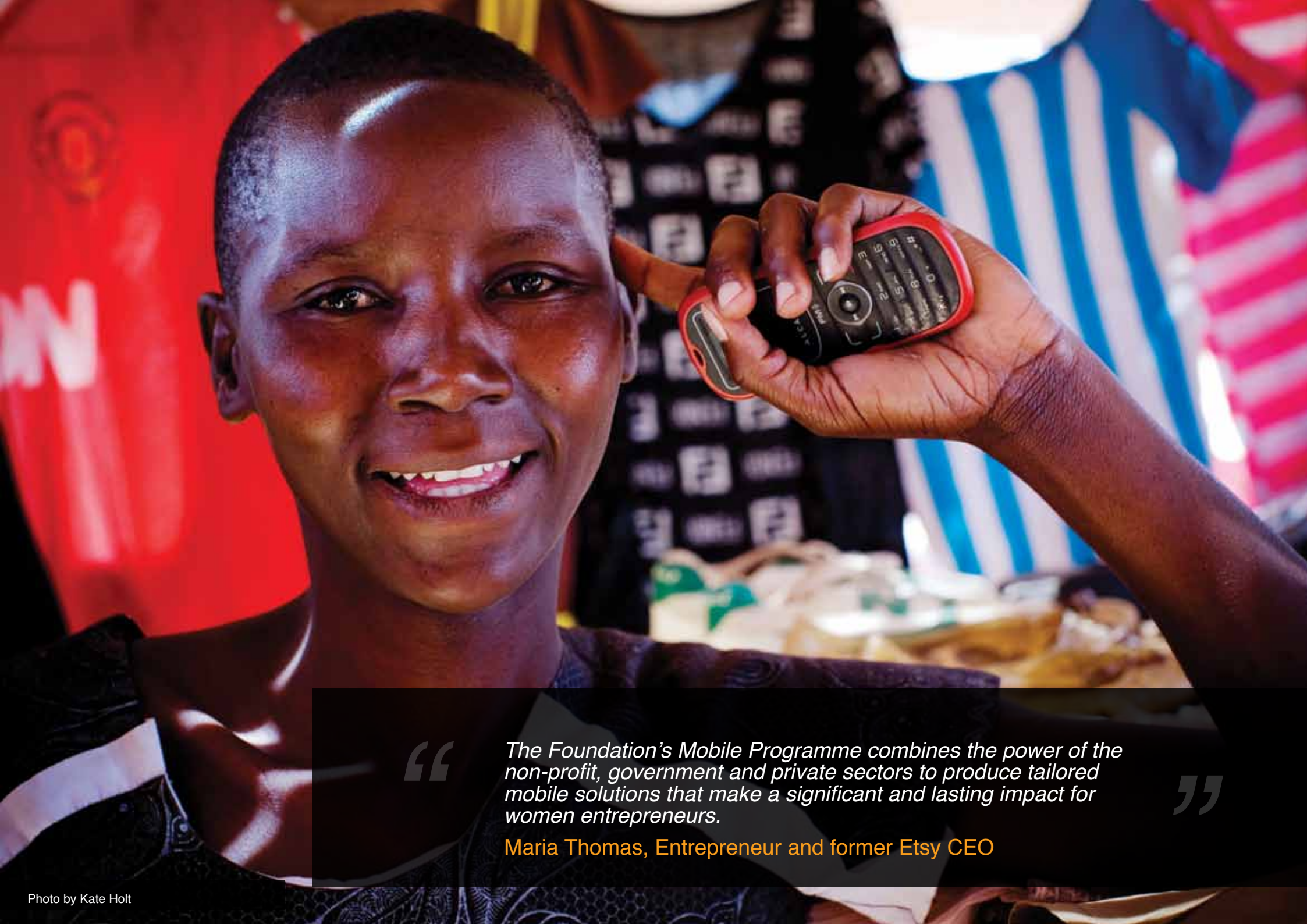
## Countries

Bahrain  
Cote d'Ivoire  
Egypt  
Ghana  
Kenya  
India  
Indonesia

Israel  
Nigeria  
Philippines  
Qatar  
Sierra Leone  
South Africa  
Sri Lanka  
Tanzania  
Uganda  
UAE

## Lilian in Kenya

Lilian Adhiambo used to keep her money under the bed but now she uses a mobile application to store and transfer funds. She feels more secure without having to travel long distances with cash. With a combination of business training and mobile applications, Lilian has expanded her small lakeside clothes business into three branches across markets in Western Kenya.



“

*The Foundation's Mobile Programme combines the power of the non-profit, government and private sectors to produce tailored mobile solutions that make a significant and lasting impact for women entrepreneurs.*

”

**Maria Thomas, Entrepreneur and former Etsy CEO**

# Business support

Facilitating access to networks, business training and finance to foster women-led businesses

The Business Support Programme offers comprehensive business development support which addresses the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Complemented by our mentoring and mobile technology initiatives, the programme facilitates access to networks, training and finance for women-owned and managed businesses. We invest in skills training, business incubation services and research into financing for women entrepreneurs in order to meet their most pressing needs. This type of support can be effective on its own but can also be enhanced by technology-led solutions and one-to-one mentoring support.

We have a unique business model which tailors support for the highest achievers. We start by providing a group of women entrepreneurs with business skills training through workshops. Subsequently, a selection from the group is chosen to complete business plans based on their abilities and motivation to succeed. Those who have shown the most potential with their business plans will be given intensive support from high-level advisors. By focusing on the women with the greatest potential for success, we are not only supporting the women to grow as individuals and businesswomen but also providing role models for the next generation.

In the 2010–2011 financial year, the Business Support Programme incorporated nine individual projects across six different countries, ranging from a business development centre in Palestine to workshops for solar franchisees in Kenya to a training of trainers programme in India. Overall, the programme has supported over 700 students and entrepreneurs in total.

## Countries

India  
Israel  
Kenya  
Lebanon  
Malawi  
Palestine  
Sierra Leone

## Nasreen in Israel

Nasreen, a third year student in our programme at Western Galilee College explains, “As women, we need each other’s support towards gaining a better future. Despite the differences between us, we have in common the will to prove that women can be very successful. The programme has allowed me to begin studying and fulfilling a dream. It has strengthened my self-confidence, shown me a positive view of the world, and I have come to the conclusion that nothing can stand in the way of the determination to succeed.”



“

*J.P. Morgan is delighted to be a part of the Lebanon project, supporting a new generation of women entrepreneurs with the essential tools to develop their businesses.*

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**Rafia Qureshi, Corporate Philanthropy & Sponsorship, EMEA, J.P. Morgan**

# Women: the smartest investment we can make

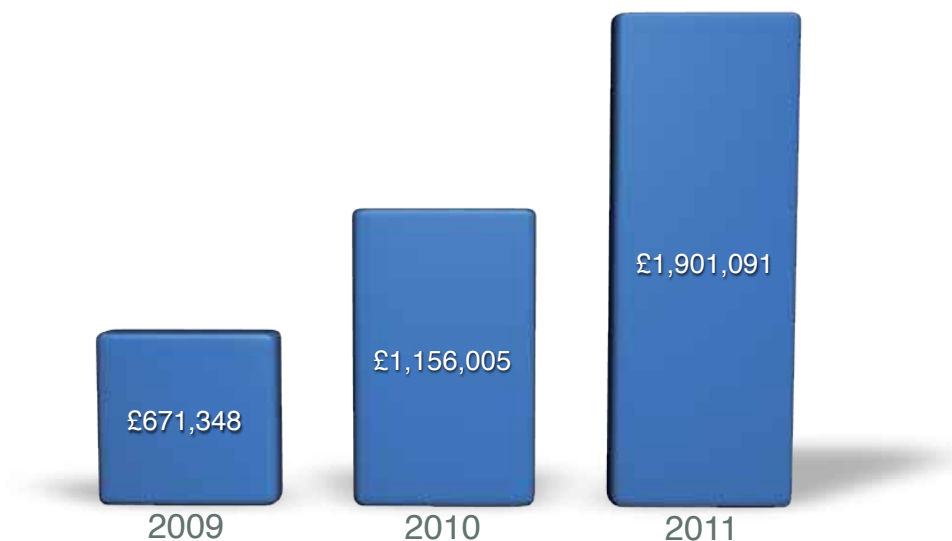
As an organisation, we strategically invest our funds in high-quality programmes, with the majority of expenditure going directly to support women entrepreneurs in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

In our first three years of operation, we have grown from strength to strength thanks to our community of supporters. With the additional funding we've received this year, we have been able to not only continue but expand our programmes. It means we are able to provide women like Minoo with mentoring support, Lilian with mobile technology solutions for her business and Nasreen with valuable business training.

The financial information on the right shows income from the last three financial years and the breakdown of 2010–2011 expenditure. The figures are drawn from our audited financial statements and trustees' reports, available at [www.cherieblairfoundation.org](http://www.cherieblairfoundation.org)

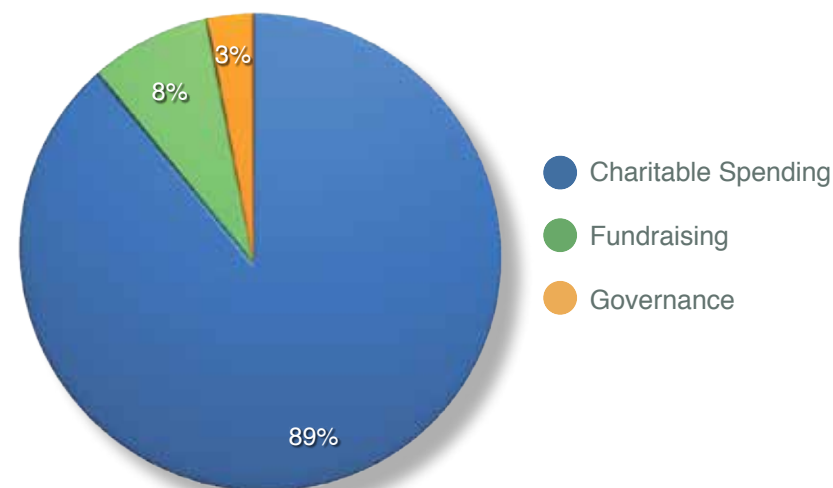
## Growing from strength to strength

Income over the last three years (£)



## Meeting the needs of women entrepreneurs

Breakdown of 2010–2011 expenditure



# Thank you

*The Foundation is grateful for the generous support received from a range of donors and partners. Working together, we can make a difference to women entrepreneurs around the world. We would like to express our thanks to our key supporters listed below, as well as our other donors who choose to remain anonymous.*

## Members

Ms Alberica Sforza  
Mrs Amna Boheim  
Mrs Ann Gloag  
Lady Anne Evans  
Mrs Anne Tazartes  
Mrs Barbara Mowat  
Mrs Carolyn Cross  
Mr Charles Rigby  
Mrs Dorthe Tate  
Mrs Gabriella Basilico  
Mr Harjiv Singh  
Mr Hugh Frost  
Ms India Gary-Martin  
Mrs Isabella Vismara Traglio  
Mr KC Lam  
Mr & Mrs Lee  
Mrs Linda Barras-Gabriellian  
Mrs Maria Hummer-Tuttle  
Ms Qu Li

## Funding partners

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Rockefeller Foundation  
Vodafone Foundation  
STC  
Nando Peretti Foundation  
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DHL Living Responsibly Fund  
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Hewlett Packard  
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## About the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women

The Cherie Blair Foundation for Women provides women with the skills, technology, networks and access to finance they need to become successful small and growing business owners, so that they can contribute to their economies and have a stronger voice in their societies.

[www.cherieblairfoundation.org](http://www.cherieblairfoundation.org)

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