

I Support the Girls: Situation Analysis

Client Background

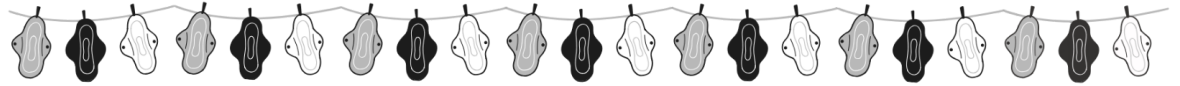
I Support the Girls is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works to provide bras, binders, feminine hygiene products and more to people who are enduring homelessness, poverty, menopause, abuse and other similar circumstances in an effort to help them regain their sense of dignity and self-respect. The I Support the Girls mission statement is as follows:

Through an international network of Affiliates, I Support the Girls collects and distributes essential items, including bras, underwear, and menstrual hygiene products, allowing women and folk experiencing homelessness, impoverishment, or distress to stand tall with dignity.

I Support the Girls (ISTG) was first founded in Maryland in 2015 by Dana Marlowe. Marlowe was inspired to create I Support the Girls after finding herself with a collection of bras that were in good condition but no longer fit her. When she mentioned this to a bra saleswoman, she responded with, "Homeless women need bras." This inspired Marlowe to reach out to a local D.C. homeless shelter, they expressed that, "Bras and hygiene products are the most requested but least donated item." For Marlowe this was transformative, she knew she couldn't be the only person still holding onto poorly fitting bras they never wore, so she decided to mobilize this community. She created a Facebook post requesting donations of bras and feminine hygiene products from her friends, after receiving many donations, a movement was born.

Taking to social media, Marlowe posted a heartfelt request on Facebook, urging her friends to contribute bras and feminine hygiene products. The response was nothing short of extraordinary, igniting a movement that surpassed her initial expectations. Since that transformative moment, Marlowe has transcended personal donations and forged collaborations with Fortune 500 companies, propelling the organization's expansion.

"Through a globally-spanning network of Affiliates, I Support the Girls dutifully collects and disseminates vital resources such as bras, underwear, and menstrual hygiene products. This empowers women and marginalized individuals facing homelessness, impoverishment or distress to stand tall, reclaiming their dignity."



Internal Audit/Assessment

I Support the Girls has a team of dedicated staff that feel strongly about the organization's mission and values and work hard to make a difference. These staff members include:

- Dana Marlowe (she/her): Founder and Executive Director
- Rachael Heger (any/all): Director of Shipping and Logistics
- Erin Persaud (she/her): Director of Operations
- Emma Cannon (she/her): Programs and Corporate Partnerships Coordinator
- Sara Whitmer (she/they): Volunteer and Donations Coordinator, Midwest Warehouse

Board Members

- Preston Blay: Director
- Jennifer Weiss-Wolfe: Vice President
- Elinor Litwack: Treasurer
- Alon Cohen: Secretary
- Sarah Pitluck: Board Member

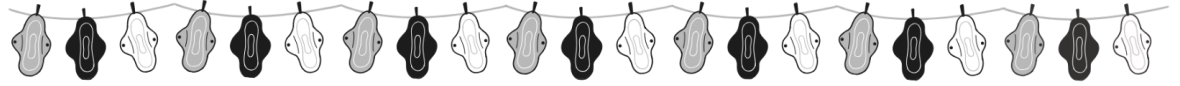
Dana Marlowe is a businesswoman, philanthropist, feminist and an advocate for women's and disabled rights. Marlowe graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a master's degree in interpersonal and organizational communication after studying professional and technical education at the Rochester Institute of Technology. She is currently the president and founder of Accessibility Partners as well as the founder and global operations manager of I Support the Girls. Accessibility Partners offers businesses services to assist in making their websites accessible to people with impairments.

Before turning 35 in 2016, Rachael Heger initially set out to accumulate 3,500 bras, and she accomplished her task in 88 days. When people are moved by the ISTG story and want to organize collection drives in their neighborhoods, Heger acts as the point of contact. She runs the ISTG Midwest warehouse, plans shipping and logistics and is a member of the social team. She resides in Indianapolis with her family, her cat DB and Milhouse, an orange Pomeranian who is her most devoted coworker. She attended Simmons University and Ripon College earning a bachelor's degree in history and classical languages and a master's degree in library science.

Erin Persaud has over 15 years of experience working in the nonprofit sector, holding positions ranging from executive leadership to grant writing and fund development to



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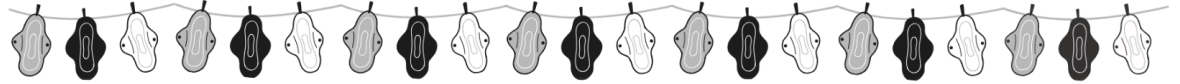
program design and execution. Persaud manages communications with donors, grant writing and continuing infrastructure building from her Denver office. Persaud graduated from Colorado College with a bachelor's degree in history and Spanish literature and from Georgetown University with a master's degree in Latin American studies.

Emma Cannon joined ISTG as an intern before moving from Indiana to the Maryland headquarters. She graduated from Indiana University with a Bachelor of Arts in sociology and gender studies before pursuing an MPA with a nonprofit management concentration at the O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. She is dedicated to promoting gender equity, reproductive justice and the rights of women, girls and LGBTQ+ people.

Sara Whitmer is an educator, a community activist and a qualified tarot reader. Her part-time position at ISTG enables her to pursue both of her great passions: helping others and serving her community, and growing her tarot business. Whitmer likes to spend her free time with her friends, hiking, camping, listening to live music, thrifting and antiques and exploring the local Indianapolis art scene. At the moment, Whitmer lives in a 108-year-old fixer-upper on Indianapolis' "bEast side" with her wife, their two young adult kids and three zany dogs.

In order to achieve the organization's goal, it has partnered with several product manufacturers, corporations, business and companies, government agencies, education, sports and entertainment and various foundations, such as L'Oreal, NCAA, The Good People Fund, Uber, Victoria Secret and Women's League for Conservative Judaism.

I Support the Girls offers various programs for underserved and at-risk women and nonbinary people around the U.S and over the world, working to provide bras, binders, feminine hygiene products and help them gain access to dignity. ISTG's disaster relief program offers packages for people who encounter disasters. When disaster strikes, ISTG acts fast, and its disaster response team delivers hundreds of thousands of products to those who are suddenly left with nothing, including period products and bras, these just aren't top of mind when people are fleeing for life. Force for change is also another special thing the ISTG holds. This set of programs encompasses advocacy, meeting the needs of unique populations and special requests from partners on the ground. The issues they are tackling are complex and entrenched. One of their popular programs, the A.S.H (Aid, Safety, Hygiene) Kits, consists of customized care packages delivered directly to individuals who are often overlooked in other initiatives. These include D.A.S.H. Kits for survivors of domestic violence, SLASH Kits for transgender and nonbinary individuals without safe



access to resources, and FLASH Kits for homeless and low-income individuals navigating menopause.

The organizational structure, dedicated team and partnership ecosystem are essential pillars of ISTG's ability to fulfill its mission of extending dignity and support to those in need.

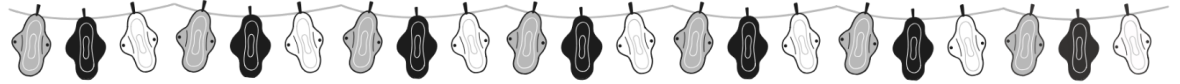
Public Perception

I Support the Girls was founded on social media and it continues to post and promote its efforts and organization through it. It was launched on Facebook and took off on other social media platforms since then. It uses its social media following to interact with corporations, public figures, donors and celebrities all over the world. Currently, ISTG maintains a robust online presence where it has profiles on Facebook (I Support the Girls), Instagram (@isupportthegirls), X (@i_support_girls), TikTok (@isupportthegirls), YouTube (@isupportthegirls348) and LinkedIn (I Support the Girls).

In terms of Facebook, I Support the Girls has over 31,000 followers. It contains a variety of content themes and post types, making it more engaging for the audience. The engagement it gets is a range of different levels of interaction, it receives around five to 10 reactions, two to five comments and two to five shares per post. They post on average every two to three days. While posts directly related to the organization's actions tend to attract fewer comments, those that incorporate more entertaining content elicit a higher volume of positive comments. Overall, ISTG enjoys a positive and supportive atmosphere within the Facebook community.

On Instagram, I Support the Girls has over 29,100 followers, an average of 50 to 100 likes per post and one to five comments and they post content every two to three days on average. The content shared on Instagram is less on what they actually do and more about pop culture commentary, advocacy, memes and infographics, with posts focusing on pop culture themes receiving the most engagement.

With Twitter/X, I Support the Girls has over 3,800 followers. It has been posted over 6,000 times, but has an average of one to five likes per post and no comments with the consistency of posting every two to three days. Although there's not much engagement in this platform, a positive or neutral view of the organization can still be inferred since it has some retweets recognizing its programs and its work. The content on X generally consists of reposts from other accounts as well as advocacy and promotion of their initiatives.



Its TikTok account has over 67,000 followers, which is the largest out of all its platforms. It has a total number of 2.1 million likes. It gets a ton of engagement through their videos with viral videos having like counts ranging from 20,000 to 500,000 and the accounts other videos typically receive an average of 200 likes. Its TikTok content is diverse, encompassing promotions of ISTG events, partnerships, services, fun facts, trends and advocacy. While posts directly related to its work typically receive one to three comments per post, the sentiments are consistently supportive and positive.

I Support the Girls' YouTube channel has the least amount of engagement of all its platforms. The channel has five videos with an average of two likes, 183 views and none of the videos have any comments. These videos primarily serve as informative content explaining the organization's mission, foundation and activities.

Looking at its LinkedIn, I Support the Girls adopts a more professional tone and focus, highlighting job openings and reposting related announcements. While this platform receives a lower level of engagement, with 10 to 20 reactions per post and infrequent comments, it remains a critical space for career-related communications within the organization.

In summary, I Support the Girls' online presence effectively leverages a spectrum of social media platforms to engage, inform and entertain its diverse audience. Across these platforms, the organization fosters a generally positive and supportive atmosphere, underpinned by a shared commitment to their mission and work.

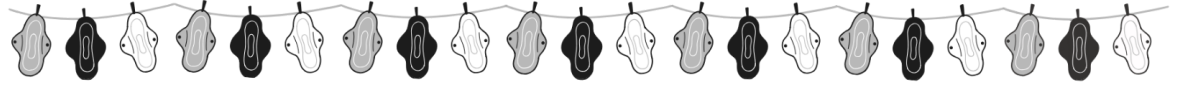
External Audit/Assessment

I Support the Girls operates within a multifaceted external environment influenced by various factors that impact its mission and service delivery.

One significant aspect relates to vulnerable demographics and the demand for kits. ISTG primarily serves individuals facing challenging circumstances, which directly influences the demand for the kits they provide. However, there are individuals who need assistance but face barriers in seeking help due to embarrassment or lack of access to resources. These factors present challenges and opportunities for adaptation and expansion of its reach to meet the evolving demands of these demographics.



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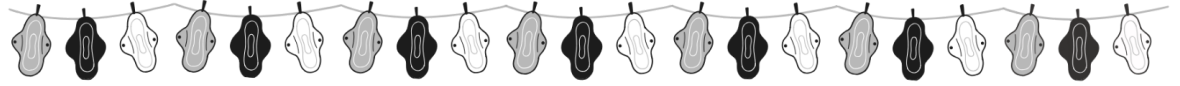


Another key consideration is the presence of taboos and stigma in feminine health and gender identity. The existence of societal taboos related to menstruation, the female anatomy, menopause and the experiences of transgender and nonbinary individuals represents an external challenge. This challenge is particularly pronounced in rural and middle America, where many ISTG affiliates and its primary warehouses are situated. Addressing these issues presents an opportunity for ISTG to foster open dialogue and educate communities, while simultaneously posing a potential challenge due to varying levels of receptiveness.

The geographical location and weather-related concerns impact ISTG's operations. The location of its main warehouse in Indianapolis, Indiana, within the Midwest exposes the organization to extreme weather conditions, including severe cold and snowstorms. This external element impacts the transportation and quality of products, which can disrupt the organization's operations, especially since all donations are dispatched from this warehouse. ISTG must address these logistical challenges to ensure the consistent provision of high-quality kits and products to beneficiaries.

Additionally, risks are associated with nonbinary and transgender individuals seeking help. These individuals, facing homelessness or housing instability, may find it challenging to reach out for assistance due to fear of disclosing their gender identity in unsafe environments. This external challenge underscores the importance of ISTG's role in creating safe spaces and providing support that respects and protects the identity of those in need. Understanding the unique difficulties faced by this demographic presents an opportunity for ISTG to tailor its approach and services accordingly.

In navigating this multifaceted external environment, I Support the Girls must continue its efforts to destigmatize feminine health and gender identity issues, adapt to varying regional attitudes, manage logistical challenges and ensure inclusivity in its support programs. Addressing these external factors is crucial to the organization's mission of providing essential items and support to vulnerable individuals in need.



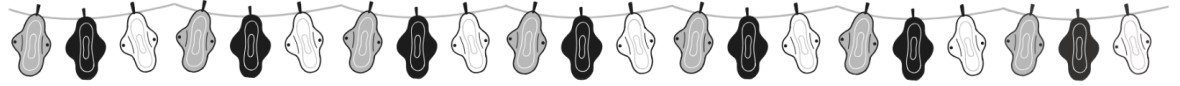
SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Active social media use. ISTG has 31,000 followers and 21,000 likes on Facebook. They post constantly on Facebook. ISTG has 29,200 followers on Instagram and has more than 1,700 posts. ISTG has 67,200 followers on TikTok.
- I Support the Girls has over 1,400 pieces of media coverage from national and local media across the globe, including but not limited to: ABC, CBS, NPR, NPR, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*.
- I Support the Girls has a strong network of over 1,000 partnerships ranging from Victoria's Secret to the NCAA that have helped them acquire volunteers, supplies, and support. These partnerships span various sectors including product manufacturers, corporations, government, nonprofits, education, sports and entertainment and foundations.
- ISTG provides comprehensive support, including various relief programs and kits to help empower folx in different situations. In addition to providing bras and menstrual hygiene products, ISTG may offer other essential items such as underwear, toiletries and other necessities.
- ISTG offers customizable Aid, Safety and Hygiene Kits that can be tailored to individual needs, ensuring recipients receive relevant and necessary items for effective assistance. It shows flexibility and attentiveness to diverse needs, in line with ISTG's commitment to personalized support.
- The ISTG website is very well-organized and easy to navigate, with many appealing features and visual design.
- ISTG has been established for eight years and is a very experienced organization on an upward trajectory.
- The staff at I Support the Girls are full time employees that are dedicated, hardworking, passionate and committed to the organization's cause.
- ISTG benefits from hundreds of volunteers generously offering their time and effort each year.
- Since 2015 I Support the Girls has grown exponentially with affiliates in 22 U.S. states and six countries.
- ISTG operates out of Indianapolis with one large warehouse for their inventory, facilitating quick nationwide shipping thanks to their central location.



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Weakness

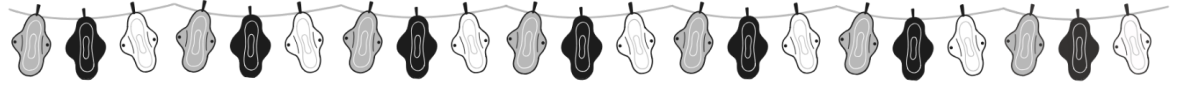
- A.S.H. Kits have a limited product range, no option for returns or exchanges of underwear, boxes can only be requested once, kits can not be sent to shelters they have to be hand delivered and informational cards that come with the boxes lack resources and language options.
- There is no legislation or public policy surrounding menopause care. U.S. courts have consistently upheld menopause to remain separate from discrimination and disability laws.
- I Support the Girls has a limited program evaluation with a lack of a program targeting mothers in need and maternity specific products.
- I Support the Girls has a lack of volunteers as there is a challenge when it comes to maintaining a consistent, committed and available individual. As well as when applying to be a volunteer, it only has it on an individual basis which limits the attraction for larger groups and numbers wanting to volunteer all together.
- I Support the Girls has a staff that is on the smaller side leading to one or only a few people having to handle multiple kit requests at a time.
- I Support the Girls lack consistency in posting on social media.
- I Support the Girls is highly engaged on social media, but the content surrounding the work of ISTG receives less attention than the general topics such as activism and pop culture commentary.
- I Support the Girls lack of staff results in personal obligations interfering with social media posting schedules.
- I Support the Girls face challenges in having consistent and sustainable funding.
- I Support the Girls still covers the expenses out of pocket for approximately 90% of its A.S.H Kit shipments (\$17/box).
- The affiliate coverage does not match the demand; there are no programs in many major cities like Miami and Boston and no programs in states with high domestic violence rates like Arizona and Nevada.

Opportunities

- With affiliates in different areas of the U.S. and the country, I Support the Girls has the opportunity to create strong, community-based relationships in smaller subsections globally.



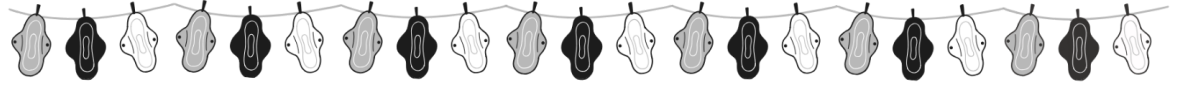
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- I Support the Girls has the opportunity to expand into major cities such as Boston, New Orleans, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, where affiliates are not yet present but needed.
- I Support the Girls has already had national media coverage. With these previous media relationships, the organization will be more appealing for other outlets to want to work with and make it easier for the organization to enter larger cities.
- I Support the Girl's social media presence is strong which allows for the opportunity for them to connect on multiple platforms to various audiences.
- I Support the Girls discusses and supports a variety of social matters, the nonprofit will have a good chance at developing relationships with younger groups (College Sororities, secondary school LGBTQ+ groups, etc.).
- ISTG has the potential to partner with companies, especially those in the health and wellness sector or feminine product industry, for sponsorships, product donations or fundraising campaigns due to corporate social responsibility.
- Partnerships with other organizations such as other nonprofits, corporations and organizations in order to connect with new audiences.
- Most sororities set broad philanthropic goals for its chapters. Partnering at this level can bring ISTG into the fold with multiple chapters across the country. This is a great way to garner donations and volunteers and hold affiliate events.
- Establishing a campus ambassador program where students become representatives of ISTG in their institutions. This can spearhead donation drives, informational sessions and other events throughout campuses all over the nation.
- Collaborate with colleges to offer internships or fellowships at ISTG. This not only provides students with valuable experience but also brings fresh perspectives and energy to the organization. This could be a great opportunity for individuals interested in social advocacy or nonprofit work. This can also aid in volunteers and donations on a national level.
- I Support the Girls has values that align with many passionate leaders in the country which would be able to bring more awareness to their less discussed issues like menopause.
- Engage in or sponsor guided research related to women's health, non-binary folk and menstrual equity with the end goal of influencing and collaborating with policy makers, enhancing I Support the Girl's overall mission, such as, partnering with nonprofits like Blue Bench aimed to research.



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Threats

- Dialogue on social media (especially regarding LGBTQ+ topics) are consistently met with aggressive backlash in the comments. While this does 'drive engagement,' it still means that certain spaces associated with I Support the Girls can be hostile.
- Stigma surrounding homelessness (i.e. drugs and mental health issues) makes it especially challenging to change public perception.
- Public misconceptions about menstrual products and ISTG's beneficiary groups (e.g. Transgender and nonbinary folx) and their needs can affect people's support for ISTG.
- The financial burden of shipping and any supply chain issues can potentially drive up the cost to ship out boxes.
- Economic changes like recession and rising inflation impact people's ability or willingness to donate, reducing I Support the Girls funding.
- There are other organizations with similar missions and objectives. This creates competition for resources, including funding, volunteers and partnerships.
- Regulatory changes in policies related to nonprofits or ISTG's areas of operations can affect its functioning and ability to run its programs.
- International regulatory changes can affect operations of affiliates outside of the U.S.
- The celebrities that I Support the Girls works with or seeks out may not be aware or fully aligned with the nonprofit's mission.
- I Support the Girls doesn't communicate personal narratives from the marginalized groups it assists which could shy away potential donors and affiliates who want to know their contributions are making a difference.
- I Support the Girls is a shipping-based organization with only one major warehouse located in Indianapolis, which is subject to inclement weather challenges that can negatively impact the ability to provide people with packages in a timely manner.