SAAF

SAAF Annual Report 2021

15 years of supporting access to safe abortion

Safe Abortion Action Fund (SAAF)

SAAF is the only global fund focused exclusively on the right to safe and accessible abortion. Through our funding and support, we work to destigmatize abortion and to enable organisations in low- and middle-income countries to deliver abortion related initiatives based on their context and expertise. SAAF also creates opportunities for organisations and networks working on abortion to connect with like-minded partners, with the goal of supporting a thriving intersectional movement to advance reproductive rights for all, especially communities which experience marginalization.

This Annual Report provides an overview of SAAF's work in 2021 and showcases the incredible achievements of the organisations we provide funding to.

In 2022 the current rounds of SAAF funding (Round 4 and Round 5) came to a close, so in this report we also share some overall achievements from this cohort of grantee partners.

SAAF was founded in 2006 and started providing funding in 2007, so 2021 marked our 15 year anniversary of grant-making.

"We are extremely grateful for the sustained support we have received from you over the years. We have walked together, you have seen us grow, we have faced times of uncertainty and unprecedented change, we have learned from change and adapted to it. The resources you have given us have meant a lot for our work; without a doubt, the world is a little fairer thanks to you."

SAAF grantee partner report

Since 2007 SAAF has provided a total of just over $56 million USD to 210 organisations, in 74 countries, across five regions.

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Si Mujer Young Leaders
Fundación Si Mujer/Colombia/Angelica Sabogal Gallego
Cover photograph: RMAAD/Nicaragua

A message from the Director of SAAF

It's amazing to think that SAAF has now been providing grants for work on abortion for just over 15 years. In 2007, we launched a vital source of support for an extremely stigmatized area of healthcare and human rights. Now, 15 years later, we have supported 210 organisations around the world and SAAF is still very much needed as a source of funding for work connected to abortion rights and access.

I wish there didn't need to be a fund dedicated to safe abortion. In an ideal world, national health care systems would provide high quality, free, accessible reproductive health care services to anyone who needed them. Unfortunately, we are still a long way away from that ideal. SAAF continues to be a critical resource for organisations which struggle to get funding for their work on abortion. I'm proud to say that we now have a global team of 10 people, and this year, launched our sixth round of funding, with the biggest number of applications SAAF has ever received. Clearly there is still a great need for this kind of specialized funding.

In 2021, the COVID pandemic continued to throw up challenges for SAAF's grantee partners. But we also saw adaptation and innovation, particularly in the push to provide abortion via telemedicine, which has now been permanently adopted in some countries. 2021 also saw some incredible abortion rights wins in Benin, Mexico, San Marino, India and Thailand among others. And of course, the decriminalization of abortion in Colombia has given a great boost to global reproductive rights activists. You can read more about the important work of Colombian SAAF grantee partner Si Mujer Foundation on page 18.

As a fund, SAAF has also undergone some important changes. In 2021 our board developed a new Theory of Change and embarked on a crucial piece of work to ensure our funding mechanism is not just fit for purpose but truly serving diverse communities around the world. All this work has fed into a new and improved round of funding, and we are looking forward to welcoming more feminist, youth-led, and grassroots organisations to the SAAF network this year. You can read more about the changes we've made and why on page 28.

Having been lucky enough to work for SAAF since the early days, I'm delighted to present this report which is a summary not just of grantee partner achievements in 2021, but also the ongoing successes of the past 15 years of SAAF's abortion-focused funding.

We hope you enjoy reading!

Maïté Matos Ichaso

Director of SAAF

SAAF timeline

15+ years of abortion funding

2006

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) asks IPPF to consider taking a leadership role in establishing a financing mechanism to support work to reduce unsafe abortion. The result is the Safe Abortion Action Fund (SAAF).

DFID's initial contribution of $6m leveraged further money from other governments, and contributions from the Governments of Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland brought the fund to a total of $11.6 million USD.

A nine person Board is recruited to oversee the fund, with representation from community organisations, abortion rights activists and donors.

SAAF

2007

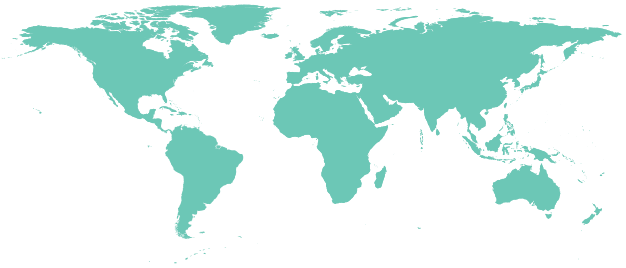
SAAF's first call for funding is launched, and receives 222 applications. According to a Rewire article written at the time,

"This number is a powerful reminder of the staggering lack of funding available for safe abortion worldwide, despite enormous global need."

$16 million USD is granted to 49 organisations across 33 countries. These grants ran from November 2007 to December 2010.

2008

Having relied on staff support from IPPF so far, SAAF hires its first part-time member of staff to coordinate the fund.



2009

The first external evaluation of SAAF is carried out and finds that:

"SAAF helped to legitimize abortion by visibly funding projects on an international scale. It made the issue of abortion 'less of a dirty word' and it gave people courage to work on a controversial topic."

2010

The first regional grantee partner meetings to bring together organisations receiving SAAF funding are held in Bangkok, Addis-Ababa, Lima and Lisbon.

Asia grantee partner regional meeting, 2010

2011

SAAF's second round of funding starts in July 2011 with a total of $5.5 million USD made in grants.

The first SAAF website is launched.

2012

An online SAAF community is launched to better enable contact between grantee partners.

The first SAAF Theory of Change is developed at a Board retreat.

2013

The first SAAF global grantee partners meeting is held in Bangkok.

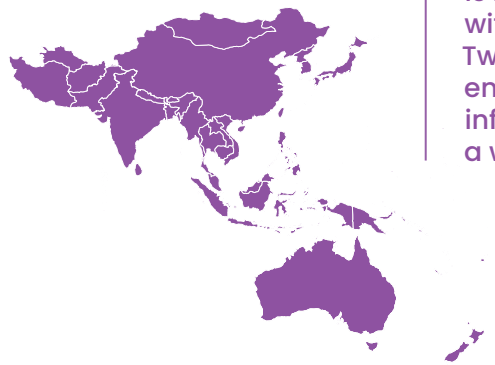
The first proposal development workshops are held in Bujumbura, Nairobi and Dhaka from 2013 to 2014 to support new partners to plan their SAAF funded work.

The SAAF team begins to undertake visits to see the work of grantee partners in context.

Proposal development workshop in Burundi, 2013

2014

The third round of funding is launched and runs until 2017. 104 organisations receive a total of over $16 million USD.



2015

An Africa grantee partners meeting is held in Kampala, attended by 32 people from 18 countries.

2016

An Asia grantee partners meeting is held in Bangkok, attended by 45 people from 17 countries.

A new SAAF website is launched, along with Facebook and Twitter accounts, enabling funding information to reach a wider audience.

2017

Rounds 4 and 5 see a combined commitment of just under $16.8 million USD granted to 90 organisations. The final grants made under this funding round came to a close in March 2022.

$16.8 million USD granted

2018

A new online community is created on Workplace for SAAF grantee partners to easily share resources and discuss topics relating to their work.

2019

The SAAF global grantee gathering in Istanbul hosts individuals from 45 organisations.

SAAF co-launches SafeAccess – a digital platform to tackle unsafe abortion worldwide.

SAAF global grantee gathering, 2019

2020

The SAAF board undertakes a strategic review and develops a new Theory of Change for the fund.

An external evaluation of SAAF is carried out by independent consultant HERA:

"SAAF managed to find and maintain its niche in the safe abortion landscape; the Fund is seen as relevant and well managed with good results."

2021

Independent consultants are brought in to review SAAF's grant making process – the recommendations of which have informed planning for Round 6.

The SAAF website undergoes an update and redesign, with information available in English, French and Spanish.

2022

SAAF's sixth round of funding is advertised in January, leading to the highest ever number of applications (1191) from 90 countries around the world.

Our most recent round of funding

We delivered 90 grants across 49 countries with a total commitment of $16,803,844 USD.

The majority of grants were made to organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa (52%) followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (21%).

Rounds 4 and 5: October 2017-March 2022

SAAF's latest round of funding recently came to close as we prepare to welcome a new cohort of grantee partners in 2022.

During this period the following achievements were made by SAAF grantee partners:

33 policy and legal advances on abortion

209,974 abortion and post-abortion services provided

1514 newly trained abortion providers

15 new studies on abortion

The areas of work we fund

SAAF directs funds to organisations based in low- and middle-income countries that work to increase access to and build support for safe abortion. Any project that aims to improve the enabling environment for the promotion and delivery of safe abortion services through locally-led changes in legislation, policy, service delivery and attitudes is eligible for funding. All SAAF funded projects satisfy one or more of the following categories, and objectives and activities are decided by the organisations receiving funding.

Supporting progressive abortion laws and policies through targeted advocacy

Improving access to safe abortion services

Changing attitudes and norms towards abortion through awareness raising and behaviour change

Generating understanding and evidence on abortion through research

Driving change and making history

Spotlight on SAAF grantee partners working to change laws and policies

Tamtang Group

Thailand

Advocating for full implementation of the new abortion law

Tamtang Group / Thailand

In February 2021, Thailand's parliament passed amendments to the country's criminal code, making abortion available on request in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. **Tamtang Group** was a key part of the advocacy effort which led to this change. They continue to fight for an even more progressive law, and for effective implementation. From their community-led work, and helpline, they are seeing that abortion services are still not accessible for many, and people seeking abortions do not know their rights.

Since the law changed, Tamtang has been a fierce advocate for its implementation. They produced an advocacy report on the existing obstacles people are still facing, and have shared this evidence in a number of national meetings, protests and media outlets. Tamtang has been creative in the use of social media to engage the public in this work – calling for contributions to an online public hearing on abortion via Twitter and an episode of their abortion-themed podcast. Tamtang continues to be a vocal proponent for the option of abortion by telemedicine in Thailand, without the need for expensive clinic visits which many need to travel long distances to attend.

Bloco A

Brazil

Pioneering a harm reduction strategy for abortion counselling

The abortion medication Misoprostol is restricted in Brazil - only hospitals and legal abortion providers can prescribe it.

A harm reduction method aims to inform people about the risks of unsafe abortion and also how to access post-abortion care. Noting that harm reduction approaches have been successful in a number of Latin American countries where abortion is restricted, **Bloco A** set out to introduce such a model in Brazil.

First, Bloco A set up a national group of experts to determine best practice and strategy, and started to advocate with local partners in Recife. The Secretaria de Saúde da Mulher de Recife (women's health department) has now adopted a workplan in which health professionals talk about the risks of unsafe abortion to everyone who comes for pregnancy testing. This is a major achievement in a country where unsafe abortion is a leading cause of maternal mortality. Bloco A also developed an online education programme for medical doctors and nursing students called Ampara, meaning 'support'. The goal is to reduce stigma and guarantee a safe place to provide care and information.

Bloco A / Brazil

Reaching the most underserved

Spotlight on SAAF grantee partners increasing access to safe abortion care

Generation For Environmental Education and Enhanced Renewal (GREENER)

Nigeria

Reaching remote communities with reproductive health services

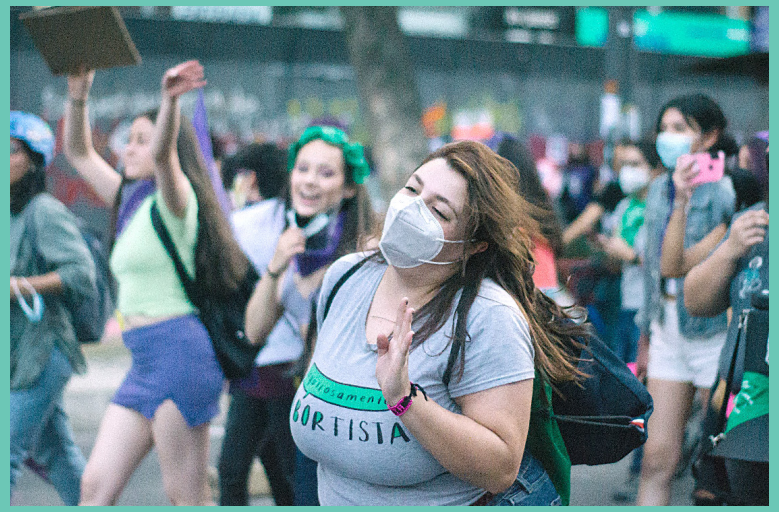
Young people at a community sensitization workshop

GREENER / Nigeria

Since becoming a SAAF grantee partner in January 2020, **GREENER** has supported 1297 women and girls from remote riverine communities in the Niger Delta region to access safe abortion and post-abortion care. Due to their remote location, the absence of an accessible healthcare system, and deep cultural taboos and stigma on abortion, young women in these communities often resort to unsafe means to discontinue unintended pregnancies.

GREENER trained healthcare providers and pharmacists to provide safe abortion care services. They also made bi-monthly visits to these service providers for capacity strengthening trainings, to monitor the quality of services, and to deliver essential medicines and commodities. 66% of the service delivery points have recorded a significant improvement in the quality of services accessible, especially in the provision of non-judgmental pre- and post-abortion counselling.

180 women and girls were trained as Community Change Agents and they have reached out to 6216 peers with information about their reproductive health and rights. On the last Saturday of every month, GREENER organizes boat trips to support women and girls in these remote communities to access the free contraceptives available under the Government's family planning programme. 90% of those who have accessed abortion or post-abortion care under the project have gone on to use a method of contraception, the majority choosing long-term methods.



Balance / Mexico

Balance Promoció para el Desarrollo y Juventud (Balance)

Mexico

Training doulas to accompany those travelling for abortion care

Through the 'Fondo Maria' project, **Balance** contributes towards making reproductive justice a reality for people in Mexico, where the ability to access safe abortion depends on where you live and what resources you have.

Since becoming a SAAF grantee partner in 2018, they have supported 1150 people to travel to Mexico City to access safe abortions. Fondo Maria also provides safe abortion information and accompaniment to those who are unwilling or unable to travel, as well as medical supplies, accommodation and food to those who travel by their own means to access services in Mexico City.

Balance has trained 36 abortion doulas to support and accompany those who need to travel for abortion care. Those who have received support have reported a 98% satisfaction rate. Supported individuals also receive informational postcards to take back to their own state to let others know about the warm support offered by Fondo Maria should others in their community need it.

Breaking the silence

Spotlight on SAAF grantee partners changing harmful norms on abortion

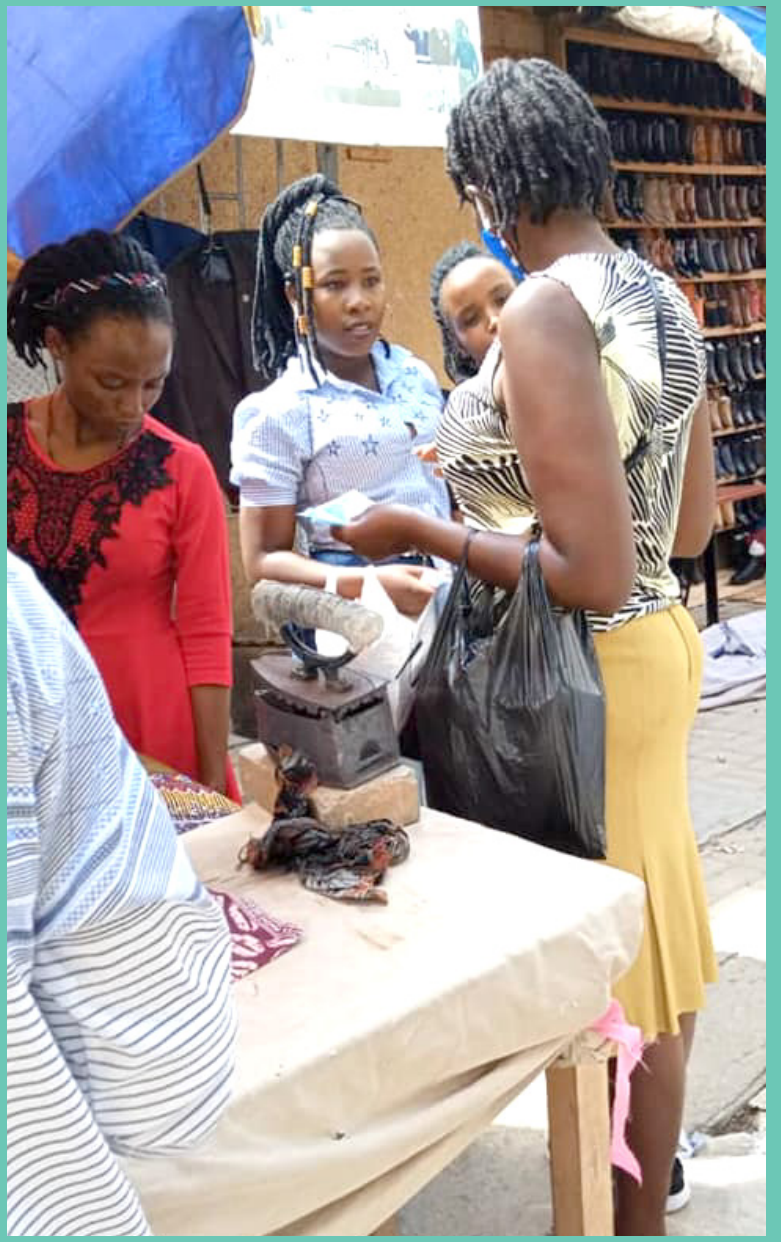
St. Augustine Community Health Centre (SACH)

Uganda

Reducing abortion stigma through community outreach

Through their own primary health care centre in the Mbarara District of Uganda, **SACH** had noted an increasing number of women coming for treatment of complications as a result of unsafe abortions. Funded by SAAF since 2018, SACH has focused on improving community knowledge of safe abortion options, and ensuring high quality and accessible services are available.

SACH has now increased the knowledge of over 5000 women and girls in Mbarara, conducting health education sessions in and out of schools, sharing information on the TV and radio, as well as door to door as part of their community outreach. The impact of this work is apparent through the results of the Stigmatizing Attitudes, Beliefs and Actions Scale (SABAS) study which SACH has used to gauge attitudes since the start of their project. In 2018, the average stigma score of community members engaged with this work was 72 – at the end of 2021, the average score was just 34.



Community education at a market
SACH/Uganda

La Red de Mujeres Afrolatinoamericanas, Afrocaribenas y de la Diaspora (RMAAD)

Nicaragua

Young people empowering each other with information about sexuality and rights

In Latin America, Nicaragua is the country with the highest proportion of adolescent pregnancy. Young people have limited access to information on sexuality, contraception and safe abortion. Young Afro-descendant and indigenous women are particularly excluded and discriminated against in health care services.

RMAAD (The Network of Afro-Latin American, Afro-Caribbean and Diaspora Women) has trained 37 young people from indigenous and Afro-descendant communities in Bonanza, Rosita, Waspan and Bilwi. These young people share the information they have learned with their peers, who are often reluctant to talk to elders and health professionals. They also accompany them to access sexual and reproductive health services if needed.

RMAAD ran a public campaign called "I decide...it's my right", sharing messages about sexual rights on TV and radio in Creole, Miskito and Spanish, to ensure rural communities could be reached. A total of 11,520 young people were reached by activities such as talks and fairs to promote SRHR.

"These training workshops have helped me to see, understand and put into practice what my sexuality is about. I am the owner of my body and no one else can decide about it."

Young participant Zulmy

RMAAD / Nicaragua

Sharing the evidence

Spotlight on SAAF grantee partners undertaking research

Right and Access for Women to Safe Abortion (RAWSA)

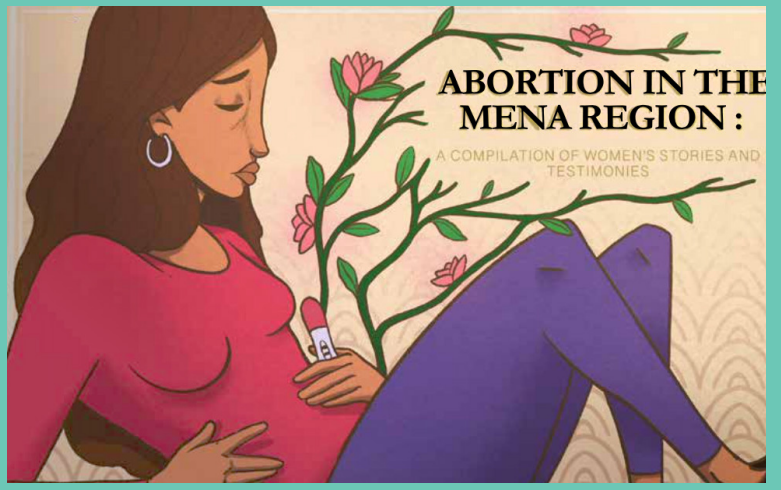
MENA region

Uncovering abortion stories from the Middle East and North Africa region

RAWSA is a network committed to safe abortion advocacy in the MENA region. With SAAF funding they are strengthening a group of advocates across the region to highlight existing barriers to safe abortion and the impact of stigma. In 2021, RAWSA added new country focal points to the network, launched a website (with a private members' area) and built their distribution list of contacts working to gather and share evidence and solidarity.

Using this evidence and data they have published a number of reports, including studies on the impact of COVID-19 on SRHR in the MENA region; and the consideration of telemedicine for sexual and reproductive health care.

RAWSA has also gathered anonymous testimonies of those who have accessed abortion care and published these to highlight the realities across the region.



RAWSA / Tunisia

"This collection of stories and testimonies aims to shed light on the barriers for access to safe abortion and their detrimental impact on women's lives in the region. Too often, women do not have the opportunity to talk and express themselves on this issue. This collection of stories is dedicated to raising and amplifying women's voices and allowing them to take space and to share what they are facing."

The YP Foundation/India

The YP Foundation

India

Exploring the perception of abortion and common myths in Assam and Kerala

Though abortion was legalized in India in 1971, myths and misconceptions are common and impact young people's access to safe services. With this in mind, **The YP Foundation** (TYPF) set out to conduct a piece of research with tea plantation workers in Assam and the traditional fisherfolk community of Trivandrum district in Kerala to investigate practical, social, and cultural barriers to abortion information and services.

The research team carried out interviews with 36 young people and community stakeholders across Assam and Kerala – moving the data collection to phone and online interviews in the wake of the COVID pandemic.

The research has been presented to the communities engaged for their consent and will soon be published on TYPF's SAFE resource hub alongside other vital resources on abortion in India. The research has informed TYPF's other activities including a youth fellowship and an online open course on abortion available in English, Malayalam, and Assamese.

Interviews with SAAF grantee partners

SAAF strives to provide ongoing, reliable support to organisations working to improve reproductive rights and access around the world. Some of the organisations we continue to provide funding to today have been partners since the first round of funding in 2007. Below are some short interviews with long-standing SAAF grantee partners:

Fundación Si Mujer

Colombia

Si Mujer has been receiving SAAF funding for just over four years. Their work with SAAF has been focused on empowering young people from marginalised backgrounds on a range of social justice issues, particularly sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Since 2017, 206 young leaders have attended Si Mujer's comprehensive training programme. They have gone on to support and accompany 116 other young people in their communities to access safe abortion services.

"It's been so good to see the young leaders we've worked with continue with such passion and engagement wherever they go. They continue to talk about sexual and reproductive rights in the spaces they are involved in, and to mobilise on issues that are important to them. Some are now mentors to the younger volunteers who are starting out. It's very satisfying for me to see the changes we can make to people's lives."

Amanda Giraldo Jara
Coordinator of Youth Work at Si Mujer

"I'm 20 years old and I've been involved with Si Mujer since I was 15 - it's helped me grow so much as a person. Through Si Mujer I was able to understand that as a woman I was no different from a man. This new kind of thinking changed my life completely and really made me grow as a person."

Gabriela Enriquez
Young Leader, Si Mujer

SOS Femme, Enfant en Catastrophe (SOSFEC)

Democratic Republic of Congo

SOSFEC works in South Kivu, an area of the DRC which has been affected by conflict for many years, and where women and girls are at high risk of sexual exploitation. Noting that women were dying from unsafe abortion procedures, SOSFEC first applied for SAAF funding back in 2014. Over the past eight years, through their training and engagements, they have seen a decrease in deaths from unsafe abortion.

SOSFEC has provided a total of 68,316 sexual and reproductive health services through their SAAF funded work.

"Before we had SAAF funding there were more unwanted pregnancies, more clandestine abortions, more unplanned births, more adolescent mothers, more newborns thrown into rivers and toilets or abandoned on the street. Thanks to the funding we now have three clinics, and all of the services we provide are free. We have contraceptives that sometimes even the General Hospital does not have.

We are recognised and approached by other local and national partners now. The difference is so remarkable on all levels."

Annie Nturubika Indi – Project Coordinator, SOSFEC

Krygyz Family Planning Alliance (KFPA)

Kyrgyzstan

Another of SAAF's longest-standing grantee partners, **KFPA** started receiving funding in 2014. In those years they have made significant improvements to safe abortion access in Krygyzstan.

As part of their community-led work to increase knowledge of abortion options, and improve services, KFPA had a huge win. They successfully introduced Medabon (abortion medication) to the country, where previously only surgical abortion was on offer.

"SAAF funding allowed us to expand our activities in regions where women had great problems accessing information on safe abortion. We have increased the number of our partners, and have developed regulatory documents on the provision and delivery of safe abortion services for health care organisations. Overall, funding from SAAF has increased the organisational, technical, and expert capacity of KFPA.

We are the first civil society organisation that has registered, assisted in importing, and promoted Medabon, a quality assured abortion drug, on the pharmaceutical market. Hundreds of Kyrgyz women have thus gained access to safe abortions using this medication.

A great achievement for us is that thanks to our activities, the number of abortions using curettage* has fallen from 70% to 5%. And the number of safe medical abortions has risen and continues to increase."

Baktygul Bozgorpoeva, Director of KFPA

*A method of abortion which carries a higher risk of complications, not recommended by the WHO

Supporting and connecting SAAF grantee partners

As a global fund focused exclusively on the right to safe and legal abortion, SAAF creates opportunities for organisations working on abortion to connect with like minded partners. Grantee partners are regularly consulted on our processes and we continue to work with all partners to ensure the support and networking opportunities we provide are inclusive and effective.

SAAF global gathering in 2019

Meetings and visits

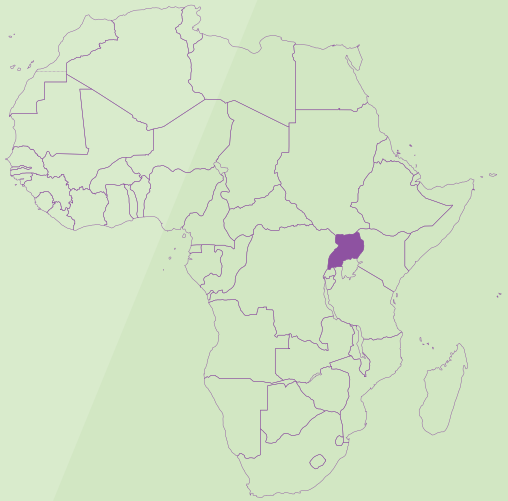
One SAAF staff visit was made to Uganda in November – to four organisations: **Lady Mermaid's Bureau**, **Association of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Uganda (AOGU)**, **The Center for Health, Human Rights, and Development (CEHURD)**, **St Augustine Community Health Centre (SACH)**. This provided an opportunity to visit with the staff, volunteers and clinics led by long-standing SAAF partners, and also to better connect organisations working on abortion in Uganda.

Due to the ongoing travel restrictions and safety concerns around the COVID-19 pandemic, online global gatherings were organized for grantee partners to connect and share learning and experiences. These virtual gatherings used simultaneous interpretation for English, French and Spanish to ensure cross-regional discussions.

In June, grantee partners discussed specific barriers and solutions to working on abortion access, particularly during the COVID pandemic, and in December, **Mama Network** led a discussion on expanding access to self-managed abortion.

SAAF staff members Andre and Phonsina visit SACH in Uganda

90% of respondents to the SAAF grantee partner survey reported attending SAAF webinars and shared positive feedback.



Grantee partner collaboration

Meeting of three SAAF grantee partners from Kyrgyzstan and Moldova

SAAF also provided funding support for grantee partners in the 'Great Lakes' region of Africa to hold a meeting in July. Representatives from six SAAF-funded organisations in Burundi, Rwanda and the DRC have formed a partnership to create a space for ongoing exchange and learning on safe abortion in the sub-region, and medical abortion in particular. Mutual learning visits and a shared platform for resources are under development.

Examples of grantee partner collaboration were invitations to meetings and trainings as well as specific technical assistance, such as one organisation supporting another to set up a digital Client Management Information System. SAAF grantee partners have also provided timely and vital support to individuals seeking abortion care, by making referrals across countries to other SAAF partner organisations.

"After the SAAF Latin America regional meeting in 2020, a WhatsApp group was set up in which colleagues from different organisations are in constant communication and we pass on information and collaborate in dissemination tasks. The SAAF communication channels have been very useful to us as they have allowed us to get to know, for example, the work done by colleagues in the Congo, which would have been impossible to know otherwise."

Survey response

69% of respondents to the SAAF grantee partner survey said they had collaborated with other grantee partners.

Communications

Following an in-depth piece of user research with grantee partners and others in the sector, we updated our communications strategy. This included the development of a brand new SAAF website, and an Instagram page for the fund, which has already attracted over 2000 followers.

Responding to grantee partners' requests, the new website is available in all three working languages of the fund, and is simple to navigate, with improved information about our funding processes.

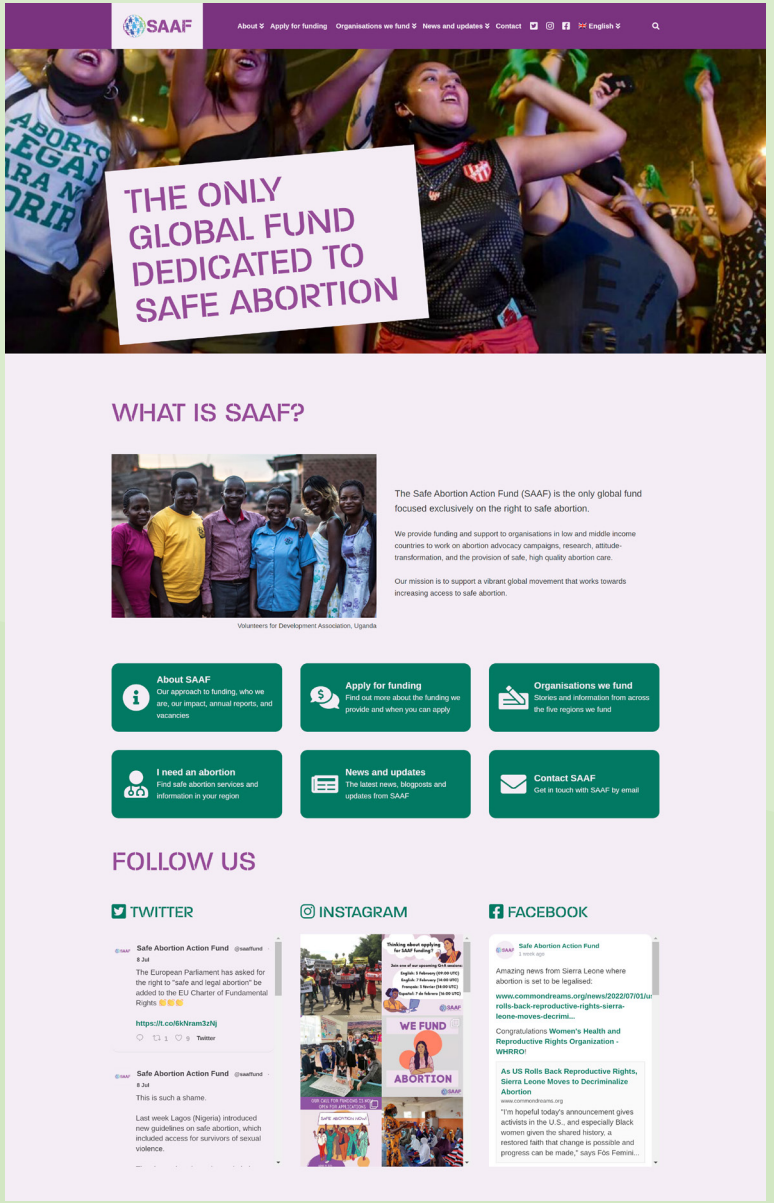
Through a partnership with Girls Globe, we published regular blogposts in 2021 – sharing the work of grantee partners with a global audience. Through this collaboration, young activists from SAAF grantee partners **Tamtang Group** and **WGNRR** also hosted an Instagram Live discussion to mark International Safe Abortion Day, and share their insights for abortion advocacy and communications.

In February, SAAF hosted a webinar showcasing the work of Argentinian grantee partners **Socorristas En Red** and **CDD Argentina**. Following the legalization of abortion, they were able to share their learnings from a successful advocacy campaign. The webinar was aimed at SAAF grantee partners but for the first time was also open to the wider reproductive justice community and was well attended.

In June, SAAF supported grantee partner **Somali Gender Justice** to hold a webinar launching their research findings on sexual violence and access to safe abortion in the Puntland region.

"Really enjoyed the recent meeting organised by SAAF between Las Socorristas and other organisations in Latin America. We think these regional exchanges really make sense as there are lots of areas/ experiences in common."

Survey response



saafund.org

Photo stories from Colombia

SAAF coordinated with grantee partner **Si Mujer** to publish a range of interviews with their staff and young volunteers. You can find the interviews in English and Spanish on our website.

"Cali, where we are based, was the epicentre of political demonstrations earlier this year, mostly led by young people. It was very powerful to see how our young leaders sought to get involved in the social protests. In some cases, they even took advantage of these social mobilizations to discuss issues like sexual violence, equity, gender, and sexual and reproductive rights. It was inspiring to see them take advantage of this opportunity, and they are now fighting for their rights in larger social justice spaces."

Alexandra Lamb Guevara – Projects Director, Si Mujer

Fundación Si Mujer/Colombia/
Angelica Sabogal Gallego

The SAAF board and governance

2021 saw some changes to the SAAF board. Dr Tlaleng Mofokeng, Manuelle Hurwitz, Alexandra Teixeira and Pushpa Joshi stepped down, and new members Eugenia López Uribe, Rawan Raad and Mamello Makhele were recruited.

We are delighted to have such knowledgeable and passionate board members overseeing SAAF decision making processes.

Current SAAF Board Members

Kelly Blanchard
President, Ibis Reproductive Health
Position On The Board: Representative of an International Organisation Working in The Field of Abortion

Camilla Holst Salvesen
Senior Adviser, Section For Gender Equality, Norwegian Agency For Development Cooperation, (Norad)
Position On The Board: Donor Representative

Eugenia López Uribe
Regional Director Of IPPF Americas And The Caribbean
Position On The Board: Representative of the Host Organisation (IPPF)

Génesis Luigi
Consultant
Position On The Board: Activist from the Global South

Mamello Makhele
SheDecides Leader
Position On The Board: Medical Professional

Rawan Raad
Program Coordinator at the Institute for Reproductive Health and Rights - Sudan
Position on the board: Youth Advocate

"I take great pride and honor in serving as a SAAF board member. SAAF is one of the few global funds committed and focused on enabling and supporting grassroots organisations to build momentum towards de-stigmatizing, promoting, and increasing access to safe abortion."

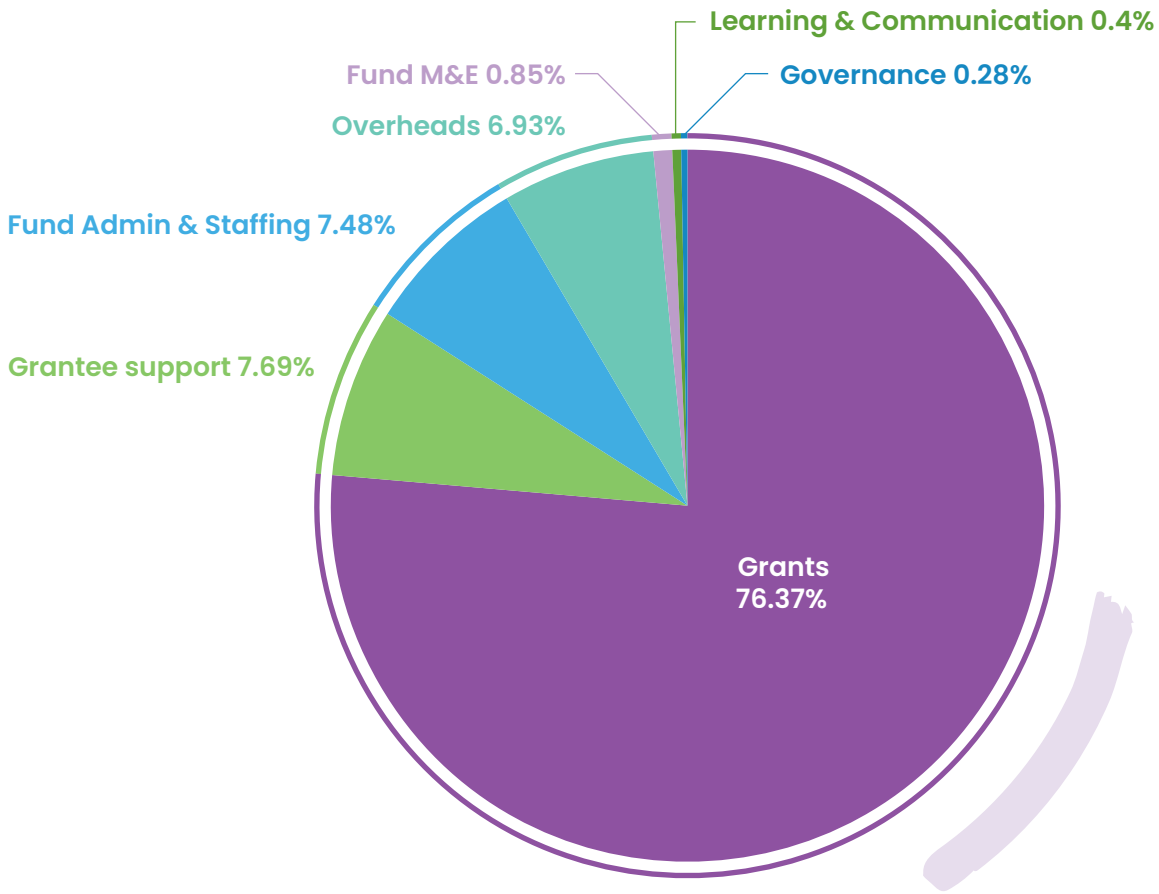
Rawan Raad – SAAF board member

SAAF financial information

SAAF's total expenditure in 2021 was $4,136,869 USD. Most of this expenditure ($2,969,916 USD) was project funding to grantee partner organisations. In 2021 the fund was supported by the governments of the Netherlands, Norway, the UK, and by an anonymous donor.

Across the most recent funding period (2017-2022) the total expenditure was $21,324,203 USD. The vast majority of this funding (84%) was used for grants and other forms of support for grantee partner organisations.

Total Expenditure	$21,324,203.00	%
Grants	$16,285,364.00	76.37%
Grantee Support	$1,640,269.00	7.69%
Fund Admin & Staffing	$1,595,002.00	7.48%
Overheads	$1,478,430.00	6.93%
Fund M&E	$181,092.00	0.85%
Learning & Communication	$84,368.00	0.40%
Governance	$59,678.00	0.28%



Shaping a new SAAF

In July 2021 SAAF hired independent consultants to undertake a full review of our grant-making processes with a feminist, rights-based lens. This involved a review of relevant documents and interviews with SAAF grantee partners, staff, board and external partners. A total of 42 individuals participated in the process, in English, French and Spanish.

We were pleased to see that overall, grantee partners were satisfied with their relationships with SAAF, and the funding process. However, specific recommendations to further improve on our systems were taken on board and have been addressed in the latest round of funding and our general work.

For example, capacity gaps within the team were addressed by the addition of four new positions: a Senior Finance Advisor, an Evaluation and Learning Advisor, a Programme Advisor focused on Technical Allyship, and an additional Programme Advisor. Hiring processes were adapted to deliberately diversify the team, advertising three of the four new positions in Africa and Latin America.

"Words that were used across all grantee partner groups to describe SAAF's work were: Flexible, accountable, and consultative."

SAAF grant making review report

The YP Foundation/India

For the new round of funding, we have made some important changes:

- In advertising the funding, we expanded our dissemination, and focused on approaching organisations in previously underserved areas, such as the Caribbean and Francophone Africa. We also contacted groups not working directly on SRHR, for example, feminist-led networks, and organisations focused on supporting people living with disabilities and LGBTQI+ individuals.

- We introduced new questions about gender-transformative work and are tracking whether organisations are led by women and/or trans people to ensure these organisations make up the majority of those we fund.

- We became more explicit about our values, and introduced new questions to assess the mission, vision and values of applicants more systematically.

- We have expanded the financial remit for organisations applying for funding, specifically including budget for organisational strengthening and movement building.

- We have simplified the application process and budget templates which has already proven popular with those shortlisted for funding.

- We have removed the need for grantee partners to report set indicators, based on numerical targets, and introduced a more flexible approach to measurement of progress, based on grantee partners' own definitions of success.

- We have moved to an online application system which reduces administration burden on both the grantee partners and the SAAF team, and allows for easier and better data collection.

"When I think of SAAF, I think trust. It is difficult to have a close relationship with funders. They are very hierarchical, very rigid, and they are creating many stringent requirements for social movements to fulfil."

Grantee partner, SAAF grant making review

NFFCK/Kyrgyzstan

SAAF grantee partners

In 2021, SAAF was funding a total of 75 organisations.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Regional
Consorcio Latinoamericano Contra el Aborto Inseguro(CLACAI)

Mexico
Balance Promoción para el Desarrollo y Juventud

Equifonía, colectivo por la ciudadanía, autonomía y libertad de las Mujeres AC

Anonymous Organisation

Venezuela
Anonymous Organisation

Guatemala
Asociación Civil, Colectivo para la Participación de la Infancia y Juventud (COPIJ)

Nicaragua
Asociación Red de Mujeres Afrolatinoamericanas, Afrocaribeñas y de la Diáspora (RMAAD)

Colombia
Fundación Si Mujer

Peru
Centro de la Mujer Peruana Flora Tristán

Anonymous Organisation

Bolivia
Manodiversa

Argentina
Asociación Civil por el Derecho a Decidir (CDD Argentina)

Socorristas en Red-Feministas que Abortamos

Brazil
Anis – Institute of Bioethics

Bloco A

Católicas pelo Direito de Decidir Brasil (CDD Brazil)

Instituto Patrícia Galvão – Mídia e Direitos

Sub-Saharan Africa

Regional
Mama Network

Burkina Faso
Communauté d'Action pour la Promotion de la Santé Sexuelle et Reproductive au Burkina Faso (CAPSSR-BF)

Organisation pour de Nouvelles Initiatives en Développement et Santé (ONIDS)

Sierra Leone
Women's Health and Reproductive Rights Organization (WHRRO)

Liberia
Consortium: Women Solidarity Incorporated, Sisters Aid Liberia and Her Voice Liberia

Ghana
MABIA-Ghana

Sao Tome & Principe
Santomense Association for Family Promotion

Nigeria
Generation For Environmental Education and Enhanced Renewal (GREENER)

International Centre for Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development (CENPAD)

Women Friendly Initiative

North Africa and the Middle East

Regional
Groupe Tawhida Ben Cheikh/RAWSA

Lebanon
Anonymous Organisation

Cameroon
Anonymous Organisation

Congo (DRC)
Comité d'Echange et d'Information sur la femme et pour le Développement (CEIFD)

Groupement des Femmes Vivant avec le VIH

Si Jeunesse Savait

Anonymous Organisation

Zambia
Copper Rose Zambia

South Africa
The Western Cape Health Foundation

Women's Legal Centre

Somalia
Somali Gender Justice

Kenya
Kenya Legal & Ethical Issues on HIV and AIDS (KELIN)

Trust for Indigenous Culture and Health (TICAH)

Women Promotion Centre

Uganda
Association of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Uganda (AOGU)

Center for Health, Human Rights and Development (CEHURD)

Kyetume Community Based Health Care Programme

Lady Mermaid's Bureau

St. Augustine Community Health Centre (SACH)

The Community Health Rights Network (COHERINET)

Tusitukirewamu Group

Volunteers for Development Association in Uganda (VODA)

Anonymous Organisation

Anonymous Organisation

Malawi
Centre for Solutions Journalism (CSJ News)

Foundation for Children's Rights

Mozambique
Centro Internacional para Saúde Reprodutiva (ICRH-M)

Zimbabwe
Women's Action Group

Rwanda
Health Development Initiative

Burundi
Réseau SOS femmes en Détresse

Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Regional
Regional Training Center

Georgia
Union of PLHIV in Georgia "Real People Real Vision"

Kyrgyzstan
Kyrgyz Family Planning Alliance

National Federation of Female Communities of Kyrgyzstan (NFFCK)

Tajikistan
Tajik Family Planning Alliance

Asia and the Pacific

Afghanistan
Sustainable Development Organization for Women

Pakistan
Shirkat Gah – Women's Resource Centre

Nepal
Action Works Nepal

Population, Health and Development Group (PHD Group)

Visible Impact

India
Hidden Pockets Collective

Sama Resource Group for Women and Health

The YP Foundation

Bangladesh
Bangladesh Women's Health Coalition (BWHC)

Thailand
Tamtang Group

Vietnam
Vietnam Family Planning Association

Philippines
Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR)

Cambodia
Reproductive Health Association of Cambodia

“It feels like SAAF is part of our work. They are a partner in the work. They are not a traditional donor-grantee relationship. We can ask questions. We feel relaxed. We feel flexible.”

Grantee partner, SAAF grant making review report.

SAAF is hosted by the
International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

IPPF, 4 Newhams Row London SE1 3UZ
United Kingdom

For quarterly updates on SAAF’s work please join the mailing list www.saafund.org/register.

SAAF Safe Abortion Action Fund

IPPF

Sister Aid Liberia/Liberia