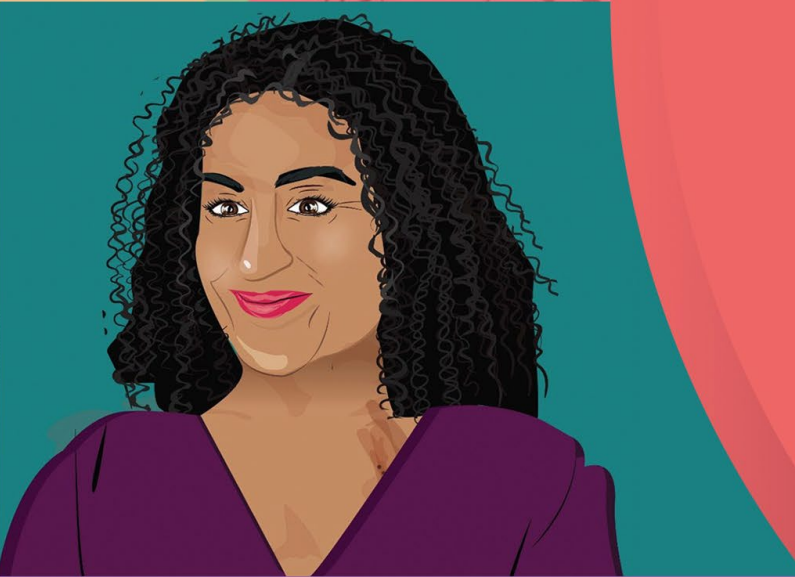


SAHIYO U.S.
ANNUAL
REPORT
JULY 1, 2021 TO
JUNE 30, 2022

SAHIYO'S FIFTH ANNUAL
VIRTUAL
**Activist
Retreat**
PLEASE SUBMIT INTEREST FORM HERE - 2022
[SAHIYO ACTIVIST RETREAT INTEREST FORM](#) -
SUBMIT BY MAY 7TH
JUNE
3-5TH 2022



**The
Verbal
Cut**
*Maryan's
Story*
Art by
Debasmita
Dasgupta



**"WILL MY
DAUGHTER
EVER
FORGIVE
ME?"**
Dear Maasi's latest entry
sahiyo
United Against Female Genital Cutting



	Welcome Letter from the US Executive Director.....	3
	Background / About Us	4
	Meet the Team	5
	Theory of Change	10
	Partner Organizations	12
	Programs & Impacts	13
	Finances and Funding Sources	20
	Get Involved	21
	Acknowledgments	22



Greetings!

Another year has gone by, and Sahiyo U.S. continues to reach significant milestones in our work to end female genital cutting (FGC). After six years, we've launched a new website to better reflect the story of how Sahiyo came to be and the work we've accomplished since our founding in December 2015.

Here's a look at some of those accomplishments:

With the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic, Sahiyo U.S. extended our offering of programming in virtual formats, oftentimes finding creative solutions to ensure we could be inclusive of communities and stakeholders impacted by FGC across various time zones, both throughout the country and internationally.

In January 2022, we hosted our 6th Voices to End FGM/C Digital Storytelling workshop with 11 participants joining virtually from 6 different countries. These storytellers' thoughtful and beautiful digital stories will be released in the fall of 2022.

A few months later in June 2022, we hosted our 5th annual Activist Retreat with 15 participants connected to the Dawoodi Bohra community, some of whom are survivors, and others who are devoted to ending FGC in this community. Since this was a three-day virtual event, for the first time, we extended an invitation to participants in Europe.

We have continued to build our Outreach and Education programs throughout the last year and hosted over 40 training sessions and events in the same timeframe. We couldn't have achieved this without the work of our new Programs Assistant or



the support of our wonderful interns. These essential team members coordinate and organize educational webinars that bring together survivors, community members, health care providers, educators, and government officials to educate the broader community on the harms of FGC and what we can do to support survivors.

Finally, we're so very pleased to announce that Sahiyo U.S. was a sub-recipient of a three-year federal grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime in collaboration with Asian Women's Shelter and StoryCenter. This award will allow us to expand our Voices to End FGM/C Digital Storytelling project. We have also begun to educate advocates at Asian Women's Shelter on FGC, so they can also provide services to survivors facing this form of gender-based violence.

I am so proud of our team and everything we have accomplished. The work we have done this past year has only strengthened our unwavering commitment to amplifying survivors' voices through storytelling advocacy. With this in mind, I'm excited to present our July 2021-June 2022 Annual Report. As we look to the future with anticipation and hope, we thank you for your continued support in helping us meet our mission.

In solidarity,

Mariya Taher, U.S. Executive Director
Sahiyo – United Against Female Genital Cutting



ABOUT SAHIYO

Sahiyo is the Bohra Gujarati word for ‘saheliyo,’ or female friends, and reflects our mission to empower Asian and other communities to end FGC and create positive social change through dialogue, education, and collaboration based on community involvement. The World Health Organization defines FGC as “all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injuries to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.” FGC can have lifelong physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual impacts on a person.

Sahiyo’s vision is to end female genital cutting (also known as female genital mutilation or female circumcision), which has been internationally recognized as a human rights violation. We aim to enable

a culture in which a person’s body and sexuality are not feared or suppressed but embraced as normal. We recognize and emphasize the values of consent and women and peoples right over their own bodies.

Sahiyo U.S. ‘s programs operate transnationally, with primary work carried out in the United States. We work with survivors, their families, and their larger religious/ethnic communities in which FGC continues as a social norm. Sahiyo was recognized in 2018 by the Population Reference Bureau as one of six inspiring organizations working to end FGC. Sahiyo U.S. is a fiscally sponsored project of Empowerments Works. Our programs and activities are financed through individual donations and private foundations.



Mariya Taher
U.S. Executive
Director

 mariya@sahiyo.org

U.S. Executive Director Mariya Taher has worked in gender-based violence for over a decade in teaching, research, policy, program development, and direct service. Currently, Mariya sits on the US End FGM/C Network steering committee, serves as an expert consultant for the Department of Justice's Addressing Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Technical Assistance Project, and is a program strategist for SOAR's Survivor Storytelling Project. Mariya is also an extensive writer and has contributed to NPR, Brown Girl Magazine, The San Francisco Examiner, and more. She holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Lesley University, an MSW from San Francisco State University, and a BA from UC Santa Barbara in Religious Studies.



**Kristel Mendoza
Castillo**
Communications
Coordinator

 kristel@sahiyo.org

Communications Coordinator Kristel Mendoza Castillo recently finished her BA degree in Communications from the University of Connecticut. She is passionate about women's rights, gender equality, and social justice, and strongly believes in Sahiyo's message. Kristel enjoys using her marketing and social media knowledge to bring awareness and impact that will help enforce Sahiyo's mission of ending female genital cutting and empowering girls and women globally.



Cate Cox
Programs
Coordinator

 catherine@sahiyo.org

Programs Coordinator Catherine Cox is an undergraduate student at Simmons University studying International Relations, with minors in Economics and Arabic. She is passionate about women's and human rights and hopes to enter into those fields once she graduates. She has worked with many international organizations supporting women's and children's rights and has published a paper on gender-based violence within the United States. She is excited to help Sahiyo uplift women's voices everywhere and create positive change.



Rachel Wine
Editorial
Coordinator

 rachel@sahiyo.org

Editorial Coordinator Rachel Wine is a recent graduate of Georgetown University’s MSc Global Health program, where she focused on mental health equity. In 2020, she earned her BSPH at Tulane University with a double-major in Public Health and Anthropology, and a minor in International Development. Her passion lies at the intersection of activism and storytelling, and she is honored to continue Sahiyo’s work of elevating survivors’ voices for the empowerment of people everywhere.



Michelle Taylor
Development
Coordinator

 michelle@sahiyo.org

Development Coordinator Michelle Taylor comes to Sahiyo with over a decade of nonprofit development and fundraising experience. Michelle earned a BS in Business from California State University, Long Beach. She developed a strong sense of commitment to bettering the world by focusing on individual community development as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Sénégal. Expanding on this desire to help others, she then earned a MS in International Affairs from Marquette University. Michelle is excited to contribute her knowledge of nonprofit event planning, finance, and marketing and her passion for her greater community to help advance Sahiyo’s mission to end FGC.



Meg Sinnott
Programs
Assistant

 meg@sahiyo.org

Programs Assistant Meg Sinnott recently finished her Bachelor’s degree in Sociology and Social Policy at Trinity College Dublin, in Ireland. As a Swiss-born traveler, she has developed a love for learning about different cultures, which has led her to become an advocate for the empowerment of minority groups. During university, Meg was an avid member of the Gender Equality Society and coordinated university-wide International Women’s Week. She recently moved to Colorado with her dog Ruby and looks forward to supporting and expanding Sahiyo’s various programs.



Arefa Cassoobhoy
Sahiyo U.S. Advisory Board Chair

 arefac@gmail.com

Arefa Cassoobhoy, Sahiyo U.S. Advisory Board Chair, is an internal medicine physician, a health communications professional and an advocate for health equity and health literacy committed to raising awareness of topics like female genital cutting. Her projects focus on empowering individuals to improve their wellness through partnerships involving advocacy, research and education. Most recently Dr. Cassoobhoy was Chief Medical Editor and Vice President of Medical Affairs at Everyday Health Group. Prior to that she was at WebMD and Medscape. She is on the Emory School of Medicine Alumni Board and the Board of Directors at the Clarkston Community Health Center, a non-profit clinic for immigrants and other individuals without adequate health insurance. She is an advisor for the Community Health Promoters Program at the Refugee Women’s Network. Dr. Cassoobhoy is a board-certified internist with degrees from Emory University in medicine, public health, anthropology and human biology.



Zehra Patwa
Sahiyo U.S. Advisory Board Vice-Chair

 zehra.patwa@gmail.com

Zehra Patwa is the Co-Founder and US Lead of WeSpeakOut, an organization striving to work for equal rights for Bohra women, specifically, on FGM/C (khafz). Educated at the University of Bradford Management Centre in the UK and the Université de Montpellier in France, Zehra serves on several Boards, including Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS), and Hopkins School in New Haven. Discovering well into adulthood that khafz (type 1 FGM/C) was practiced in her community, and that she had been subjected to it also, she has worked with WeSpeakOut to expose the practice within, and outside, the community. Zehra is working to bring about an anti-FGM/C law in CT. She works in Digital Customer Delivery for the Knights of Columbus in New Haven, CT.

Additional Sahiyo U.S. Advisory Board Members

 **Nesha Abiraj**

 **Renee Bergstrom**

 **Alisha Bhagat**

 **Insia Dariwala**

 **Joanne Golden**

 **Priya Goswami**

 **Aarefa Johari**

 **Jo Keogh**

 **Zahra Qaiyumi**

 **Maryum Saifee**

 **Sakina Sharp**

 **Joanna Vergoth**

 **Kristen Zaleski**

“
My biggest takeaway from joining this community was finding my voice in speaking out against FGC. I gained confidence in sharing my story about the issues of FGC education in college because I was assured that it is a story worth sharing.
Hunter Kessous”

Thank you to our wonderful interns:

Social media interns support Sahiyo’s communications, providing content for our social media channels, and strategizing around digital campaigns to engage and educate survivors, advocates, and the larger community. Interns this year include **Kamakshi Arora, Kristel Mendoza Castillo** (now staff), **Megan Maxwell, Anabelle Tarango, Katie Geren,** and **Olachi Nwagu.**

The communications interns assist the Communications Coordinator and wider team with internal and external communications activities. Interns this year include **Meaghan Payne, Maiyim Jordan Da Cruz,** and **Grace Berrios.**

Program interns support education and outreach efforts by planning and coordinating virtual events, such as our webinar on male ally engagement in preventing FGC or virtual screening of the Voices to End FGM/C digital stories. Interns this year included: **Sarah Boudreau, Ellen Ince, Beth Fotheringham,** and **Amela Tokić.**

Development interns ensure the organization remains financially stable by maintaining relationships and securing funds from grant-making organizations, as well as enacting fundraising campaigns to support Sahiyo’s programs. Interns this year include **Yusra Majoka, Shelby Smith, Marilou Cameron, Avery Boudreau, Katia Orozco Saucedo, Anaïs Furukawa,** and **Shatize Pope.**

Editorial interns assist the Editorial Coordinator with blog development, creation of the monthly newsletter, and copyediting for Sahiyo’s new website. Interns this year include **Kristin Grady** and **Urvashi Sharma.**



Based on external research on FGC and independent research Sahiyo conducted with over 400 women from FGC practicing communities, we developed a theory of change that leads to two primary outcomes:

- 1) Increased abandonment of FGC amongst future generations of girls and**
- 2) A strong network of community advocates raising awareness of FGC within their own communities that will lead to the social norm change of abandoning FGC.**

Our Theory of Change was also developed with influence from our partner organization Tostan's Social Norm Approach. Tostan, a nearly 30-year old NGO, has utilized social norm theory to reduce FGC in Senegal. In 2014, they reported **a 69% reduction in instances of FGC** over the course of 5 years. Subsequently, **UNFPA-UNICEF** Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation has also found social norm change interventions to be effective.

FGC continues because it is a deeply embedded social norm justified by cultural or religious necessity, and/or the need to control a woman's sexuality. As such, social norm theory dictates that the threat of social rejection is very real if an individual makes different choices from those of the group.

Therefore, despite **Sahiyo's research revealing that 81% of the Bohra community does not want FGC to continue, the fear of social rejection and resulting silence surrounding the practice has allowed it to do just that.** Sahiyo understands that only by building a critical mass of voices willing to challenge FGC will the trend towards abandoning it gain momentum. Obtaining community member buy-in is, therefore, the most important variable in determining abandonment of FGC. **Creating safe spaces and mechanisms that allow community members to share dialogues on the topic without fear of reprisal, or if that cannot be avoided, establishing a built-in support system to turn to when reprisals occur, is a critical factor towards social change.**

So far, anti-FGC advocacy amongst Asian communities has focused on breaking that silence, supporting survivors, raising awareness, and seeking legal bans. This vital groundwork has led community members to debate FGC with family, friends, young mothers, mosque leaders, etc. These conversations are the imperative next step to ending FGC.

A 2018 study revealed that once 25% of a social group adopts a new social norm, the rest will follow. To reach a 25% tipping point that shifts the social norm from cutting to not cutting, vast numbers of community members must have informed conversations on FGC. Sahiyo utilizes social mobilization techniques involving storytelling to further this effort.



CHALLENGING FACTORS

- FGC continues because it is a deeply embedded social norm justified by reasons of religion, culture, gender roles (i.e., sexual control)
- Lack of dialogue and communication around FGC due to fear of social exclusion, getting in legal trouble, etc.
- Lack of skills to engage in effective dialogue
- Lack of awareness of FGC amongst Asian communities due to lack of research, leading to lack of support and funding for resources connected to prevention of FGC and support for survivors

WHO WE WORK WITH

- FGC survivors & community members
- Advocates and allies
- Civil society (NGOs)
- Child welfare professionals
- Government
- Health professionals
- Gender-based violence advocates

PROGRAMS



OUTCOMES / GOALS

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

Building a coalition of stories across different platforms (blogs, photos, video, theater, etc.) on FGC and uplift survivors voices.

Helping to connect survivors globally through shared experience as well as breaking the silence and isolation.

Addressing the research gap that exists on FGC amongst Asian communities, including diaspora communities (FGC prevalence, health impacts, best practices in advocacy efforts to end FGC, etc.).

LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES

Creating a critical mass of voices speaking publicly against FGC that will lead to a social norm shift within FGC practicing communities toward viewing FGC as a social ill.

Establishing a strong network of community advocates raising awareness of FGC within their own communities, leading to increased percentages of abandonment of FGC.

Researching on FGC amongst Asian communities and other communities that enables policy creation and implementation of laws against FGC and funding for support programs for survivors.

What We Do

At Sahiyo, we offer a variety of resources and programs to spread awareness and education about FGC and provide a platform for those impacted to share their stories:

We pride ourselves on being an all-women-led organization, with staff and advisory board members representing diverse backgrounds of ethnicities, religions, sexualities, and ages. This past year, Sahiyo U.S. brought on new part-time staff, including a new Editorial Coordinator, Programs Assistant, Development Coordinator, and Communications Coordinator to help increase our capacity to meet our mission. We've also expanded our internship program, and over the past year have trained 16 interns. Our Sahiyo volunteer program has grown significantly as well; today we have 60+ volunteers from 9 countries.

Sahiyo staff and board member diversity:

- **59% identify as BIPOC**
- **86% are survivors of FGC or friends/family of survivors**
- **100% identify as women**

Sahiyo intern and volunteer diversity:

- **77% identify as BIPOC**
- **45% are survivors of FGC or friends/family of survivors**
- **82% identify as women**



As a result, our programs and campaigns have garnered attention in various media articles over the past year, including:

- [Training journalists in gender-sensitive reporting: Sahiyo](#)
- [Stateside: Judge dismisses Michigan FGM case](#)
- [Khatna: More than a Religious and Social Norm](#)
- [Eating from the Bohra Thaal](#)
- [An Unspoken Abuse: Time to End Female Genital Mutilation in Pakistan](#)
- [What Can States Do to Address Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting](#)



Choosing to go against the traditions ingrained in me by my faith can be a very lonely experience. Sahiyo, like the name implies, brings people together and reminds me that I am not alone.

Umme Kulsoom Arif

Sahiyo Blog

Sahiyo provides survivors of FGC, FGC-practicing communities, and advocates against FGC a platform to share their stories, opinions, research, and work towards ending FGC. Storytelling is an important medium for healing and allows people impacted by FGC to share narratives in their own words and connect with others through shared experiences.

The Sahiyo blog collects and distributes survivor story submissions and gives a voice to those looking to express themselves. Our readers and authors hail from the U.S., India, the U.K., Pakistan, Kenya, and across the globe. This year alone, Sahiyo has published 126 blog posts. Over time, the blog has increased in viewership, and between 2021-2022 we received 191,222 views. Some posts from this past year include various topics, such as:


- [Dear Maasi: Will My Daughter Ever Forgive Me?](#)
- [How I took part in the Each One, Reach Bhaiyo Campaign: Turning neighbors, friends, and community members into Bhaiyos](#)
- [End FGM: Save Our Daughters](#)

In 2021, we launched a new column: [Scenarios by Sahiyo](#). Created and illustrated by Kamakshi Arora, these blogs feature short comic strips based on real-life stories by activists, advocates, and allies working to end FGC. The project aims to portray particularly personal interactions, ones that are often the hardest to conduct, that end in a positive outcome, such as a breakthrough in communication or a change in perspective. The comic strips are designed to build on Sahiyo’s mission of empowering FGC-impacted communities through storytelling, with the visual art style accompanying the stories as an effective aid.

Read these personal stories [here](#).

SCENARIOS
by **sahiyo**


Rahat and Afeera



Why is she speaking about her own khatna? Why couldn't she only talk about her research?

Afeera reads a story about FGC that her daughter Rahat has written for a large American magazine. She reveals that she had undergone female genital cutting at the age of seven and speaks out against the practice. Afeera is shocked and ashamed that her daughter is talking about this so publicly.

Though Rahat never says it, Afeera feels as if her daughter holds her own khatna against her, but doesn't dare to ask. She instead attempts to defend the practice, much to Afeera's frustration. She tries to explain to her mother why FGC is wrong, and also why she felt she had to publicly speak out against it while coming out as a survivor herself in the process.

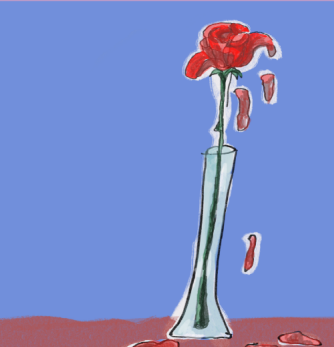



But it's tradition... It's a part of our community and culture...

Afeera thinks back to when her daughter was cut, remembering afterwards, wiping away her tears and taking into her arms to comfort her. How could her daughter not blame her for the pain she caused her?

Afeera thought she was doing what was best for her daughter, but now she feels as if she has let her down by following community norms and expectations.

Mother and daughter have many conversations following Rahat's appearance on TV. Though both start from very different points, struggling to understand the other, they are able to slowly come to terms with their past and present and learn how to heal and move forward. With time and introspection, they reach understanding and forgiveness.






I don't blame you.

In one of these conversations, Afeera vulnerably admits that she thinks Rahat blames her for the pain and trauma. Rahat consoles her, that she never blamed her.

She understands that her mother did what most women in the community are expected to do without questioning anything. However, many survivors suffer considerably and unnecessarily from the practice of female genital cutting. The way to ensure future generations are not made to go through the same experience is to talk about this taboo topic and break the social norm through education and advocacy.

Through her own journey of resolving such a personal conflict, Rahat gains important insight into how community and family elders, especially mothers, do not want to speak about or address FGC as an issue, because that might mean facing guilt over the pain that khatna has caused to so many girls.



*Female genital cutting is referred as Khatna within the Bohra community.
Sahiyo resources - <https://sahiyo.com/sahiyo-resources/>



“
Sahiyo is a wonderful organization making a huge difference to the world for women and children for generations to come. I’m so grateful to Sahiyo because as a survivor of FGM/C, they helped me heal.
Shabana Feroze

Voices to End FGM/C:

Voices to End FGM/C is a joint digital storytelling project, initiated in 2018 by Sahiyo and StoryCenter, seeking to mobilize a critical mass of storytellers and activists from across the globe. The project brings people together to share and heal from their experiences of FGM/C, connect and grow as leaders in their own communities, and create short digital videos calling for an end to this harmful practice. The Voices project is ultimately about breaking from deeply ingrained social norms by normalizing the voices of those who dare to speak publicly and openly about a practice that many communities consider taboo to discuss. With storytelling comes a ripple effect in that one person's story can influence others to also share. As stories build, the gap in data that exists on the total number of those impacted globally by FGM/C will further be closed.

In 2022, Sahiyo hosted our **6th workshop virtually with 9 participants over a 6-week period**, which resulted in 8 new videos. In all, **55 Voices to End FGM/C videos** have been shared with the wider public through YouTube and our educational outreach programming. After taking part in our Voices program, **92.7% of workshop participants have continued to stay involved with our organization** and Sahiyo's work as ambassadors and volunteers.

Participants have hailed from **19+ countries, including Singapore, Tanzania, Egypt, Chad, Pakistan, Bahrain, India, the U.S., and Zimbabwe**. These stories have been used on a variety of platforms to act as educational material, not only in communities that practice FGM/C but also with healthcare professionals and government officials. Since 2018, the **55 videos have been viewed over 45,000 times across Sahiyo's social media platforms**.

Also this year, in partnership with Asian Women's Shelter and StoryCenter, Sahiyo applied for and was awarded a three-year grant to expand the Voices project from the U.S. Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime. This project also includes developing a training curriculum and materials utilizing Voices videos to educate gender-based violence advocates working in domestic violence and sexual assault organizations on FGC so that the overall capacity for care for FGC survivors can be increased.

“
Each of our voices matters, each unique expression holds a different lens and angle like holding rays of light.
Ibtisam



U.S. Activist Retreats:



In 2017, Sahiyo conducted a **Needs Assessment survey** of anti-FGC activists and found that discussion among anti-FGC activists helped to further understand their challenges and ways of overcoming those challenges to end FGC. Since 2017, Sahiyo has hosted annual **Activist Retreats** in response to these findings and recognition that many activists had been working in isolation, and desired to connect with others. Sahiyo Activist Retreats help to strengthen relationships amongst the activists, who are often geographically distant from one another and allow for best practices and tools to be shared. As a result, activists are now utilizing these best practices and tools in their advocacy work, and various new collaborations have formed between and amongst Retreat attendees.

Sahiyo held our **5th annual Retreat** in June 2022 with **16 participants**. For the first time ever, this Retreat also included participants from the United Kingdom. Since the program’s inception, **Sahiyo has trained over 77 advocates**, who have gone on to organize and host workshops to raise awareness of FGC; participate in outreach campaigns within communities, and give testimony at policy briefings in various states on FGC. Due to the pandemic, Sahiyo continues to host the Activist Retreat virtually to support and connect activists from the Bohra community working to end FGC.



“

The Sahiyo Bohra Activist Retreat creates a safe space for people to connect and collaborate on a shared goal of ending FGC, while also creating a compassionate and healing environment in which participants can be vulnerable.

Zahra Qaiyumi

Community Outreach and Education Events:



2021 Sahiyo Critical Intersections between FGC and Racism webinar

Sahiyo holds monthly community outreach and education events on an array of topics related to FGC and Sahiyo’s work. Through these events, we continue to engage communities in conversations related to FGC and uplift the voices of those working to end the practice. **In 2021-2022 we hosted and participated in 40 different community outreach and educational events, reaching around 2,000 people from across the globe.** Some event topics included:

- [Critical Intersections: Anti Racism and Female Genital Cutting](#)
- [How to Stop The Rising Trend of Medicalizing Female Genital Cutting in Asia](#)
- [Sahiyo Massachusetts Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners \(SANEs\) Training on Female Genital Cutting](#)
- [World Bank Law, Justice, and Development Week: Webinar on Racism and Female Genital Cutting](#)



In addition to presentations, Sahiyo organizes public awareness and community outreach campaigns such as our **“Religion and FGC Campaign”** and our **“Father’s Day Campaign: Engaging Men to End FGC.”** Our campaigns encourage community participation against FGC and use grassroots communications methods such as Whatsapp, Facebook, and Instagram to engage with communities. Our Father’s Day campaign garnered 747 views, our Religion and FGC campaign garnered 8,647 views, and our Each One, Reach Bhaiyo campaign garnered 12,517 views – **totaling an engagement of 21,911.**



American Bar Association 2022 International Law Section Annual Conference



2022 Massachusetts Children’s Alliance Annual Conference

Bhaiyo

In February 2021, Sahiyo launched **“Bhaiyo”** (“brothers” or “male friends” in Gujarati), which exists as a mirror to Sahiyo, the Bohra Gujarati word for female friends. As an initiative emerging from male allies who attended the 2020 Activists’ Retreat, Bhaiyo launched to purposefully create a space where male allies could gather to collaborate, spark dialogue, and spread information about FGC. Bhaiyo allows male allies to have an open and honest conversation about a topic they may or may not know about, and gives male-identifying members of the community a way to become involved in the work to end FGC. Bhaiyo currently supports 16 male allies who volunteer to help the program.

Since the inception of Bhaiyo, we have continued to hold and participate in a number of educational events on male allyship. The **Global Platform for Action to End FGM/C**, of which Sahiyo is a member organization, held a webinar in March of 2022 at the 66th Commission on the Status of Women titled, **‘Engaging Men to End Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting.’** This event featured our Bhaiyo program, with speakers such as Sahiyo’s Programs Coordinator Catherine Cox and Sahiyo Co-Founder Mariya Taher. This live webinar explored how boys and men are involved in efforts to end FGC globally, and what the movement is doing to expand male participation.

Additionally, Sahiyo launched the educational campaign Each One, Reach Bhaiyo on International Women’s Day in March 2022 with the premise that participants would speak to one or more male-identifying people in their life to educate them about the topic of FGC and encourage them to join Bhaiyo. As a result of this campaign, **19 people** reached out to men in their lives and communities, **educating over 23 men** on the need for male involvement in our work to end FGC. Their experiences were shared on social media to help garner attention to the need to involve men in our work to abandon FGC.

“

I felt its important to speak to other men in the community because FGM/C is an issue that not only impacts women’s lives directly, but also the larger community and its attitude towards women and girls. It is necessary to engage with men to build awareness and take steps towards change.

Anonymous

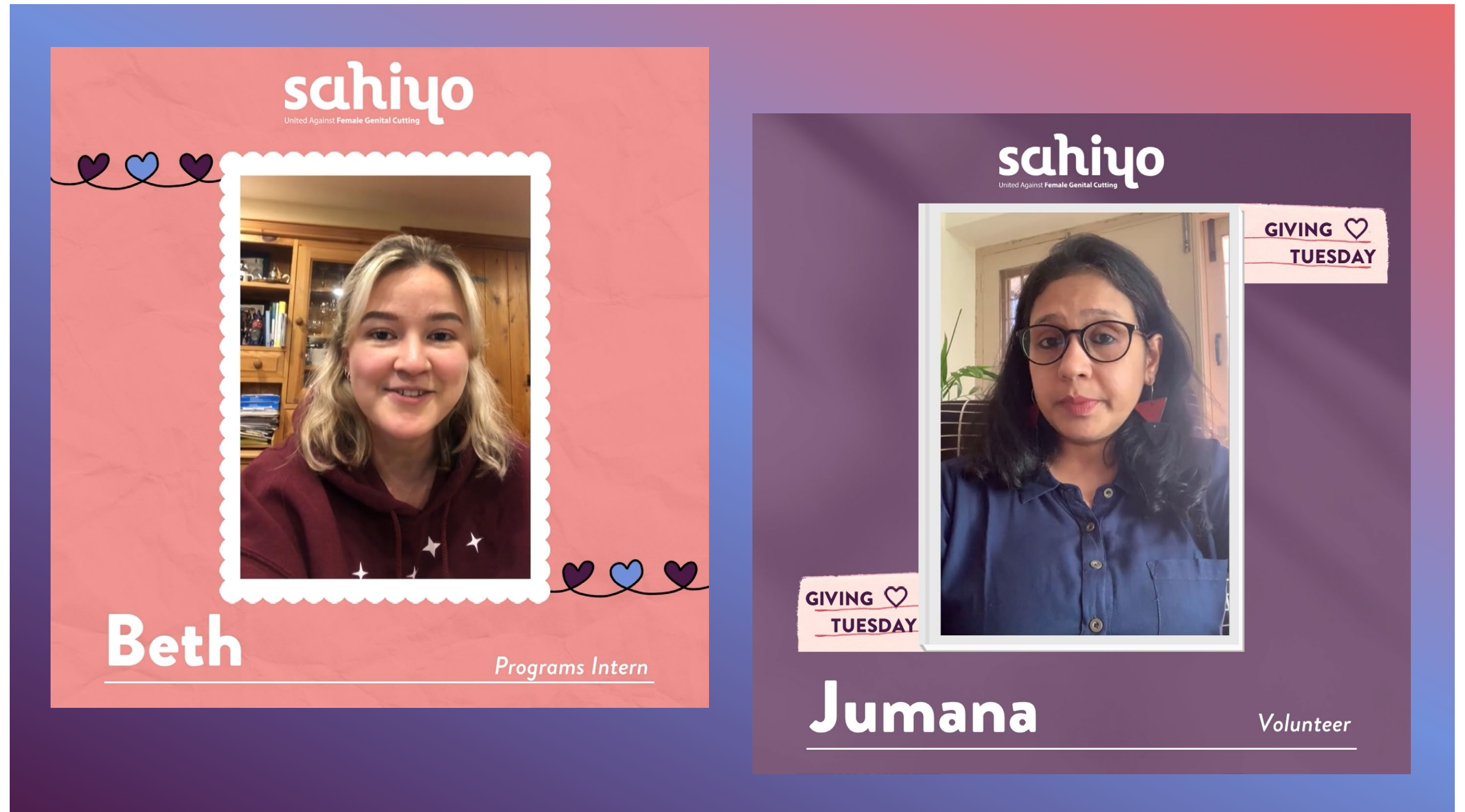


Internship Program

Sahiyo's **internship program** engages future activists in Sahiyo's work and teaches them about the inner workings of a social justice organization. Interns can work in many of Sahiyo's departments, such as Programs, Development, Editorial, Social Media, and Communications. To support Sahiyo's internal operations, Sahiyo employs 7-12 interns at any given period.

Volunteer Program

Volunteers are the organization's backbone, and Sahiyo thrives on the passion and dedication of its volunteers. Sahiyo currently has 60+ active volunteers stationed globally (in the U.S., India, Bahrain, Pakistan, Kenya, U.K, Canada, U.A.E., and Sri Lanka). As Sahiyo is a transnational organization, volunteers work with us remotely to support our storytelling initiative via our blogs, and provide both administrative and event logistical support as needed. To support our volunteer community in continuing education on the impact of FGC, Sahiyo coordinated study sessions and youth meet-ups this year.



“
I recently learned that one of my articles is a required reading for anthropology students at the University of Washington. Writing for Sahiyo really does help increase FGC awareness! I'm so grateful for the opportunity to contribute.
Hunter Kessous

“
This job has forced me to be uncomfortable. To look. To listen. To hear. In ways that I did not know were possible before. I have gained a deeper resilience and respect for womanhood.
Kristin Grady

Research

Research is critical to understanding the prevalence and impact of FGC, and suggests/explores possibilities on how to engage in programs and methods to end it. Sahiyo conducts innovative research to bridge the gap in data that exists on FGC globally, and to bring understanding, awareness, and advocacy to the topic of FGC within Asian and other communities. Since our inception, Sahiyo has engaged in two major studies:

- The **first-ever global study** on FGC in the Dawoodi Bohra community, which surveyed over 384 Bohra women and found that 80% of women had been cut, and
- A needs assessment surveying activists from within the Bohra community on how to better support them.

In 2017, Sahiyo also investigated and revealed that FGC is being practiced in parts of southern India's **Kerala** state. This countered the previous assumption that in India, FGC is practiced only by Bohras. Sahiyo is currently implementing a new research project titled, "Critical Intersections" which seeks to explore the intersection between FGC and other forms of oppression such as racism, Islamophobia, and transphobia.

Additionally, Sahiyo supports undergraduate and graduate students in conducting research to contribute to this knowledge base. Sahiyo works with and supports students on capstone projects, theses, and dissertations related to FGC, such as psycho-sexual health and healing, raising awareness in education institutions, and the importance of engaging male allies. In 2022, we worked with and supported students from Stanford University, Columbia University, Simmons University, and Drew University.

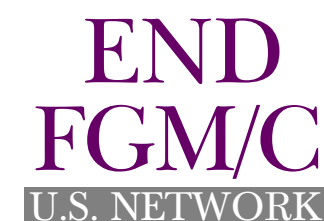
“

The first project I worked on with Sahiyo, was their ‘Critical Intersections’ literature review, which allowed me both the opportunity to apply skills from my Master’s degree program and the time to delve further into a topic that I am passionate about. I’ve enjoyed learning about how personal identity and social stigmas/expectations continue to shape the lived experiences of FGC survivors.

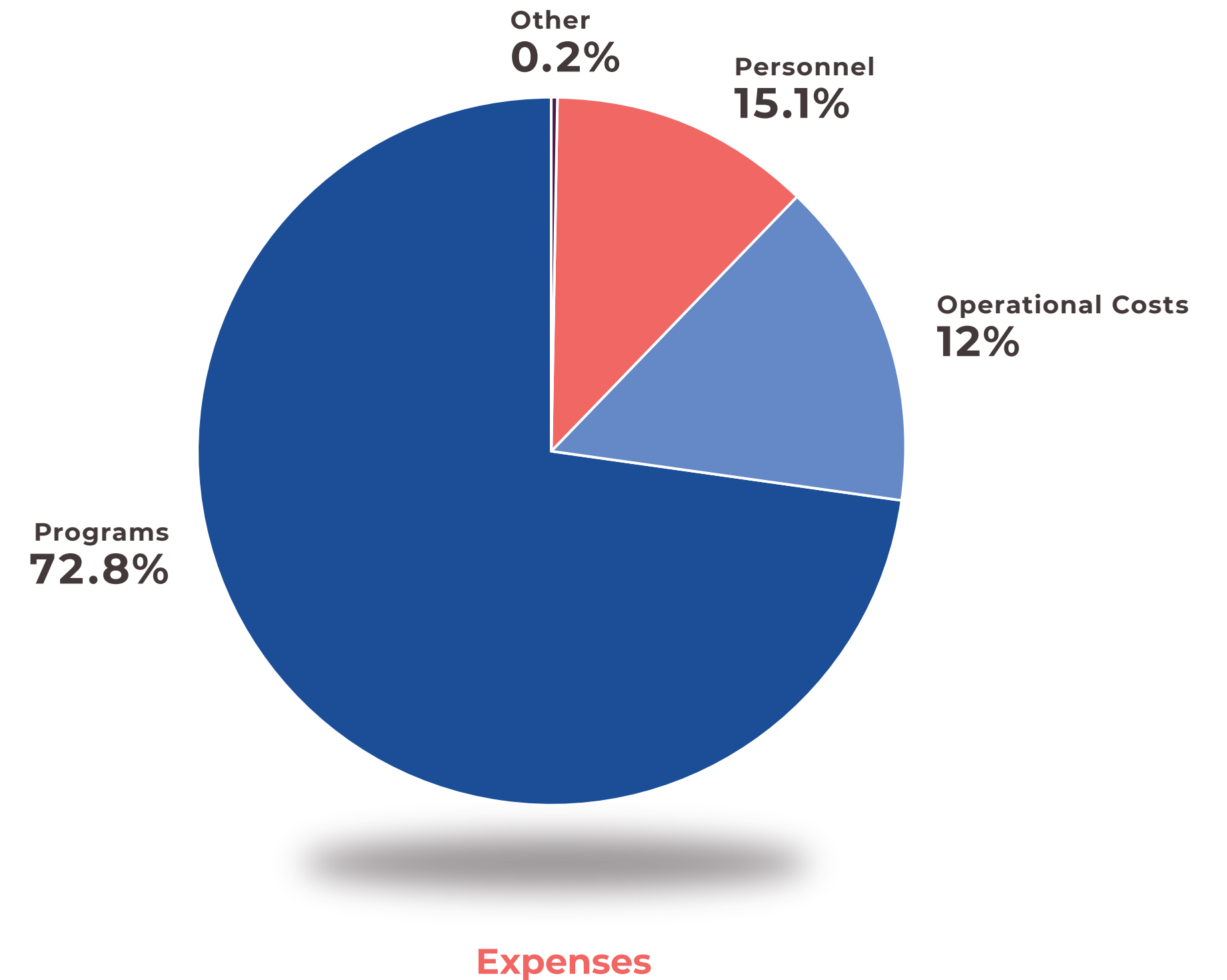
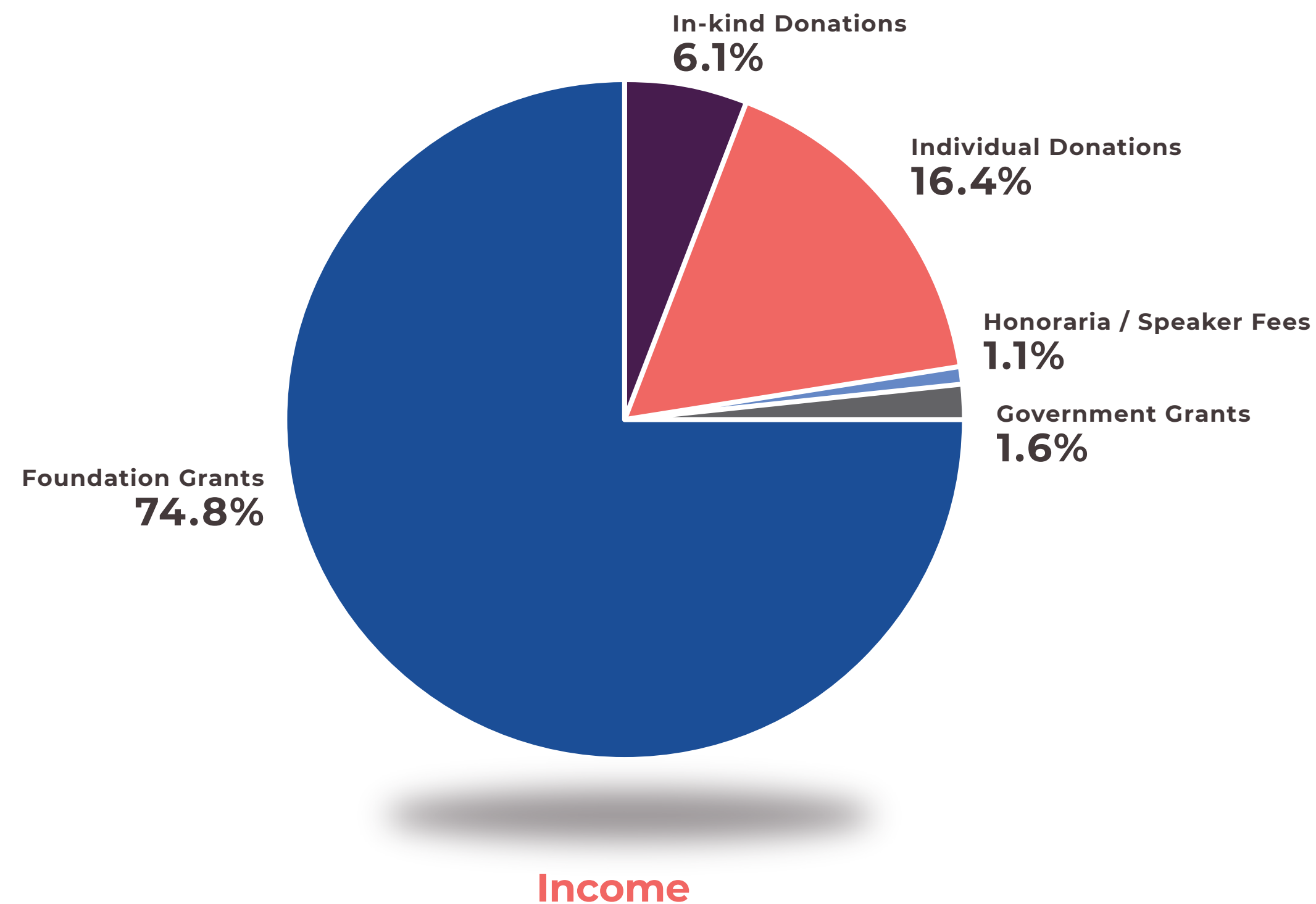
Aries Nuño



Partner Organizations



Total Operating Budget: \$130,872.49



Each year, Sahiyo continues to increase and diversify our funding streams. This past year, we received foundation funding from the Wallace Global Fund, Resist, Ben & Jerry’s Foundation, The Miami Foundation, and the Peace Development Fund. We were also awarded a subcontract for federal funding from the Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime. This year, Sahiyo saw the beginning of a new funding stream through Honoraria /Speaker fees for educational training sessions we conducted on FGC. Sahiyo also continues to receive donations from our supportive community, and Sahiyo volunteers and interns provide in-kind contributions by volunteering countless hours to our various programs.

Sahiyo’s main expenses go towards fulfilling our programmatic mission of connecting with FGC-impacted communities and survivors, including:

- 1) Supporting survivors in their individual healing journeys,
- 2) Creating a critical mass of voices within communities to support the abandonment of FGC and prevent it occurring to future generations of girls, and
- 3) Engaging with frontline professionals including health providers, gender-based violence advocates, child protection workers, social workers, legal professionals, government officials, and more to create macro-level systems of care for women and girls at risk of FGC.



Without the help of dedicated volunteers and generous donors, Sahiyo would be unable to carry out its mission. If you would like to get involved with Sahiyo, there are several ways to do so:

Donate

Support survivors of FGC by donating to help our various programs.

Volunteer

Support Sahiyo in our mission by contributing your experience, interest, or time. Volunteer work includes editing newsletters, translating content, and assisting at events.

U.S. Advisory Board

This board brings together experts from a variety of disciplines in the United States, including health, law, and the media, to help drive Sahiyo’s strategic vision forward and guarantee that we continue to fulfill our objective. If you’d like to learn more about the advisory board, send an email to info@sahiyo.org.

Intern

Interns assist Sahiyo in a variety of areas, including Development, Communications, Editorial, Social Media, and Programs. Internships with Sahiyo require a minimum commitment of six months and five to ten hours each week. These are remote employment opportunities that provide excellent career experience for anyone interested in this work or human rights.

Blog

Be a part of the collective voices speaking about their knowledge or experience of FGC. Writers can seek assistance from Sahiyo’s Editorial staff throughout the process of developing a blog post. The blog post submission form can be found [here](#). For additional information, email editor@sahiyo.org.

Our Funders:



Special Thanks To:



Thank you to our 2021-2022 volunteers for donating over 2,000 hours of support this year, in areas such as blog and grant proposal editing, program support, communications, organizational development, and social media.



Thanks to Shabana Feroze and her team at The Silver Kick Company for offering their graphic design and editing skills to the completion of this annual report.

“
We can choose to be a part of a legendary history that could be read hundreds of years from now, a history which speaks to how one organization brought together people from all walks of life, bounded by a shared vision and common humanity, to pave the way forward to protect the rights of children today and future generations, by relentlessly pursuing the protection, past survivors needed but did not have. That kind of selflessness is rare in the world we live in today.
Nesha Abiraji

Alphabetized Individual Donor List (Jul 2021 - Jun 2022)

Nesha Abiraj	Catherine Cox	Chlo Hew	Peggy Macunovich	Sakina Sharp
Lawrence Adrian	Laurette Cucuzza	Sarrah Hussain	Brad Mazon	Michelle Taylor
Geeta Aiyer	Insia Dariwala	Ted Jackson	Anu Menon	Duncan Tolmie
Fatima Akhtar	Fariya Doctor	Aarefa Johari	Joan Meunier-Sham	Terrence Turner
Porter Anderson	John Dwork	Zahara Kagalwalla	Safiya Mohammed	Darshan Upadhyaya
Rex Arrasmith	Beth Fotheringham	Shabbir Kapadia	Barbara Newman	Joanna Vergoth
Deborah Benson	Haritha G	Jo Keogh	Judith Norsigian	Tobe Levin von Gleichen
Renee Bergstrom	Mary Giesecke	Anjum Khan	Zehra Patwa	Andrew Whalley
Marci Bowers	Joanne Golden	Geethika Kodukula	Angela Peabody	Susan Wickens
Arefa Cassoobhoy	Priya Goswami	Anitra Kupalo	Maryum Saifee	Kristen Zaleski
Mairead Cavanagh	Amy Grier	Susan Leibowitz	Elizabeth Saldivar	Mario Zdybel
Benoit Chabaud	Ellen Grierson	Anne Lucas	Christoph Schorl	

100% of our Advisory Board donated to Sahiyo this past year!