



Strategic Initiative
for Women in the
Horn of Africa



SIHA Network

2022 ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT



Published February 2024

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reprinted or reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical or other means now known or hereafter invented including copying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa

P.O. Box 2793 Kampala - Uganda

www.sihanet.org

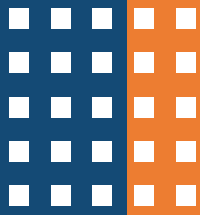
©SIHA Network 2023

Cover artwork: Galal Yousif

Design by: Diana Namanda

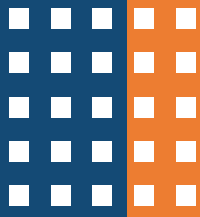
THE S I H A A N N U A L R E P O R T

Acronyms	ii
A Message from the SIHA Management Team	1
Human Resources and Organizational Behaviour Report ..	3
A Note on Compliance	13
Membership	15
Executive Summary	17
Our Impact in Numbers.....	18
Program Interventions	19
Women and Girls' Access to Rights and Justice.....	19
Women's Social Protection and Economic Justice..	22
Rights of Women and Girls on the Move.....	24
Building Inclusive Women's Movements	25
Cross-cutting Issues	29
Challenges.....	36
Financial Management Statement	38
Our Board	39
Our Members	42
Development Partners	43



Acronyms

CEDAW:	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSOs:	Civil Society Organizations
FIDA Uganda:	The Uganda Association of Women Lawyers
FPC:	Family Protection Centre
GBV:	Gender-based Violence
GSA:	Good Samaritan Association
GHoA:	Greater Horn of Africa
IDPs:	Internally Displaced Persons
MGCSW:	Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Welfare
OSC:	One Stop Centre
SCN:	Sudan Change Now
SGBV:	Sexual and/or Gender-based Violence
SIHA:	Strategic Initiative for Women in the Greater Horn of Africa
UN:	United Nations
VAWG:	Violence Against Women and Girls



A Message from the SIHA Management Team

Dear Readers,

On behalf of the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA Network), we are pleased to introduce our 2022 Annual Report. Over the past three years, SIHA has been steadily growing and exploring new territories, as our voice continues to gain influence in representing the struggles of women and girls across the Greater Horn of Africa region.

However, this growth has come with great challenges. There has been a sharp increase in the volume of program and intervention demands, which we must coordinate and manage, while still preserving our values and principles as feminists and as a human rights network. All of this is happening within a volatile environment plagued by civil conflicts, atrocities, and political regimes that often seek to impose their agendas, limit the role of civil society, and undermine women's participation in society and politics. The closing of civic space remains a threat to feminist and human rights activists and organizations across the region.

We are proud to acknowledge and celebrate the increasing awareness and growth of the feminist movement that took place in this region throughout 2022. The movement has been enriched by the involvement of new and strong young women who are daring, intelligent, and capable when confronting repression. We congratulate ourselves on our progress in

promoting inclusivity and diversity within the women's movement, however, we recognize that there is still much more work to do.

Throughout the year, we have strengthened our collaborations with and support for urban poor women, women who are internally displaced, and women refugees. We have also made significant improvements in working with women with disabilities but recognize that we continue to face challenges in reaching women within minority groups across the region.

Our advocacy work is informed by women's lived realities. We seek to amplify the voices of women at the grassroots on platforms that can reach regional and international actors.

Our capacity to collaborate with local governments across the region to engage women's social and economic rights and promote the advancement of women and girls at the grassroots level continues to be one of our core work strategies.

Our human resources have grown significantly between 2019 and 2022 but we still need to improve our management and administrative capacity and hire talented, skilled, and committed team members who can enrich SIHA's creation and growth as a Pan-African network.

Over the past 20 years, from 2002 to 2022, SIHA has experienced significant growth. In 2002, the organization's annual budget was only 150,000 Euros, and it had a mere three staff members and 15 network members. As of 2022, SIHA has over 75 full-time staff members, a significant number of part-time and intern team members working across the region, and over 100 members and affiliate organizations throughout the greater Horn of Africa. Furthermore, SIHA has active offices in 7 different locations across the region. All of this is a testament to SIHA's complex and inspiring journey.

In 2022, we will maintain our engagement with our network members. Our Board of Directors and teams of advisors have played a crucial role in our growth and stability. Without their unwavering support and commitment, SIHA would not be where we are today.

The SIHA management team played a central role in SIHA Network's progress in 2022. Thanks to their ongoing collaboration with our representatives and partners, SIHA staff members are the driving force behind our success.

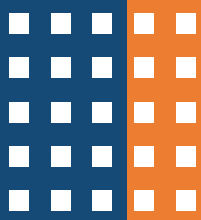
Our donors and partners, both at the international and regional levels, engage and collaborate with us and facilitate our agenda. Their support and trust have also been instrumental in our achievements.



Hala Al Karib

Regional Director

On behalf of the SIHA Management Team



Human Resources and Organizational Behaviour Report

The report's main objective is to give a brief overview of SIHA's human resources policies and practices, to examine the strategic planning done in 2022, and to show an accurate picture of management and staff. The Report underpins SIHA's commitment to transparency and its staff. According to its mission and values, SIHA is committed to

maintaining a workspace free of discrimination and harassment where equal rights and gender equity are championed.

Having a precise overview of these areas provides SIHA, its staff, and its stakeholders with a better understanding of how the organisation is progressing in areas contributing to staff engagement and development. This will help SIHA achieve its strategic goals and further its growth.

Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA Network)

SIHA has been working in the Horn of Africa region since 1995 and supports programming in Uganda, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Somaliland, and Djibouti.

1). The function and structure of the Human Resources and Administration Department

This department is comprised of the following personnel:

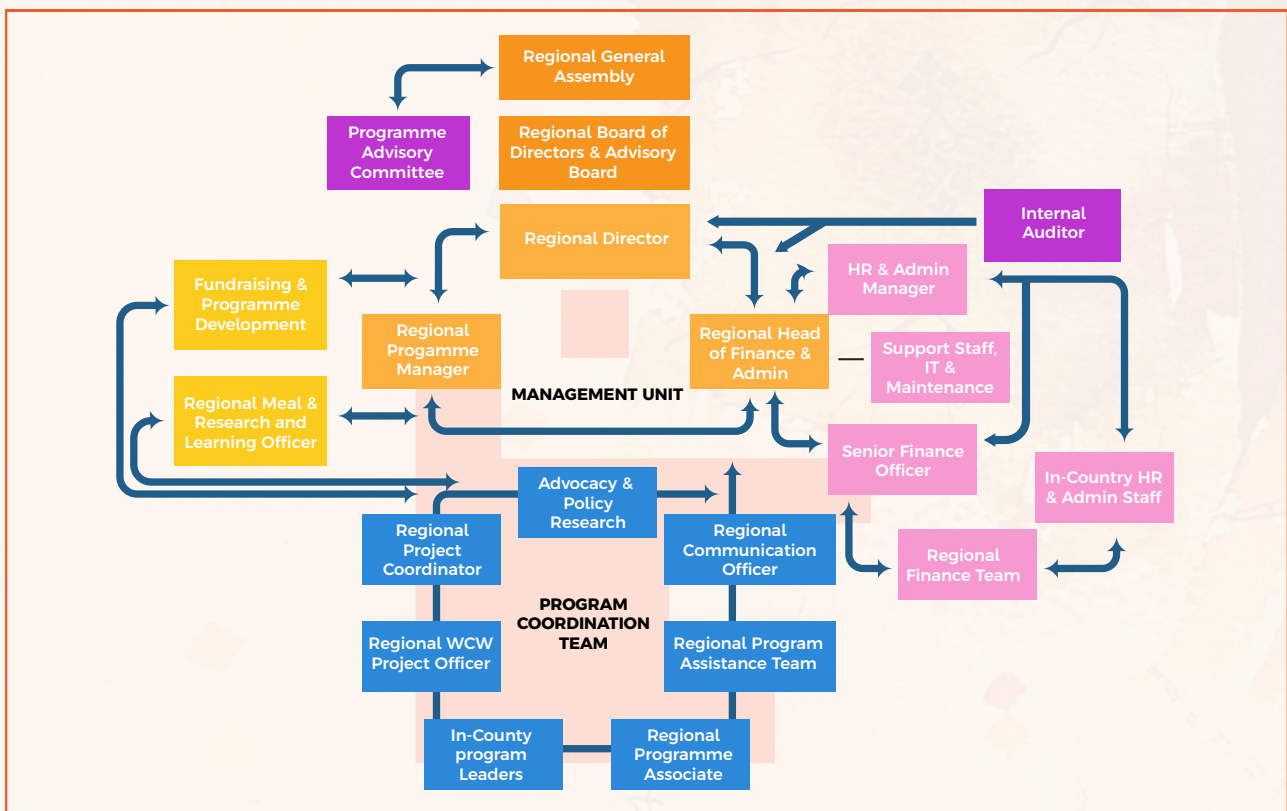
- ❖ Regional Head of Finance and Administration (1)
- ❖ Regional Human Resources Officer (1)
- ❖ Regional Senior Finance Officer (1)
- ❖ Finance Officer (1)
- ❖ Regional Accountant (1)
- ❖ Program and Finance Administrative Assistant (01)
- ❖ Sudan Human Resources Officer (1)
- ❖ Procurement and Compliance Officer (1)
- ❖ Sudan Finance Officer (1)
- ❖ Sudan Logistics Assistant (1)
- ❖ Sudan Accountant Assistant (1)
- ❖ South Sudan Finance and Administration Officer (1)
- ❖ Uganda Administrative and Logistics Officer (1)

SIHA’s recruitment and selection policy is fair, equitable, transparent, and efficient. It attracts candidates who are motivated and passionate about the organization’s agenda. SIHA’s operational structure is shown in Figure 1.1. SIHA has adopted a lean organizational structure across the region, decentralizing the chain of command across countries of operation to a central point at the Regional Office. The Regional Office is led by a well-seasoned senior management team. Guided by SIHA’s human resources policies, this unit is accountable and responsible for final decisions concerning function, operation, and strategy.

SIHA’s mission, vision, and values are supported by its performance management system, prevailing strategy outputs/outcomes, key result areas, and performance indicators. This is attained by ensuring that all staff members have up-to-date job descriptions, annual key performance indicators, and probationary, mid-year, and annual performance reviews. The staff, direct supervisors, line managers, and the senior management unit play a vital role in providing professional development, training needs, and opportunities for career advancement.

1.1

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE



SIHA currently has **69** staff (59F,10M) in Uganda, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Somaliland and Ethiopia.



Staff and Gender Composition

SIHA currently has 69 staff (59F,10M) in Uganda, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Somaliland and Ethiopia.

SIHA Structure

1

Senior Management Unit

- ❖ Regional Director
- ❖ Regional Programme Manager
- ❖ Regional Head of Finance and Administration

Finance and Administration Team

- ❖ Regional Human Resources and Office Manager
- ❖ Support Staff & IT & Maintenance
- ❖ Regional Senior Finance Officer
- ❖ Regional Finance Team
- ❖ In-Country Human Resource & Admin Staff

3

Programme Coordination Unit

- ❖ Regional Projects Coordinator
- ❖ Senior Advocacy and Communications Officer
- ❖ Regional Consortium Coordinator
- ❖ In-country Programme Leads
- ❖ Regional Programme Associate
- ❖ Regional Programme Assistant

2

SIHA is a growing organisation that is responding to its long-term vision and expanding scope of activities by creating new staff functions. SIHA issues fixed term contracts, temporary/short term contracts, and consultancy contracts based on project funding.

To cater to the ever-changing modes of work, SIHA has some staff members who work remotely and directly with the advocacy, editorial, and fundraising teams functioning within the organisation.

2.

TEAM-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

SIHA constantly strives to establish a team that cohesively works together toward its goals. The importance and main purpose of team-building activities is to create a strong team by forming bonds and connections.

At the Regional Office, staff members have a lunch arrangement in which everyone contributes to staff meals. During the lunch hours, staff members get a chance to commune with each other away from their desks. It gives everyone a chance to unwind before resuming their work. Also, there is an occasional aerobic session to promote fitness and health. This helps fight stress and health-related issues that arise from long hours working at a desk. The HR department at SIHA's Regional Office intends to adopt these activities for all SIHA country offices where possible.

Also, SIHA convenes sectoral and general staff meetings, during which staff members discuss each other's past achievements and future projects. This encourages staff to

support each other and understand what all team members are working on for the week.

3.

COLLECTIVE
MANAGEMENT
APPROACH

At SIHA, we have defined collective leadership as a group of people working together toward a shared goal through collaborative effort. We work to ensure that staff members are internally and externally motivated. Our management team encourages all staff members to work together toward a shared vision and we recognize that lasting success is not possible without diverse perspectives and contributions. We believe in shared responsibility and decision-making, accountability, and authentic engagement. All members of the management team are involved in creating SIHA's vision and are committed to working to achieve that vision. There is trust, shared power, transparency, effective communication, accountability, and shared learning. The success of management depends on the leadership within the entire group rather than the skills of one person.

The management unit is open to feedback and ideas from all staff members and strives to create a space where they feel comfortable talking to management about their ideas. The management unit welcomes and carefully considers all input from staff members.



Group photo from the 2020 SIHA Board Members Meeting

4.

EXPANSION - NEW REGIONS IN THE COUNTRIES OF OPERATION

A). SUDAN

Our operations have expanded to include Blue Nile, Sennar, Gezira, North and South Darfur. There is staff representation in each of these locations.

B). SOUTH SUDAN

SIHA is represented in Juba and Wau.

C). UGANDA

SIHA has its Regional Office based in Kampala and one field office in Arua.

D). SOMALIA

SIHA is now working in Puntland and Mogadishu.

5.

STAFF EVALUATION AND REFLECTIONS

Staff evaluations are carried out in a participatory, honest, and collective spirit while considering the organization's accountability to its work, communities, and partners. Both the staff member and the evaluation team exchange views and reflect openly and transparently upon the staff member's role and accomplishments over the evaluation period.

- ❖ This is an ongoing process aimed at monitoring, recognizing exceptional performance, and fostering improvement in areas that fall short. The

process includes ad hoc informal reviews and formal evaluations, which are conducted twice per year for each staff member. During these formal evaluations, we encourage a two-way process where employees can also give management feedback on their performance. Part of the evaluation process is designed to ensure that both staff members and supervisors understand the staff member's role and trajectory within the organization.

- ❖ The formal staff evaluation is usually attended by immediate supervisors, a Human Resources representative, and a team member who works closely with the staff member who is being evaluated.
- ❖ SIHA Staff receive biannual performance evaluations, at the mid-year point of their annual contract and the end of their annual contract.
- ❖ Staff evaluations give essential feedback to help staff members understand what constitutes a good performance and how to improve performance. Evaluations also help staff members and management to jointly solve work challenges, exchange views on the work environment, suggest improvements, and reflect on the overall work.
- ❖ Staff evaluation results, outcomes, and recommendations are a determining factor in employee promotion and demotion.
- ❖ The staff evaluation format is a combination of qualitative and quantitative assessments, which are all reviewed by the Regional Human Resources and Office Manager.
- ❖ For staff who are working remotely, the evaluations are carried out using teams or video chat platforms.

All the above are guided by the SIHA HR Manual policies, Section 7 under Performance Management.

6.

SOLIDARITY, COLLECTIVE CARE, AND ONGOING FIELD VISITS

At SIHA, we believe in supporting, encouraging, and standing with each other no matter the situation or location. We support our staff throughout the region by carrying out programme field visits, which we hope lets the rest of the team know that there is an abundant amount of care, support, and recognition for them and the work they do.

With the excessive number of tasks at hand, it is not uncommon for SIHA staff to work or travel over the weekend. SIHA staff members may be paid overtime but according to the SIHA HR manual, staff members may opt for time off in lieu (TOIL) or compensatory leave to rest and recuperate from the extra time worked. Staff members also enjoy other benefits, such as one health day per month for all female staff, annual leave entitlements of 1.8 days accrued per month, emergency leave, and paternity or maternity leave as stipulated by the local employment acts of the countries of operations.

7.

REMUNERATION

SIHA's remuneration system is described in its Bylaws and Finance Procedure Manual. The system was designed to comply with the local labour laws and norms in each country of operation.

Payroll and payment schedules are created by monitoring working hours that are recorded through a timesheet system underpinned by contractual terms. In collaboration with the Finance Department, HR updates payment schedules based on timesheet and contract records to ensure timely payouts of staff salaries.

SIHA has a broad salary scale for all team members depending on their job roles, expertise, seniority, and complexity of work delivered. The SIHA salary scale was last revised in 2021 and will need a more recent review to benchmark with organizations sharing an equivalent portfolio.

Challenges persist regarding the certainty of comparable levels of remuneration due to the fragile and complex contexts of Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia. Though SIHA would like to revise and implement an increase in the salary amounts of its salary scale, the process is tied to finances determined by funding, external forces in the economy, inflation, and constant fluctuation in social amenities.

8.

EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

Employee turnover in SIHA has been associated with voluntary and involuntary tendencies – resignations by staff to pursue other opportunities and dismissals as the result of the closure of projects.

In 2022, the turnover rate stood at 6.9%, with a total of seven staff members from all countries of operation leaving their employment at SIHA over the course of the year.

When staff leave SIHA, HR conducts exit interviews, in which HR hopes to uncover and understand the reasons why staff are leaving the organization. This will inform retention strategies. The SIHA HR Department also conducts "stay surveys" to understand why staff members enjoy working at SIHA, the reasons they would ever voluntarily resign, and what the organization could do better in terms of staff welfare and working conditions.

9.

STAFF RETENTION AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

As part of its set standards, SIHA will continue to support staff growth and development by offering additional knowledge acquisition under the Training & Development Policy, Section 10 of the HR Manual.

Paying close attention to staff training and development weaves a fabric of employee loyalty, engagement, motivation, and overall capacity improvement. This cultivates a sense of belonging and continuous commitment to the SIHA organization, its core values, mission, and vision. Employees' empowerment and career development are instrumental in ensuring employee retention.

10.

WORKING CONDITIONS, HEALTH, AND OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY

SIHA prioritizes staff welfare, working conditions, health, human rights, and the safety of all staff members.

The well-qualified office administration arm of the Finance and Administration Department ensures that all offices are well-stocked with office supplies, consumables, and equipment.

SIHA intentionally ensures that staff members have serene working spaces with all the necessary tools of the trade such as desktops, laptops, comfortable chairs, functional desks, and airy, spacious office rooms.

Moving forward, SIHA's HR department intends to conduct an Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Audit to ensure that all country offices adhere to minimum standards set by in-country OSH Acts. HR will check office spaces for diversity and equity. They will ensure that all staff members receive basic training in first aid, firefighting, safety, and security.

11.

SIHA POLICIES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

SIHA is committed to ensuring professional conduct. Staff members will adhere to a set of guiding principles when interacting with fellow staff, clients in the field, contractors, and implementing partners. Staff members will commit to high standards of respect for human rights, transparency, and accountability. There is a zero-tolerance rule for illegal activity, corruption, terrorism, violation of international environmental agreements, sexual exploitation, harassment and abuse, child labour, forced

labour, any violation of the working conditions acts, and discrimination in the work environment.

In case of violation of SIHA policies and code of conduct, there is a dedicated whistleblowing procedure under section 23.7 - How to Raise a Concern - of the HR Manual. SIHA is mandated to ensure all employees are familiarized with its whistleblowing procedures so that staff members can vocalize their concerns swiftly and confidentially.

12.

MAJOR HR ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

12a.

MAJOR HR/ADMIN ACHIEVEMENTS

- ❖ **Completion of the SIHA Storybook: On March 4, 2022, SIHA published a storybook about the courage and spirit of women in the Greater Horn of Africa.** The book can be viewed on our website under publications: www.sihanet.org.
- ❖ **Human Resources Policy and Procedure Manual endorsement and passing on to staff:** The approved HR Manual was rolled out to staff for use as a guiding tool for all HR-related matters.

- ❖ **Inefficiency with the onboarding process:** Mostly, recruiting has been done in a state of emergency, which affected the onboarding processes by not allowing ample time for pre-boarding, boarding, and post-boarding HR practices. This inefficiency affects staff performance as new staff members are not always oriented as thoroughly as we would like.

Possible Solution: There needs to be prior planning for all staff recruitment to ensure compliance with the guidelines enumerated in the SIHA HR manual. Recruiting managers will be encouraged to take ownership and work in tandem with the HR Team during the onboarding process and the prior planning for this process.

- ❖ **Limited Capacity to implement, monitor, and evaluate the execution of HR policies, processes, and procedures:** There is still no active mechanism to ensure that HR policies and procedures are implemented, monitored, and evaluated. This is solely because the Compliance Department is tied to the Procurement Officer who also partners with HR on certain tasks. The segregation of tasks is unrealistic as those implementing the policies, processes, and procedures would also serve as the internal auditor.

Possible Solution: Hire an independent Internal Auditor/Compliance Officer to

ensure all departments including HR are held accountable and adhere to all policies. The Internal auditor could conduct spot checks for compliance and be involved in external audits.

- ❖ **Continued Workforce Gaps:** There continues to be a workforce gap in some country offices. Not enough employees have been hired to handle the increase in projects and work volume. More staff members are needed to work in the support service sector, procurement, IT, HR, and administration.

Possible Solution: Actively engage HR in proposal brainstorming for workforce needs. Engage HR during project inception meetings to set clear workforce forecasts and expected timelines for filling positions required by the projects.

- ❖ **Budget constraints to implement HR initiatives:** Budget constraints make it difficult to implement HR initiatives concerning staff welfare and wellbeing. Initiatives include increasing the number of dependents covered by medical plans, setting up lactation rooms within offices, team building events and retreats, reward and recognition drives, facilitating flexible working arrangements by procuring laptops and providing data bundles.

Possible Solution: Incorporating staff capacity-building, perks, and welfare budgets into SIHA's fundraising and proposal budgets.

- ❖ **External pushes in the political environment:** SIHA's staff members are based in many countries considered to be conflict or post-conflict settings. Many of

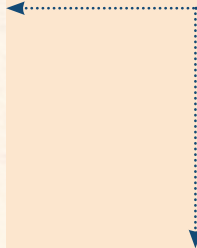
these countries are home to hostile governments or other powerful actors who oppose the women's rights and human rights perspectives that SIHA upholds. Staff members working in SIHA's offices in these countries must deal with greater risk, insecurity, and other hindrances.

Possible Solution: SIHA will continue to provide regular training sessions for staff on security precautions, SIHA's contingency plans, and other essential ways for staff to mitigate the dangers they might face and keep themselves safe both physically and mentally.

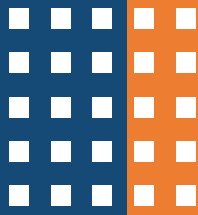
12.

PROSPECTIVE HR PLANS FOR 2023

- ❖ Tracking key HR performance indicators annually with respect to recruitment and selection, onboarding, staff database management, discipline, performance management, training and development, turnover, staff welfare, offboarding, planning leave, and absence management. SIHA will become more aware of the quality of HR services delivered to the organization and staff.
- ❖ Recruitment of an HR Assistant at the Regional Office to support the Regional HR Officer in all HR and administrative tasks.
- ❖ Conduct a review and update of the SIHA salary scale and staff benefits. This will inform decision-making and cost forecasting concerning staff salary reviews, cost of benefits like medical insurance, monthly talk time, flexible work arrangements, relocation and housing allowances, per diems and accommodation, external training for staff, team-building events and staff retreats, and leave benefits.
- ❖ Implement a protocol of monthly reports from HR to the Senior Management Unit, to include the progress against HR Metrics, hindrances to the impact of long-term achievement of organizational goals, proposed recommendations and solutions, leave tracking, recruitment tracking, contract tracking, performance management tracking, and up-to-date staff lists.
- ❖ Set up HR personnel files in soft-copy format, which are backed up in the secure cloud for easy access by the Senior Management Unit and authorized SIHA officials.



SIHA will continue to provide regular training sessions for staff on security precautions, SIHA's contingency plans, and other essential ways for staff to mitigate the dangers they might face and keep themselves safe both physically and mentally.



A Note on Compliance

OPERATIONAL LOCATIONS

UGANDA

SIHA has two offices in Uganda, located in the Kampala and Arua districts. The Regional office is based in Kampala while Arua is a country office. SIHA is registered with the National Bureau for NGOs in Uganda (NGO Bureau) and holds a valid registration certificate and operational permit valid for five years.

ETHIOPIA

We are proud to announce that in July of 2022, SIHA acquired a physical office located in Addis Ababa. For many years, the SIHA staff members implementing our work in Ethiopia had to work remotely without a physical office in which to congregate. With support from the SIHA team on the ground and SIHA's in-country board committee, SIHA also acquired its registration from the Authority for Civil Society Organizations in Ethiopia in July 2022. This was attained after a lengthy procedural process. We are optimistic that this new office will facilitate a better work environment for our Ethiopia-based staff and will allow SIHA's work in the country to be more visible.



SOMALIA

SIHA in Somalia is based in Mogadishu and Puntland. In Puntland, SIHA operations started with the implementation of the project “*Championing Change: A Partnership to Promote the WPS Agenda in Sudan and Somalia.*” Given this, SIHA was required to register with the Authority (Ministry of Planning, Economic Development, and International Cooperation). SIHA acquired its first registration in Puntland State in March 2022.

SIHA is hosted by one of our members in Somalia, Witness Somalia, based in Mogadishu and is registered with the Ministry of the Interior, Federal Affairs & Reconciliation.

SOUTH SUDAN

SIHA is registered in South Sudan and now has two office locations. In addition to the office in Wau, in November 2022, SIHA acquired a location to house its office in Juba. Setting up an office location in Juba eases coordination, activity implementation, and physical engagement with our members and partners. We currently have more members and partners in Juba than in any other state in South Sudan.

SOMALILAND

SIHA’s office in Hargeisa is housed by one of our members, Nagaad, and is registered with the Ministry of Planning and National Development.

SUDAN

In Sudan, SIHA is registered with the Office of the Registrar General of NGOs under the Humanitarian Aid Commission. There are two office locations in Sudan.

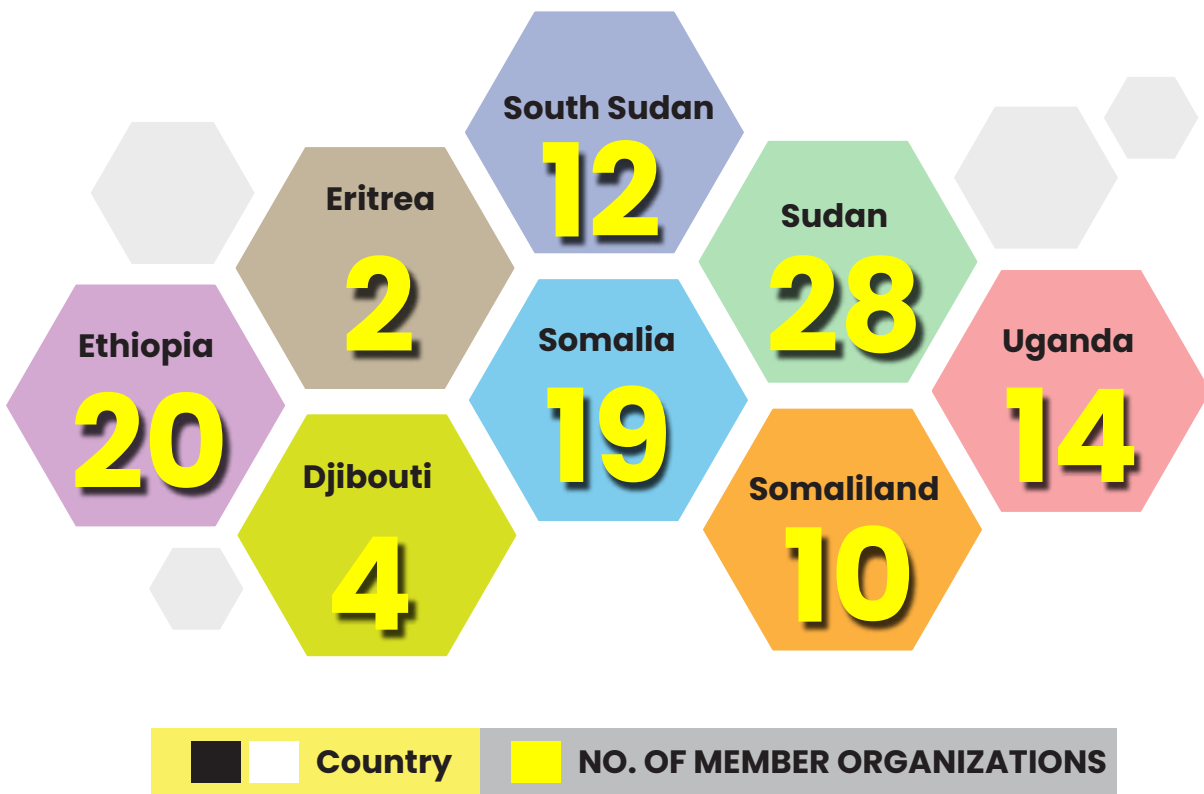
MEMBERSHIP

SIHA's membership has grown in the region. In 2022, SIHA developed membership guidelines to answer some of the questions frequently asked about membership. The guidelines include information regarding the membership criteria, benefits, application process, classification, and subscription fees. Given some of the challenges involved in membership fees, the initial application fee was revised from 100 USD to 50 USD. This was a move to encourage more organizations and affiliates to apply. The annual membership subscription fee was agreed to be 50 USD or 100 USD depending on the member organization's operational budget for the years following application. These membership guidelines were also uploaded to SIHA's website to ease the information-sharing process for members and those who would like to apply.

Some of the challenges faced in 2022:

- ❖ Accessibility of some of the member organizations
- ❖ COVID-19 and its adverse effects are still impacting many CSOs within the region.
- ❖ The war in Ukraine which has impacted many economies, including at the grassroots level, has caused subsequent increases in the cost of living and has directly impacted the budgets for activity implementation among our members and partners.
- ❖ Some members reported that access to the online membership form was challenging due to limited access to the internet.
- ❖ We feel that the consistency in the flow of information between SIHA and her connections shows room for improvement and thus is an aspect we want to focus on in the coming year.

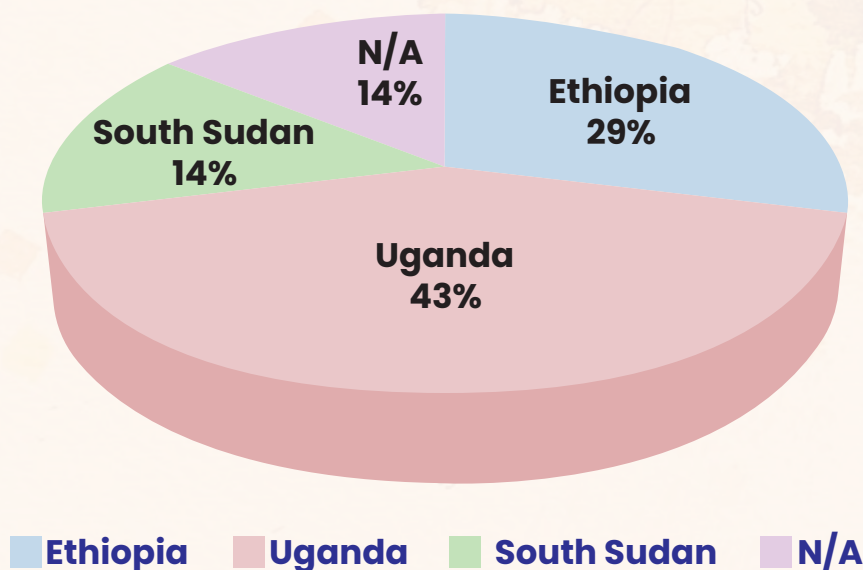
Membership Composition Per Country (as of January 2022)

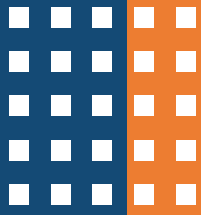


MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

We received seven applications for membership in 2022, one of which was not relevant as the applicant was not from the region. Three applicants were from Uganda, one was from South Sudan, and two were from Ethiopia.

Chart showing membership application composition per country for the year 2022





Executive Summary

2022 was a challenging year for many women's rights organizations around the world. COVID-19 paralyzed many economies, and in the aftermath, governments were more concerned with rebuilding their economies than addressing human rights abuses and improving the well-being of women and girls. Women in the Greater Horn of Africa were greatly affected by COVID-related movement restrictions and other security measures, and their businesses took a heavy toll. Political instability in Sudan, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Somalia was a serious challenge that made it difficult for women and girls to access socio-economic services and lead to delays in project implementation. In the face of the potential danger to our staff, partners and beneficiaries, we implemented strict safety and security protocols for as many women and girls in the Greater Horn of Africa Region as possible.

This report presents a summary of our achievements across our five strategic areas: Women and Girls' Access to Justice, Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), Women's Social Protection & Economic Justice, Rights of Women and Girls on the Move, and Building Inclusive Women's Movements. It also highlights our advocacy work, publications, lessons learned, and challenges that we faced.

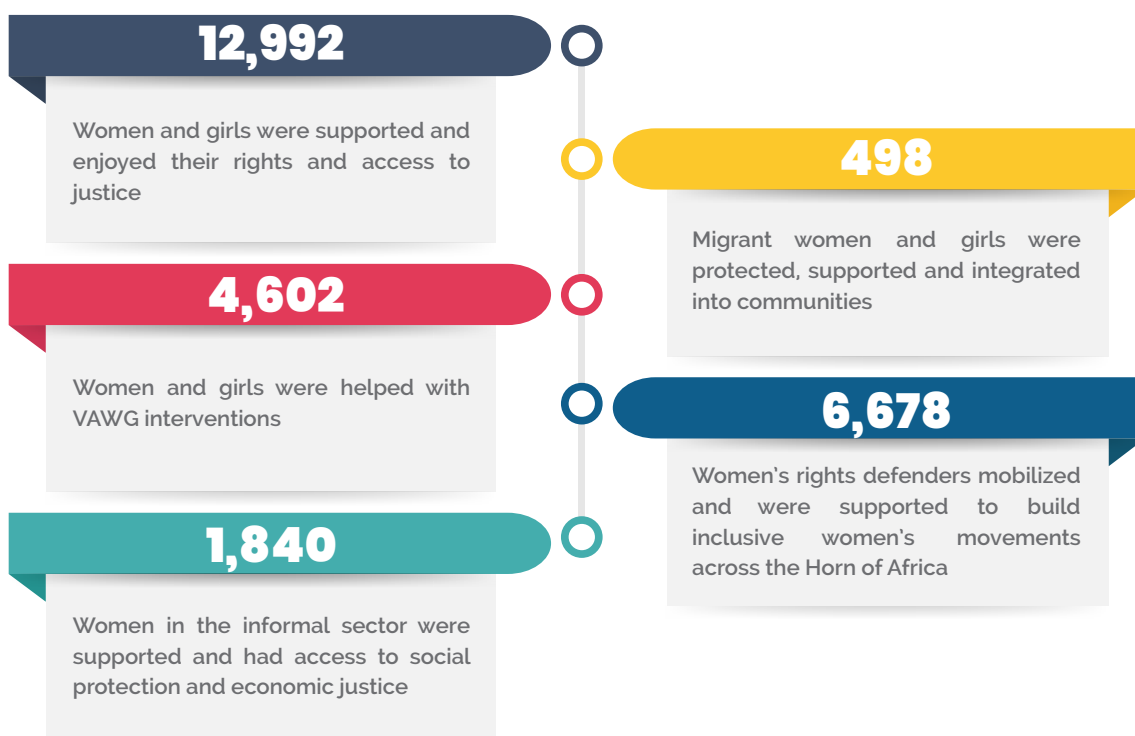


South Sudan Girls' Association Members at a capacity building event (July 2022)

Our Impact in NUMBERS



Direct Beneficiaries Reached Per Strategic Area



Program INTERVENTIONS

Women and Girls' Access to Rights and Justice

Promoting access to rights and justice for women and girls is essential for the development of a just society and the empowerment of women. Our work focused on strengthening the capacity of grassroots women and girls to understand and claim their rights, promoting the safety and security of human rights defenders, and providing legal support to women and girls.

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

Across Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Somaliland and Sudan, SIHA strengthened the capacity of 532 grassroots women and girls to become advocates for their rights in peace-making and peace-building processes, governance, and economic and political participation. Additionally, 39 women journalists were trained in communication skills, and following this training, 5 women press clubs were formed that documented the role of women in peace-making and peace-building processes in Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia.

We supported the creation of an inclusive network of 82 WPS activists across the region, 308 women market vendors in Arua, Uganda, and 103 women peace collectives in Sudan that formed a community that promotes learning, networking and knowledge sharing.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

We trained 52 women human rights defenders about safety and security in Sudan, Somalia, and Somaliland to enable them to adopt security and protection strategies when engaging in collective action. Additionally, we



Three-day capacity building training for female journalists on gender-responsive communication, as part of the South Sudan Women's Press Club

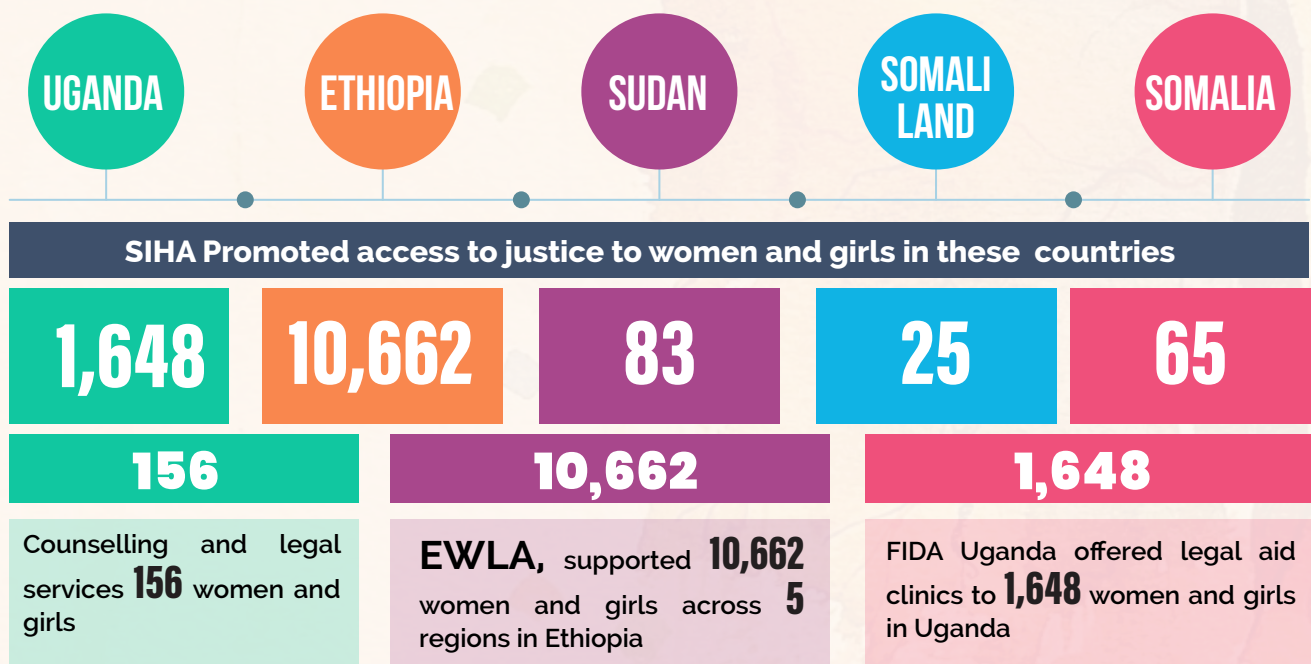


Human rights defenders participate in a training on safety and security. (Somaliland, 2022)

provided relocation services for women and girls who were injured during protests in Sudan. They were relocated to other parts of Sudan or outside of the country where they could receive the medical treatment they needed.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Working with our partners Smile Again Africa Development Organization (SAADO), Ethiopia Women Lawyers Association (EWLA), Women’s Action Advocacy Progress Organization (WAAPO), the Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA Uganda) and Somali Women Development Centre (SWDC), we promoted access to justice for 1,648 women and girls in Uganda, 10,662 in Ethiopia, 83 in Sudan, 25 in Somaliland and 65 in Somalia. We provided pro bono services, counselling and clarity on legal questions to 156 women and girls across the region. The WCW consortium, through the Ethiopia Women Lawyers Association (EWLA), supported 10,662 women and girls across 5 regions in Ethiopia. Through the Uganda Women Lawyers Association (FIDA Uganda), we offered legal aid clinics that supported 1,648 women and girls in Uganda. We also assisted survivors of violence by aiding them in processing court bail, representing them in court proceedings, and facilitating payment of their court fees.



ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Our interventions focused on strengthening partnerships that addressed violence against women and girls, promoting access to services for survivors, establishing community outreach programs, and strengthening the capacity of service providers to respond to cases of violence.

PARTNERSHIP

In South Sudan, we worked with Smile Again Africa Development Organization (SAADO) to strengthen the coordination of multi-sectoral mechanisms for responding to SGBV, including early/forced marriages. In particular, we facilitated the establishment of referral pathways and the coordination of partners through GBV working groups. We had similar engagements with the State Ministry of Health, Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Welfare, and 66 traditional leaders, where we worked toward shifting the practices and mindsets of these actors to better combat violence against women and girls and support survivors. In Hargeisa in the Somali region, we partnered with Women Action for Advocacy & Progress Organization (WAAPO) and the Voice of Somaliland Minority Women Organization (VOSOMWO) and in Banaadir, we partnered with the Somali Women Development Centre (SWDC) and Somali Women and Child Care Association (SWCCA) to increase the protection of women and girls in marginalized and minority groups in ten internally displaced persons (IDP) communities.

66

- the number of traditional leaders we empowered to better combat violence against women and girls and support survivors.

SERVICE DELIVERY

At the community level, we strengthened the prevention of SGBV and child marriage through three legal aid clinics that educated 937 women and men on the protection they should expect according to the laws in South Sudan. During the legal aid clinics, SIHA mobilized community leaders to promote and uphold women's rights and access to justice without discrimination. This was complimented by the free legal representation, counselling, and alternative dispute resolution we provided to survivors of SGBV.



Women in Somaliland record radio talk show

We assisted 413 survivors in Sudan, Somalia, and Somaliland through women-to-women dialogue sessions, radio talk shows, and other community awareness-raising activities aimed at reducing the stigma that survivors face and helping survivors and their communities better understand their rights. In Sudan, we established ten community protection units in ten IDP camps to transform social norms, behaviours, attitudes, and practices in the community to better protect women and girls from violence. Survivors also received dignity kits, toys for their children, psychosocial support, food, cash vouchers, clothes, and transportation assistance.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Through community outreach events, we increased awareness of the negative effects of SGBV and child and forced marriages. In South Sudan, three action groups that help to end child marriage supported community interventions including reporting of SGBV cases, referrals, and awareness-raising on SGBV. In Uganda, we challenged negative gender norms and traditional practices through campaigns condemning sexual violence against women and girls in the West Nile region. During a local caravan campaign, participants were linked to different service providers that work to protect women and girls from violence notably, Kitgum Women Peace Initiative (KIWEPI), FIDA Uganda,

and Child and Family Protection. In Somalia and Somaliland, an estimated 3,085 individuals were reached through community dialogues and radio talk shows involving women and religious leaders.

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

In Sudan, we strengthened the capacity of 60 service providers through training on case management, referral pathways, and legal frameworks relevant to SGBV. We also facilitated their access to platforms that advocate and discuss strategies to improve services. Similarly, 41 duty bearers in South Sudan were trained about the South Sudan legal and policy frameworks and international conventions, which establish women's legal protection from violence. These duty bearers were further trained on how to reference legal protections in order to demand their rights and the rights of all survivors of SGBV.

WOMEN'S SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Women, especially those working in the informal economy, face numerous occupational health and safety hazards that affect their productivity and access to social protection and economic justice. Our work focused on arming women to advocate for improved working conditions through the following interventions:

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

In Arua, SIHA strengthened the capacities of 200 women market vendors through training on gender policies, women's rights, advocacy, safety, and security. These newly trained women joined the growing movement of women vendors advocating for their rights using the **Women Market Vendors' Manifesto**. Women market vendors in Arua utilized this manifesto as a tool to voice their concerns during a press conference, which allowed the manifesto to be heard by local and district-level representatives.



Women market vendors march in Arua, Uganda (September 2022)

We built up the capacity of women leaders to engage in public speaking and prioritize women's issues, which resulted in the passing of the Local Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security in West Nile. This five-year strategic framework was developed to guide and coordinate the implementation of a peaceful, empowered, and transformed society in the city. It also highlights the commitment of leaders and the community to uphold the rights of women.

We improved the business and financial resilience of 260 women in Arua through training and grants disbursement, which helped the women to make informed decisions about their finances, keep proper record, prepare for tax returns, and improve their savings and capacity to calculate profits and losses.

After this capacity building, the West Nile women's movement used advocacy initiatives to establish

a women's caucus at the city level where women are now contributing to the city-level budget allocation on issues that affect women. Resultantly, the city leadership has included women's interests in the city budgeting process, which has resulted in significantly improved management of garbage in the markets where many of the women vendors are working.

We strengthened the capacity of eight women's cooperatives in Arua to influence and address city-level policies that once affected female market vendors, such as poor disposal of garbage. Further, women's increased participation in political forums enabled them to influence change such as the development of ordinances that will improve the response to sexual violence and access to health services.

CREATION OF SAFE SPACES

In the Mvara, Driwala, Muni, and Dadamu Markets, SIHA supported the creation of new safe spaces that were used to conduct advocacy around the plight of women market vendors, specifically security concerns, double taxation, social protection, and poor working conditions.

This advocacy resulted in an increased commitment by the district authorities to address the issues affecting the women vendors and improve working conditions for the women.

RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS ON THE MOVE

SIHA recognizes the risks and challenges faced by migrant girls in the Horn of Africa. To this end, our work supported reintegration programmes in Sudan, South Sudan, Somaliland, and Ethiopia through the following interventions:

LITERACY

In Sudan, we improved the literacy and numeracy skills of 135 Eritrean women and girls in English, Arabic, Tigrinya, science, and mathematics. These skills will increase their prospects for job opportunities, help them integrate into the community, and help them better understand, and therefore benefit, from written information and programs designed to meet their needs.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

SIHA supported 35 Eritrean migrant women in Sudan to receive training in car mechanics, carpentry, and art and design, which will increase their employability and transferable skills and reduce their vulnerability. Additionally, we strengthened the capacity of 307 vulnerable and migrant adolescent girls across Sudan, South Sudan, Somaliland, and Ethiopia to have the knowledge, skill set, and confidence to pursue their aspirations. This was achieved through training on coalition building, advocacy, intergenerational dialogue, campaigning, literacy, leadership, livelihood skills, sexual violence, and reproductive health.

FORMATION OF GIRLS' ASSOCIATIONS

SIHA enhanced the capacity of vulnerable and migrant adolescent girls to engage in collective action to advance their rights



Migrant girls participate in a literacy and numeracy skills course (Sudan, 2022)

307

The number of vulnerable and migrant adolescent girls from Sudan, South Sudan, Somaliland, and Ethiopia that were trained in coalition building, advocacy, and leadership.

and push for gender equality. Nine associations of migrant girls were registered in Sudan, South Sudan, Somaliland, and Ethiopia and were supported to take joint action to advance their rights and efforts toward gender equality. At the regional level, the concepts of solidarity and sisterhood were built up across the different associations

through a regional exchange forum held in Hargeisa, Somaliland.



Young women using the personal identity map, to reflect on gender identities, power relations, and diversity, during a workshop in Ethiopia (September, 2022)

SAFETY

To improve the safety of migrant girls through reporting violations and accessing response services, a trauma centre was built in Darfur. The centre provided psychosocial counselling services, transportation, and food to 20 survivors. Furthermore, SIHA rescued and provided emergency support to 1 survivor of sexual violence who had been trafficked from Eritrea to Sudan.

BUILDING INCLUSIVE WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS

SIHA recognizes that strong women's movements are critical in addressing gender inequality and improving the lives of women. Our work in supporting inclusive women's movements focused on capacity-building, networking, influencing, and resourcing.

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

SIHA strengthened the capacity of 11 grassroots women's groups to participate in Sudan's political agenda. Women groups participated in discussions and training sessions on 1325 resolutions, advocacy on sexual violence against women in Darfur, and activities including a peaceful sit-in.

In Sudan, we supported feminist spaces to be safer, healthier, and more inclusive by training women and supporting them to develop collective risk mitigation strategies. As a result, women's groups are now able to assess their security situation, identify potential risks, and take preventive measures.

We promoted gender narratives and shared the contributions of women and youth change agents in Sudan. SIHA organized debates for youth groups on the obstacles faced by young women in various political platforms, the roles of women in resistance committees and



An Eritrean migrant woman attends a SIHA Network vocational training in Sudan, aimed at breaking gender stereotypes in employment.

gender norms and their impact on women's political participation.

SIHA strengthened the capacity of seven civil society organizations in Sudan and Uganda by providing training and capacity-building workshops to improve their gender response to COVID-19. These trainings and workshops built their capacity and adequately prepared them to mobilize, take leadership, and advocate for their rights on inclusive and non-responsive gender-blind policies. The training and workshops conducted also provided these organizations with skills to more quickly recover from the effects of COVID-19 and the lockdown period.

Using the feminist methodology, our team strengthened twenty-four coalitions/collectives of women's rights groups through two training sessions in Somalia, eleven in Sudan (Kordofan, Darfur, Blue Nile, Greater Khartoum and Eastern region) three in South Sudan, one in Somaliland, five in Uganda, and two in Ethiopia.

NETWORKING

SIHA supported the creation of a continental network of advocates on family laws that will strengthen regional advocacy and amplify calls for family law reform at

the continental level. The network consists of activists, civil society, academics, religious leaders, and policymakers from across 15 African countries.

INFLUENCING

In both Sudan and Somalia, SIHA promoted female peace activists' access to dialogues between national governments and political institutions to ensure that governments are more attentive and responsive to the women's peace and security agenda and participation. In Sudan, further meetings were held with UNITAMS and embassies to support the Emergency Women's Protection Plan.

We commissioned a study entitled, ***"The Impact of COVID-19 on Street and Market Vendors in Uganda."*** **The study** recommended the need to operationalize the Minimum Wage Bill passed on July 9, 2022, and ensure that the Market Bill, which was passed in February, be signed into law to benefit informal workers, the majority of whom are women. The study report was disseminated through a consultative forum that brought together key actors from different sectors including the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social

Development, KCCA, CSOs, market vendors associations, among others. Apart from discussing the Minimum Wage Bill and the Market Bill, the forum discussed the need to build the concept of care and solidarity to create a more inclusive economy that includes informal workers.

SIHA championed advocacy and policy influencing that advanced gender-responsive policies and mechanisms during the COVID-19 crisis, particularly for women with disabilities. Persons with disabilities were linked to the wider women's movement and legal aid service providers, like FIDA Uganda and Uganda Law Society, and were provided with free legal aid services. SIHA and its partners facilitated the participation of women activists in meetings with the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) to influence decisions on market spaces for women vendors in Kampala and in West-Nile. This resulted in policy changes, including the improvement of poor road infrastructure, revised taxation, and increased security measures around the markets.

SIHA worked in collaboration with civil society and women's groups to create an anti-stoning campaign, which aimed to abolish the death sentence and remove adultery as well as extramarital sex from the Sudanese criminal Code. The campaign was sparked by the case of a woman being condemned to death by stoning. Fortunately, a quick and fierce mobilization of voices calling for the sentence to be overturned won out and led to the successful overturning of the initial court ruling.

SIHA amplified the voices of advocates and activists in Ethiopia and Sudan calling for peace, respect for women's human rights, and legal reform.

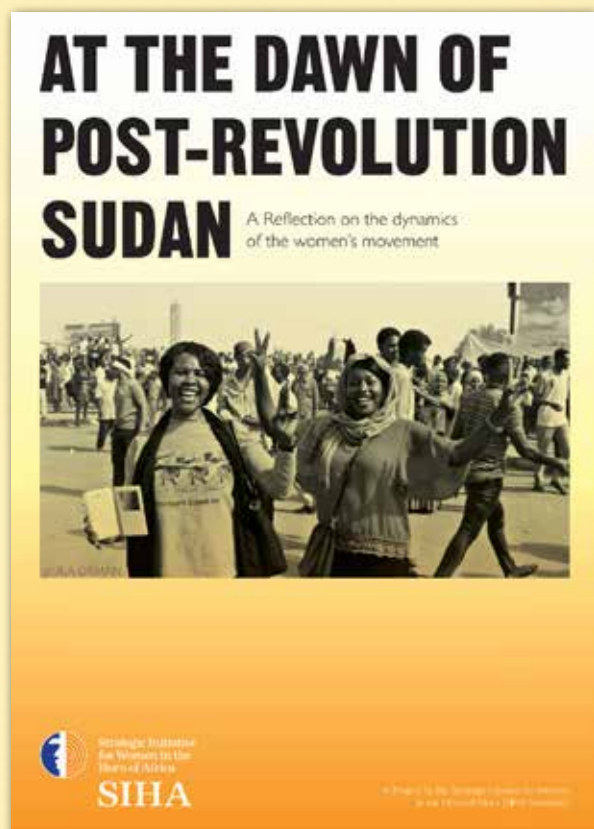
RESOURCING

SIHA strengthened outreach and collaboration with formal and informal grassroots and women's groups by providing financial support to eight women's cooperatives and five women's rights organizations (WROs) in Uganda, seven in Sudan, and four in Ethiopia.

PUBLICATIONS/KNOWLEDGE GENERATION

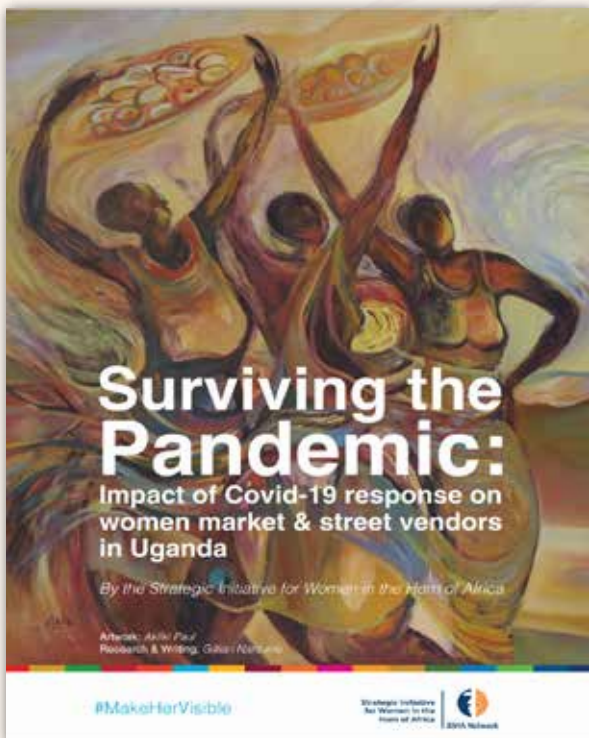
Throughout the year, we produced the following publications:

In Sudan, we published a research paper entitled, **At the dawn of post-revolution Sudan, a reflection on the dynamics of the women's movement.** This paper reflects on the struggle and achievements of the Sudanese women's movement. The paper recognizes that it is high



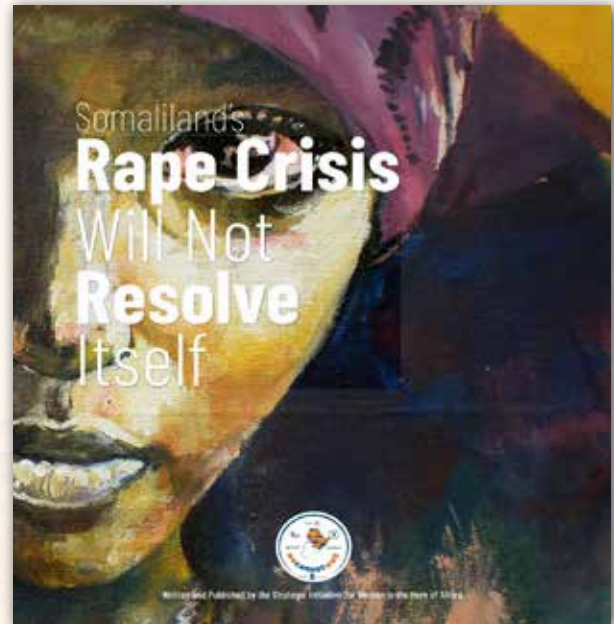
time that the Sudanese government and the ruling political institutions create a shift in their approach toward women's rights and gender equality in Sudan.

To understand the impact of COVID-19 on urban poor women in informal trade, we conducted a study entitled, **Surviving the pandemic: Impact of COVID-19 response on women market and street vendors in Uganda**. The study highlights the impact of the response to COVID-19



on informal street and market vendors in Uganda. The study also provides recommendations for the Government of Uganda on how to enable and support women's participation in a sustainable recovery process.

In Somaliland, we produced a research paper entitled, **Somaliland's rape crisis will not resolve itself**, that analyses Somaliland's criminal justice system and the prevalence of rape in the country. The paper calls upon the Government of Somaliland to enforce the rape and sexual offenses Act of 2018, prepare and



enact family law to protect women and girls, and review the traditional justice system and the statutory law among other recommendations. The paper also calls upon the international community and civil society to provide technical assistance in law review and reform and development of appropriate national action plans for gender equality and women's empowerment among other recommendations.

In South Sudan, our **Report on the Impact of COVID-19 on School-age Girls in Wau** demonstrated that school-age girls were



particularly impacted by the pandemic. They experienced increased violence at home, pressure to generate income for the family, sexual harassment, early and forced marriages, and reduced prospects for continuing their education. The report urges civil society, local, regional, and international communities, and governmental actors to take action to uphold girls' rights and freedoms.

Cross-cutting Issues

ADVOCACY AND INFLUENCING

In Sudan, we supported female youth to join neighbourhood committees through the launch of the 'Join the Committee' campaign. Neighbourhood committees are an important way for women and youth to access local-level political influence when other institutionalized barriers prevent them from holding positions within the established political parties. In Ethiopia, during the sixteen days of activism period, EWLA collaborated with the Young Women's Christian Association and the Federal and Regional Ministries of Women and Social Affairs to hold a street campaign that was led by young people calling for an end to the violence and for young women to be included in decision-making. In Uganda, the Young Activists' Coalition was formed.

To facilitate sustained advocacy, we strengthened 24 grassroots-led coalitions/ networks of women's rights organizations and activists, bringing these women together and emphasizing the aspects of their struggles that constitute a shared agenda.

SIHA adopted trust-building and solidarity platforms at the country and regional levels to foster learning



Women gather in Khartoum to promote the 'Join the Committee' Campaign (Sudan 2022)

and solidarity, amplify voices, and mobilize greater support for women's rights and gender equality.

We fostered linkages within and between movements and advocates who shared similar visions and beliefs. The 'Join the Committee' campaign remained an active initiative and raised awareness for the importance of women's participation in various political structures and decision-making spaces such as resistance committees, neighbourhood committees, unions, and professional associations, among others. This work is rooted in the firm belief that women's meaningful participation in decision-making spaces is a key factor in ensuring that women's voices and demands are heard and addressed.

Facilitating and amplifying the advocacy of women's rights organizations and activists remained central throughout our work in 2022. Because Uganda had signed and ratified CEDAW in 1985, it was due for review before the CEDAW Committee in 2022. SIHA Network, Musawah, FIDA Uganda, and Islamic Women's Initiative for Justice, Law, and Peace submitted a shadow report to the CEDAW committee to support Ugandan women, amplify their voices, and demand the prioritization of women's rights including Muslim women's rights; an end to harmful laws, social norms, and practices such as polygamy, child/forced marriage, bride price and unequal inheritance rights, violence against women and girls, and finally, a push for a gender-sensitive legal framework on marriage, separation, and divorce. In South Sudan, SIHA advocated for the ratification of the Maputo protocol. The women's coalitions are now collaborating with the South Sudan Women's Caucus in Parliament to mobilize support for gender-sensitive bills, including the Affirmative Action Bill, the Anti-GBV Bill, and the Family Law Bill.

In partnership with Musawah, FEMNET, and Equality Now, an Africa Family Law Network was launched in October 2022. The network aims to strengthen regional advocacy and build on national synergies to reform family law at the continental level. Musawah, SIHA Network, FEMNET and Equality Now mobilized 60 strategic regional partners (55 women) including activists, civil society, academics, religious leaders, and policymakers from across 15 African countries. This gathering provided a platform for open conversations across the continent regarding family law, encouraged discussions about the barriers and challenges with respect

to gender-sensitive legal reform, and developed strategies to push for reform in this crucial area of law for the rights and welfare of women and girls. As a result, the African Family Law Network continues to strategize and conduct collective advocacy, supported by regional outreaches organized by Musawah.

To support country-level advocacy and work that influences inclusive, intersectional, and autonomous women's coalitions, SIHA supported the coalitions' development of coherent agendas with clear proposals for legal reform. In Somaliland, SIHA continued to advocate for the realization of the women's quota following the Parliamentary election in which no women were elected to the legislature. In Somalia, the number of women voted into Parliament was less than 25 percent so women in the country are demanding that the women's quota be fulfilled, and a one-person-one-vote electoral system be adopted as a strategy to counter the current system, which places significant power in the hands of the clan of elders. The clan system constitutes an enduring barrier to women's political participation. Through the Sexual Offenses Bill, the women in Somalia and Somaliland also demanded stronger accountability for sexual violence cases.

With the reduction in the number of COVID-19 cases in Uganda, schools were re-opened after two years of lockdown. At least two religious leaders openly encouraged school officials to prevent pregnant and breastfeeding girls from resuming their studies. This harmful rhetoric was challenged by WROs and amplified by FIDA- Uganda through an open letter to the Ministry of Education,

which strongly recommended that the government issue a directive for all schools to open their doors to pregnant and breastfeeding girls. With support from SIHA and FIDA-Uganda, a locally led women's collective, the Domestic Violence Act Coalition developed a paper exploring available alternative forms of support for pregnant and breastfeeding teenagers who return to school. In partnership with the Uganda Women's Parliamentary Association (UWOPA), the Coalition introduced a motion in Parliament to decide on the plight of pregnant girls who are facing obstacles as they return to school.

Ugandan women's rights activists, in collaboration with SIHA and FIDA Uganda, participated in international, regional, and national advocacy platforms. At the international level, SIHA, FIDA Uganda, and their partners leveraged the Universal Peer Review Mechanism of the Human Rights Council (HRC) and Uganda's Review by the CEDAW Committee to submit recommendations for the enactment of the Marriage Bill and the Succession Amendment Bill, among other recommendations. Consequently, the Succession Amendment Bill was passed

into law by the Parliament and President of Uganda. At the national level and to influence the District Council Budgets, the women's coalition and activists in Gulu district in Northern Uganda mobilized women to participate in the budget conference along with other CSO leaders, government officials, and community leaders. Similarly, the activists' coalition located in Lira District, petitioned and obtained approval from the Speaker of the Council Meeting to allow women to present policy proposals and recommendations in their native language. This is an exception to the Standard Rules of Procedure which require that a person who prefers to use their native language, first notify the Council and get permission in advance. English as a mandatory language in meetings at the local level has in the past been an obstacle to women's meaningful engagement with the district local governments. The Chairperson allocated a specific time in their programme to listen to women's policy demands.

After the Federal Ministry of Justice appointed an all-male Board of the Advocate's Administration on July 30th, 2022, the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association and women activists held a press conference in Addis Ababa condemning this gender-insensitive appointment by the Ethiopian Prime Minister. A public petition challenged and called for the inclusion of women in leadership and a revision to the selection criteria in line with the principles of gender balance, inclusivity, and equality. The appointment was indeed a violation of Article 35 of the Constitution of Ethiopia, which guarantees the rights of women to take part in and hold positions of leadership and decision-making equal to men.

SIHA and EWLA supported women activists who coordinated peace marches through the streets of the Amhara, Adama, Oromia, Addis Ababa, and Gambella regions. The participants in these public peace walks carried clear posters, banners, and



placards to relay messages condemning violence against women and demanding women’s meaningful participation in leadership and decision-making at all levels of governance as enshrined in Ethiopia’s Constitution.



Three coalitions of women’s rights activists and organisations in Juba, Bentiu, and Wau successfully lobbied for the ratification of the Maputo Protocol.

To mobilize support for women in political decision-making spaces, and because 2021 and 2022 were election years in Somalia and Somaliland, our partner, Nagaad Network, initiated a campaign to build public support for women vying for elected positions. 30 media influencers created social media content to promote conversations around women’s leadership. 50 WRO/As from Mogadishu, Garowe, and Hargeisa jointly demanded that the women’s representation quota and the one-person-one-vote electoral system be implemented. Consequently, Somalia witnessed the election of some women including the election of a woman as Deputy Speaker, a first in Somali history.

Women at peace march in Ethiopia (September 2022)

EVENTS/WEBINARS HELD

- a). Publication launch: At the Dawn of Post-Revolution Sudan.
- b). Women with disabilities attended a press conference held on October 19, 2022 in Arua city.
- c). The coalition of women's and girls' rights organizations that support people with disabilities, WPS champions, minority rights advocates, and other stakeholders presented a statement to the government on December 6, 2022.
- d). Hybrid webinar - This event brought together key stakeholders to discuss issues around women's participation in politics and political decision-making in Somalia.
- e). Hybrid webinar - This event brought together key stakeholders to discuss issues around women's participation in politics and political decision-making in Somaliland.
- f). Panel discussion on SGBV in Somaliland in conjunction with, 'The Rape Crisis will not resolve itself' publication.
- g). Sudan Women land ownership webinar.
- h). Regional Gender Forum January 2022.
- i). Panel discussion around Anti-stoning advocacy.
- j). Six gender forums organized in Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia.
- k). International Women's Day events under the theme "Break the Bias."
- l). Sixteen Days of Activism events across the Horn.
- m). National Conference on Economic Social and Cultural Rights on August 2-4, 2022, at Makerere University, Kampala.
- n). Twitter space event organized by FIDA on International Youth Day.
- o). Africa Regional Family Law conference in Nairobi attended by women activists.
- p). Hybrid Pre-African Union Summit meeting during the GIMAC in Lusaka, Zambia.
- q). SASDIR Conference in Blantyre, Malawi in partnership with the Gender Responsive Resilience and Intersectionality in Policy and Practice (GRRIPP) project supported by FIDA.
- r). Sexual Violence Research Institute (SVRI) Conference in Cancun, Mexico in partnership with the GRIPP project supported by FIDA.
- s). Collective care and healing forum for women in Somaliland supported by Nagaad.
- t). Lobby meetings with the Puntland Members of Parliament of the Judiciary and Human rights committee supported by the Women's Coalition in Puntland, Somalia.

LESSONS LEARNED

- a). For advocacy work targeting migrant girls to be meaningful and sustained, their economic resilience and security needs must be boosted through livelihood support programs. This is crucial because poverty is one of the leading factors that forces girls into high-risk migration patterns. Additionally, migrant returnees often face a lack of acceptance and proper socio-economic reintegration which further compromises their well-being.
- b). In Sudan, migrant girls who participated in sports and cultural activities experienced a boost in self-esteem and were more confident and interested in engaging in public events that broke stereotypical views. Similarly, a greater awareness of sexual violence and reproductive health created opportunities for survivors to open up and seek support.
- c). In Somaliland, livelihood and vocational training skills were particularly appreciated by the girls. Though they had limited access to such opportunities in the past, the girls were very aware that these skills would contribute to their socio-economic empowerment.
- d). The formation of girls' associations was particularly important for girls with multiple vulnerabilities: IDPs, asylum seekers, and girls from marginalized religious or ethnic groups.
- e). It is cost-effective for girls from the associations to conduct community outreaches given that they do not have financial expectations. Additionally, they are more suited to conduct peer-to-peer awareness with fellow youth in their communities.
- f). Advocacy is extremely volatile and fragile work plagued by ongoing conflict and tensions. WROs in all their diversity require safe spaces and a support mechanism. Trust-building and solidarity platforms were found to be an important mechanism of collective care and communal support. Women activists who participated in the gender forums appreciated the safe space that was created. These spaces allowed the women to feel a sense of solidarity and support and gave them a chance to speak openly without feeling judged.
- g). Supporting women to advocate through collective mechanisms and coalitions has proven effective. In Sudan, the Gender Equality Networks have mobilized to present local authorities with motions and statements that condemn violations. In Uganda, the coalitions contributed to the appointment of Ms. Latoo Rose, the Chairperson of Pader Women's Rights Activists Coalition, to the Palwok Clan Committee to represent women and table women's issues before the clan. This was the first woman in the clan to be appointed to the committee. In Somalia, the coalitions have supported women's participation in elective leadership and consequently, up to 22 percent of the members of Parliament in Somalia are women.

- h). The inclusion of diverse groups of women, including women with disabilities, has made the wider movement more aware of the needs of women in different circumstances. Because the women's movement became more sensitive to the needs of all members of their community, women advocated collectively for adjustable beds in hospitals.
- i). In Uganda, we learned that radio can be a very effective platform for expanding the movement and reaching more women's rights activists. Through a partnership with Radio Pacis, one of the most popular radio stations in the West Nile Region, women with disabilities were able to access a platform to share their issues and be heard. This later led FIDA Uganda and Uganda Law Society to offer free legal services to the survivors of abuse within this community.
- j). The ability to be responsive and adapt to rapidly changing contexts has been important. In Sudan, staff members were able to find ways to shift the general focus of small grants so that project activities could continue to progress despite a very challenging environment.
- k). In Ethiopia, the working environment was very unpredictable with circumstances changing constantly and requiring new risk management strategies to be rapidly developed and implemented. The key lesson in this fragile situation was to find ways to draw attention to specific issues affecting women despite the general tendency among media outlets to view the impacts of the conflict without a gender lens. It was also important to be more strategic in certain interventions and devote more time and resources to risk analysis and mitigation.
- l). To guarantee better and sustainable results, it is necessary to engage beneficiaries at all levels of project implementation, from inception to completion. For example, the majority of the network's original grassroots women's organizations are much stronger now and are continuing to effect change at different levels, including within their communities.
- m). In the face of conflict, SIHA and its partners benefitted from having shared agendas that amplified women's voices and mobilized support. The shared agendas, developed and reviewed during national gender forums, provided opportunities for meaningful engagements among women's coalitions and networks.
- n). In Arua, collaborating and linking with existing women's networks strengthened the women's movement and the feeling of sisterhood among diverse groups of women. These interconnections lead to collective advocacy that allowed for policy changes and addressed some of the concerns of the women market vendors living with disabilities.
- o). Male engagement can produce positive results when undertaken strategically. In 2022, we were able to strategically engage key officers who were instrumental in making policy changes. In South Sudan, the women's coalitions engaged male allies, including traditional,

local, and religious leaders, which resulted in the adoption of the Chief's National Action Plan to End Child and Forced Marriage of 2023.

- p). Routine capacity-building, refresher training, and frequent follow-ups are

necessary to ensure that our work with first responders is effective, sustainable, and maintains momentum.

CHALLENGES

- a). The Political situation in Sudan and the conflict in some parts of Ethiopia caused uncertainty and delays in some planned activities. In Ethiopia, the closure of inter-district travel slowed down the implementation of activities. Following the coup in Sudan, the Humanitarian Aid Commission issued a notice to all NGOs to notify the government of all activities and meetings being organized in hotels. With this increased scrutiny of civil society work, women activists, whose agendas are political and stand in opposition to the coup government, faced greater risk. There was concern that the women activists could be labeled 'anti-Islam.' To counter the risk in Sudan, the program focused on implementing programs in the regions and at the state level where functional governments were in place. It was not possible to advocate policy reform in Khartoum at this time.
- b). In South Sudan, many of the girls supported by the project were internally displaced and living in protection of civilian (POC) sites in Juba. Internal conflicts between clans that migrated from different regions and gangs that have formed within camps for the displaced have continued to result in violence and insecurity. The conflicts and violence are mainly over control of resources and spaces within the camps. This violence exacerbates the vulnerability of the young women and girls who are sometimes forced to flee to safer areas within the camps and end up in early or abusive marriages.
- c). The Ebola outbreak in Uganda created some delays for Uganda-based and regional programme activities. The regional gender forum was postponed to January 2023, but otherwise, regional activities were shifted to Addis Ababa and Nairobi. Despite the challenges faced, the project remained on track and delivered on its set targets.
- d). Across the region, lockdown measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic increased women's economic struggles. Increased market prices, loss of employment, and a high cost of urban living without income forced many women to migrate to rural areas. Higher costs also frustrated budgeting plans as monies allocated could no longer cover as much as anticipated.
- e). Similarly, Somaliland faced excessive heat and six consecutive droughts, which increased poverty and food

insecurity. The climate shocks forced many to migrate within the country, resulting in higher rates of school dropouts, which undoubtedly impacted girls disproportionately. These underlying factors always make it more difficult for us to shift mindsets within the community and our capacity-building and movement-building activities cannot reach as many women and girls.

- f). Negative attitudes and perceptions about women's economic empowerment among some male participants and key stakeholders continue to be problematic.
- g). In Sudan, systematic police harassment and the raiding of refugee areas added to insecurity and negatively impacted the women's and girls' movements. Women and girls were denied access to different services and were left vulnerable to receiving fines of up to 500 USD.
- h). In Somalia, due to ongoing elections, the already tense security situation became more tenuous. As a result, some of the planned activities, such as meetings with delegates and embassies were delayed. While the elections constituted a potential trigger for insecurity and conflict, endemic forms of insecurity remained the dominant concern, including the continued threat posed by Al-Shabaab.
- i). An unstable political situation and insecurity impacted our work in Uganda. Specifically, in Kotido, insecurity was heightened as a result of the increased cattle raiding in the region. It was very difficult to convene the women's cooperatives

because many people had to leave their homes to seek refuge and safety. This chaotic situation further delayed processes.

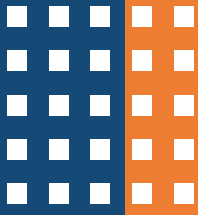
- j). Resistance from the city and district officials of the Ugandan authorities presented another challenge, as they aimed, ostensibly, to keep Kampala clean. Authorities on the ground used order and cleanliness as an excuse to harass and arrest women street vendors. While the women vendors' collectives have worked hard to push for vital legislation, the actual implementation of the KCCA By-law to better protect street vendors from this harassment has been delayed. This challenge continues to be addressed through frequent engagement with local, district, and city authorities, especially those who work with women in the informal sector.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR WOMEN IN THE HORN OF AFRICA (SIHA) NETWORK FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS

	NOTE	2022	2021
		EURO	EURO
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Surplus for the year		178,041	306,826
ADJUSTMENTS FOR:			
Prior year adjustments	8	48,931	(1,666)
CHANGES IN:			
Increase in accounts receivables and prepayments	5	(466,058)	(252,316)
Increase in accounts payables and accruals	9	628,804	894,118
Net cash flows from financing activities		389,718	946,962
Increase in cash and cash equivalents		389,718	946,962
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS			
At 1 January		2,457,233	1,510,271
Increase in cash and cash equivalents		389,718	946,962
At 31 December	6	2,846,951	2,457,233



Our Board

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



OMAYMA ELMARDI



**LILLIAN BYARUGABA
ADRIKO**



KELTUN GASIM



RABHA ELIS BANDAS



**RIGBE
GEBREHAWARIAT
HAGOS**



**FADWO HASSAN
JIMALE**

ADVISORS TO THE BOARD



KALTUN HASSAN



**SABA GEBREMEDHIN
HAGOS**



PEACE T. KYAMUREKU



**ASMAHAN ABDESELAM
HASSEN**



**CECILIA DANIEL SURUR
MUSA**



**DR. SARRA RASHEID
AHMED ABDELWAHAB**

PROGRAM ADVISORS



GULEID AHMED JAMA



KADRA OMAR



**ABDIFATAH HASSAN
ALI**



DR. LYN OSSOME



KATHERINE DONAHUE



ROSE BARYAMUTUMA



CATHERINE NYAMBURA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

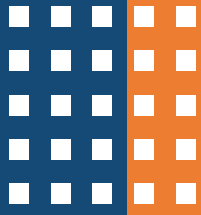
- ❖ Omayma Elmardi
- ❖ Lillian Byarugaba Adriko
- ❖ Keltun Gasim
- ❖ Rabha Elis Bandas
- ❖ Rigbe Gebrehawariat Hagos
- ❖ Fadwo Hassan Jimale

ADVISORS TO THE BOARD

- ❖ Kaltun Hassan
- ❖ Saba Gebremedhin Hagos
- ❖ Peace T. Kyamureku
- ❖ Asmahan Abdeselam Hassen
- ❖ Cecilia Daniel Surur Musa
- ❖ Dr. Sarra Rasheid Ahmed Abdelwahab

PROGRAM ADVISORS

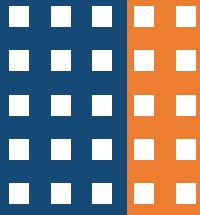
- ❖ Guleid Ahmed Jama
- ❖ Kadra Omar
- ❖ Abdifatah Hassan Ali
- ❖ Dr. Lyn Ossome
- ❖ Katherine Donahue
- ❖ Rose Baryamutuma
- ❖ Catherine Nyambura



MEMBERS



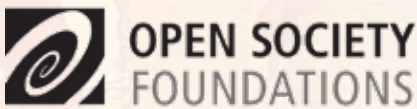
SIHA network would like to thank all its Members in 2021 and 2022. By the end of 2022, SIHA Network had over one hundred (100) members in the Greater Horn of Africa.



DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS



Global Affairs
Canada



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands



For further inquiries, please contact:

SIHA Network

 +256706442912 / +256200 906263

 info@sihanet.org

 <https://sihanet.org>

 SIHA Network

 @sihanet

 Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA)

 @SIHA-Network

 @sihanetwork

SUPPORT US: <https://sihanet.org/support-us/>