












Sahiyo U.S. Annual Report

July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021



	Welcome from the Director	3
	Background / About Us	4
	Meet the Team	5
	Theory of Change	10
	Project Partners	11
	Project and Impact updates	12
	Finances and Funding Sources	19
	Get Involved	20
	Acknowledgments	21

For Sahiyo U.S., the past year has been one of significant milestones, which included our 5th anniversary working to support survivors and prevent future generations of girls from undergoing female genital cutting (FGC). Even as we celebrated, we recognized that more work needs to be done to protect girls from FGC and that the COVID-19 pandemic brought about some unexpected changes in how we meet our mission.

We met these challenges and persevered.

With lockdown in March of 2020, Sahiyo U.S. transitioned all of our programming to a virtual format, something that took patience and increased organizational capacity to execute effectively. We also saw an opportunity to engage with community members in ways we may not have been able to in person. In April 2021, we transitioned our annual Activist Retreat from an in-person, 3-day training to a virtual Zoom training and recruited over 20 participants.

We built out our education and outreach programs by recruiting interns to support in the creation of monthly webinars focused on bringing together survivors, community members, health care providers, educators, government officials, and more, to educate the larger community on the harms of FGC and the need to invest in resources for prevention and support services.

Overall, our internship program, designed to train the next generation of leaders in this field, grew extensively, from hosting 4 interns a year to hosting 12 interns throughout all parts of our organization, from social media, to development, to programs and communications. With the support from these interns, our team was able to offer a range of community-building activities throughout this past year, including launching the Bhaiyo Male Ally program; hosting a webinar on the intersections of racial justice and FGC; and recruiting participants for our 5th Voices to End FGM/C digital storytelling workshop.

The challenges of 2020 have only strengthened our unwavering commitment to amplifying survivors' voices through storytelling advocacy. We are proud to present these accomplishments in our July 2020—June 2021 Annual Report. Finally, as we acknowledge the pain and trauma that 2020 has caused in our local and global communities, we also look to the future with anticipation and hope, and we thank you for your continued support of our future work to ensure all girls are protected from female genital cutting.

In solidarity,

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



Sahiyo is the Bohra Gujarati word for 'saheliyo,' or female friends, and reflects our mission to empower Asian and other communities to end female genital cutting (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 injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons," and it can have lifelong physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual impacts on a woman.

Sahiyo's vision is to bring an end to female genital cutting (also known as female genital mutilation or female circumcision), which internationally has been recognized as a human rights violation. We aim to enable a culture in which a woman/girl's body and female sexuality is not feared or suppressed, but embraced as normal. We recognize and emphasize the values of consent and a woman/girl's right over her own body.

Our programs take place transnationally, with primary work done in the United States and India, and 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 Population Reference Bureau as one of six inspiring organizations working to end FGC. From June 2020 to June 2021, Sahiyo was a fiscally sponsored project of Empowerments Works in the U.S.. Our programs and activities are financed through individual donations and private foundations.



Mariya Taher
U.S. Executive Director

✉ mariya@sahiyo.com

U.S. Executive Director Mariya Taher has worked in gender-based violence for over a decade in the areas of teaching, research, policy, program development, and direct service. The Manhattan Young Democrats honored her as a 2017 Engendering Progress honoree and ABC news did a special feature on her entitled “Underground: American Woman Who Underwent Female Genital Mutilation Comes Forward to Help Others.” In 2018, Mariya received the Human Rights Storytellers Award from the Muslim American Leadership Alliance. In 2020, she was recognized as one of the six inaugural grant recipients for the Crave Foundation for Women. Since 2015, she has collaborated with the Massachusetts Women’s Bar Association to pass legislation to protect girls from FGC. After starting a Change.org petition and gathering over 400,000 signatures, Massachusetts became the 39th state in the U.S. to do so. Prior to Sahiyo, Mariya held positions at Saheli, Support and Friendship for South Asian Women & Families, W.O.M.A.N. Inc., Asian Women’s Shelter, San Francisco Dept on the Status of Women, San Francisco State University, and was a 2014 Women’s Policy Institute Fellow through the Women’s Foundation of California. Mariya is also an extensive writer in fiction and nonfiction and has contributed articles and stories to NPR’s *Code Switch*, *HuffPost*, *The Fair Observer*, *Brown Girl Magazine*, *Solstice Literary Magazine*, *The Express Tribune*, *The San Francisco Examiner*, *Cecile’s Writers’ Magazine* and more. She graduated with her MFA in Creative Writing from Lesley University, where she received the Graduate School of Arts & Social Sciences Dean’s Merit Scholarship and the Lesley University Graduate Student Leadership Award. She also holds a Master in Social Work from San Francisco State University and a B.A. from U.C. Santa Barbara in Religious Studies.



Lara Kingstone
Communications Manager | ✉ communications@sahiyo.com

Communications Manager Lara Kingstone started her career in a program designed to integrate London communities and empower young people to become active and engaged citizens. Lara earned a B.A. in Political Communications at the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya, while working as a journalist at The Culture Trip and producing and hosting a human rights radio program. While studying, she worked at an educational center which aimed to help young Palestinian and Israeli people learn together. Since then, she has worked in human trafficking prevention and gender-based violence prevention on the Thai-Laos border; conducted research on identity and belonging in the U.S.; and done community outreach for an organization connecting youth in foster care with mentors. She holds an MSc in International Development from University College London.



Tania Parks
Development & Finance Manager | ✉ grants@sahiyo.com

Development and Finance Manager Tania Parks is passionate about gender justice issues and has been actively involved with a number of organizations advocating gender equality. She holds a Master in Human Rights and Humanitarian Action from The Paris Institute of Political Studies with concentrations in Middle East Studies and Migration Studies. She has held various development and outreach roles at a domestic violence survivor advocacy nonprofit in San Francisco called W.O.M.A.N. Inc., and was the gender-based violence research intern at Women and Health Alliance, International, a women's health nonprofit based in Paris. She has published a study on Syrian refugee girls' perceptions of safety during displacement and has participated in resettlement efforts for Yemenis refugee women in San Francisco through the Arab Cultural and Community Center. She is also a professor of political science with a focus on American government.



Jenny Cordle
Editorial Manager

✉ editor@sahiyo.com

Editorial Manager Jenny Cordle documents human rights issues through photography and nonfiction writing. In 2016, she received a Certificate in Documentary Photography and Nonfiction Writing from Duke University's Center for Documentary Studies with her work focusing on female genital cutting in Mali, West Africa. She has researched the intersection of maternal and child health, traditional healing and spiritual beliefs in Northern Ghana through Georgetown University for her Master of Science in Global Health. She is currently advocating for labia elongation to be considered as FGM by the World Health Organization.



Sarrah Hussain
Development Assistant

✉ sarrah@sahiyo.com

Development Assistant Sarrah Hussain is passionate about women's health and, in the future, would like to combine her interests in human rights and technology to create a positive impact in the world. She grew up in Los Angeles and is currently an undergraduate student at Stanford University double majoring in Human Biology and Computer Science, with a minor in Human Rights. She has worked with various nonprofits in the women's health and tech space such as The Lily Project and Bridging Tech. After discovering FGC was practiced in her community, she got involved with Sahiyo to ensure the practice is stopped. Sarrah is excited to create change and uplift voices with the rest of the Sahiyo team.



Cate Cox
Programs Coordinator

✉ programscoordinator@sahiyo.com

Programs Coordinator Cate Cox is an undergraduate student at Simmons University studying International Relations, with minors in Economics and Arabic. She is passionate about women's rights 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 is in the process of conducting a research project on gender-based violence within the United States. She is excited to work with Sahiyo to help uplift the voices of women everywhere and create a positive change.



Arefa Cassoobhoy
Sahiyo U.S. Advisory Board Chair

✉ arefac@gmail.com

Arefa Cassoobhoy (Sahiyo U.S. Advisory Board Chair) is an internal medicine physician and health communications professional with expertise in the health media industry and a background in public health. She is an advocate for health equity and health literacy, committed to raising awareness of topics such as female genital cutting that affect vulnerable groups. Her projects focus on empowering individuals to improve their wellness through partnerships involving advocacy, research and education. Dr. Cassoobhoy is Chief Medical Editor and Vice President of Medical Affairs at Everyday Health Group. Prior to that she was at WebMD and Medscape. She serves as a strategic leader working with external and internal stakeholders from ideation through launch to build and support multimedia health destinations. She enjoys translating complex medical concepts into easy-to-understand language that is accurate and useful, leading to increased quality audience engagement and valuable brand trust. Involved in the community, Dr. Cassoobhoy is a member of Leadership Atlanta's 2021 class. She is on the Board of Directors at the Clarkston Community Health Center, a non-profit clinic for individuals without adequate health insurance, many of whom are recent immigrants. She is an advisor for the Community Health Promoters Program at the Refugee Women's Network and is a member of the Emory School of Medicine Alumni Board. In 2020 she was on the leadership team for the inaugural Health Disparities Solutions Summit of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine. 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, Sahiyo U.S. Advisory Board Vice-Chair, is the co-founder of WeSpeakOut, an organization that strives for equal rights for Bohra women in all spheres of life, specifically on female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), or khafz. She grew up in London and was educated at the University of Bradford Management Centre in the United Kingdom and the Université de Montpellier in France. Zehra lives in the U.S. and currently works in Technology Project Management. She serves on the Board of Hopkins School (New Haven, CT) and on the Board of Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services - IRIS (New Haven, CT). After discovering well into adulthood that Type 1 FGM/C was practiced in her community and that she, too, had been subjected to it, she decided she could no longer keep silent. Although she has no recollection of the practice being done to her, she is vehemently opposed to it and works with WeSpeakOut to expose the practice within and outside the community. WeSpeakOut's focus is to ensure that FGM/C is declared illegal wherever the Bohra community resides and khafz, as a practice, ends as a social norm in the Bohra community.

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

Additional Sahiyo U.S. Advisory Board Members

 **Renee Bergstrom**

 **Alisha Bhagat**

 **Insia Dariwala**

 **Joanne Golden**

 **Priya Goswami**

 **Aarefa Johari**

 **Murtaza Kapasi**

 **Maryum Saifee**

 **Sakina Sharp**

 **Joanna Vergoth**

“
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 **Ritti Mendieta, Zahara Kagalwalla, Georgia Grady, Moksha Kothari, Kamakshi Arora, Kristel Mendoza Castillo, and Megan Maxwell.**

The communications interns assist the Communications Manager and wider team with internal and external communications activities. Interns this year include **Isabel Shepard, Krystal Ssonko, and Amena Ali.**

Programs interns support education and outreach efforts by planning and coordinating virtual events, such as our webinar on male ally engagement on preventing FGC or virtual screening of the Voices to End FGM/C digital stories. Interns this year included **Hunter Kessous, Catherine Cox (now staff), and Sandra Yu.**

Development interns ensure the organization remains financially stable by maintaining relationships and securing funds from grant-making organizations and enacting fundraising campaigns to support Sahiyo's programs. Interns this year include **Sarrah Hussain (now staff), Maria Elena P. Rivera-Beckstrom, Kendra Davis, Lindsey Carpenter, Victoria Hsieh, and Yusra Majoka.**

Based on external research on female genital cutting (FGC) and independent research Sahiyo conducted with over 400 women from FGC practicing communities, we developed a theory of change that leads to these goals:










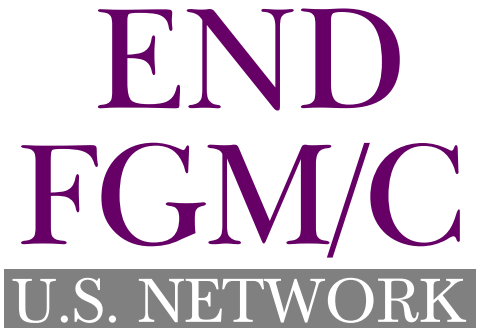






























1. Increased abandonment of FGC among future generations.
2. Creation of a strong network of community advocates who are raising awareness of FGC within their own communities, leading to a social norm change of abandoning FGC.

Our theory of change was influenced by the social norm approach of our partner organization, Tostan. Tostan, a nearly 30-year old NGO, has utilized social norm theory to reduce FGC in Senegal (and several other countries in West Africa). In 2014, they reported a 69% reduction in instances of FGC over the course of 5 years.

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. Only by building a critical mass of voices willing to challenge FGC will abandonment occur. Obtaining community member buy-in is, therefore, the most important variable in determining abandonment of FGC. When trying to create social change, it's critical to create safe spaces and mechanisms that allow community members to share dialogue on FGC without consequences of reprisal.

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 begin debating FGC with family, friends, young mothers, and mosque leaders. 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, vast numbers of community members must have informed conversations about FGC. Sahiyo utilizes social mobilization techniques involving storytelling to further this effort.



 <p>apigbv ASIAN PACIFIC INSTITUTE ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE</p>	 <p>arrow asian-pacific resource & research centre for women</p>	 <p>ASIA NETWORK TO END FGM/C</p>	 <p>Asian Women's Shelter</p>	 <p>aware</p>	 <p>breakthrough</p>	 <p>brown girl smart. hip. beautiful.</p>	 <p>Council of the Great City Schools</p>
 <p>EMPOWERMENTWORKS For A Thriving World</p>	 <p>END FGM/C U.S. NETWORK</p>	 <p>END FGM CANADA NETWORK</p>	 <p>Equality Now</p>	 <p>FIGO International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics</p>	 <p>forma</p>	 <p>GENDER & COVID-19</p>	 <p>Global Health Strategies</p>
 <p>The Hands of Hope Foundation Recognise Prevent Protect</p>	 <p>HIDDEN SCARS</p>	 <p>HONOR DIARIES</p>	 <p>IAWRT</p>	 <p>LOVE MATTERS Open, Honest, Sex Friendly</p>	 <p>MALA MUSLIM AMERICAN LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE</p>	 <p>mumkin</p>	 <p>MWT MUSLIM WORLD TODAY</p>
 <p>ORCHID PROJECT WORKING TOGETHER TO END FEMALE GENITAL CUTTING</p>	 <p>RHMA</p>	 <p>Resist.</p>	 <p>rnw media</p>	 <p>Stop FGM Middle East & ASIA</p>	 <p>STORY CENTER LISTEN DEEPLY. TELL STORIES</p>	 <p>There Is No Limit foundation</p>	 <p>Threads For Well-Being</p>
 <p>Tostan Dignity for All</p>	 <p>unicef 70 YEARS FOR EVERY CHILD</p>	 <p>ViiV Healthcare</p>	 <p>POSITIVE ACTION</p>	 <p>wadi</p>	 <p>WALLACE GLOBAL FUND For a sustainable future</p>	 <p>wespeakout</p>	 <p>Thrive WOMEN ALLIANCE</p>

At Sahiyo, we pride ourselves on being an all women-led organization, with staff representing a diverse background of ethnicities, religions, sexualities, and ages. This past year, Sahiyo U.S. brought on new part-time staff, including a Development Assistant and a Programs Coordinator to help us increase our capacity to meet our mission. We've also expanded our internship program and over the past year trained 6 Development Interns, 4 Communications Interns, and 8 Social Media Interns. Our Sahiyo volunteer program has grown significantly and today we have 60+ volunteers from 9 countries, including the U.S., India, Bahrain, Pakistan, Kenya, UK, Canada, U.A.E., Australia and Sri Lanka. Volunteers work with us remotely to support our storytelling initiatives through providing administrative support and event logistical support as needed. This year, to support our volunteer community in continuing education on the impact of FGC, Sahiyo initiated monthly study circles wherein volunteers connect with one another and deepened their understanding on this issue.

80%
 of all Sahiyo members
 are Asian (staff, volunteers,
 advisory board combined)

40%
 of staff identify as part
 of LGBTQ+ community






92%
 of all Sahiyo members
 are survivors of FGC or
 friends/family of a survivor

“
 The team behind Sahiyo constantly strives to create a more responsible and accountable society by raising awareness about the need to end the practice of FGC. It has been an astounding experience to be a part of such an organisation that aims at ending FGC and thereby, ensures that women can exercise personal autonomy without the influence of external forces.
 ”

Richa Bhargava , volunteer






As a result, our programs and campaigns have garnered attention in over 25 media articles:

-  **FGM's #MeToo Moment, Ms Magazine**
-  **Today is Zero Tolerance to FGM day, and battle to end Bohra Muslim custom has only begun, The Print**
-  **Only united voices can bring an end to FGM/C, Mid-day**
-  **International day of zero tolerance against FGM: 27 short films break silence around khatna through personal stories, The Indian Express**
-  **These 27 Short Videos Highlight the Horrors of Female Genital Mutilation, Global Citizen**

Sahiyo Blog

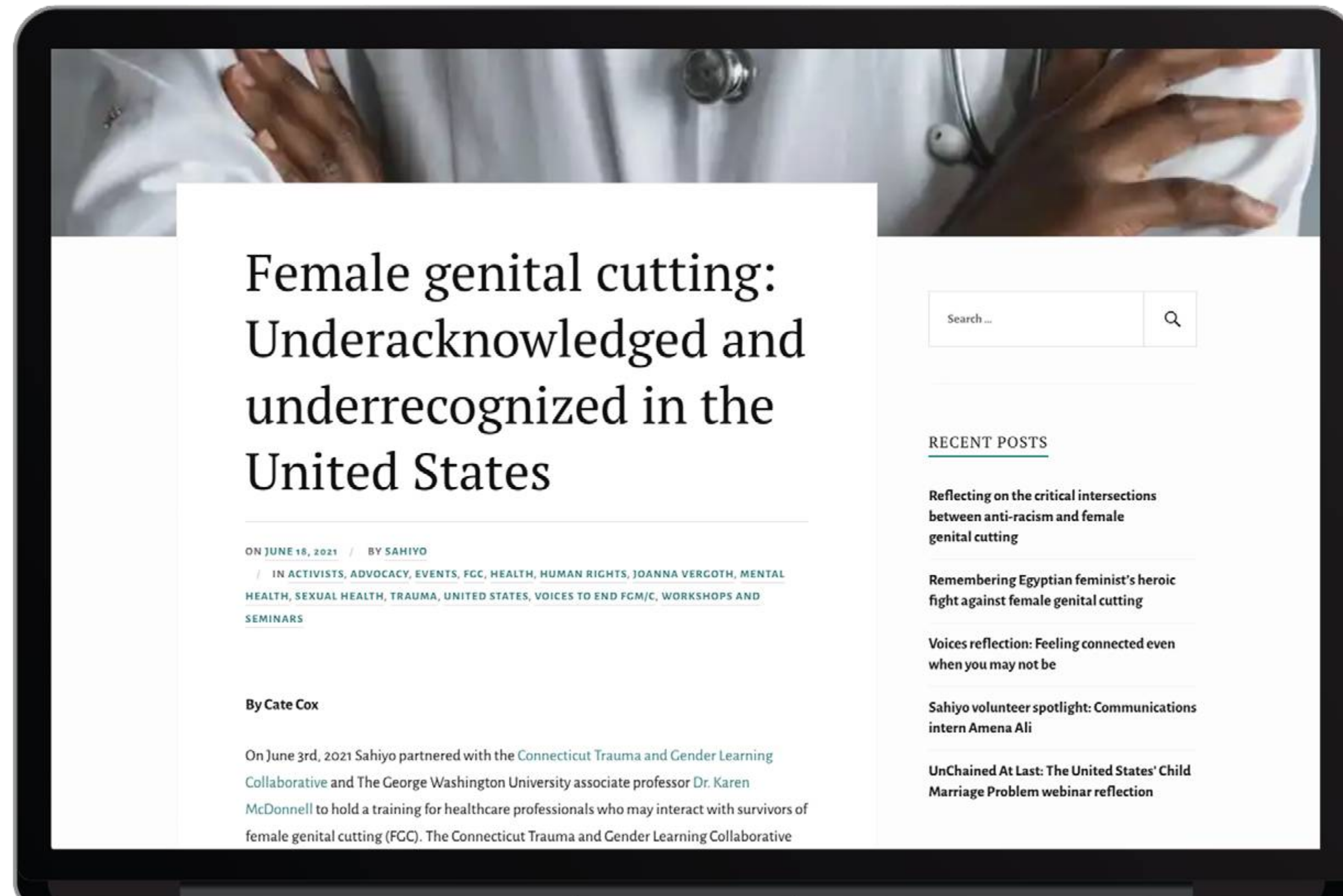
Storytelling is an important medium for allowing people affected by FGC to share narratives in their own words; gain agency over their stories; and connect with others through shared experiences. Sahiyo's blog is one avenue of doing so. This year alone, Sahiyo has published over 100 blog posts. Over the years, the blog has increased in viewership, now averaging 100,000 views per year. Some posts from this past year include various topics, such as:

-  **Female genital cutting: Underacknowledged and underrecognized in the United States**
-  **Sahiyo stands with AAPI communities experiencing racist violence**
-  **Why I shared my experience at Voices to End FGM/C with the medical community**

In September 2020, Sahiyo also launched its “Dear Maasi” column. Maasi is the word for aunt in Gujarati, and gives people an opportunity to anonymously submit questions about sex and relationships. Farzana Doctor, an accomplished psychotherapist and novelist, plays the role of Maasi, and responds with helpful tips and advice for survivors impacted by FGC. Over the past year, we've published 10 Dear Maasi blogs, and have seen how this column has gathered the highest number of views on our blog on a monthly basis.



[Visit Sahiyo Blog](#)



Voices to End FGM/C Digital Storytelling Project

Voices to End FGM/C is mobilizing a critical mass of storytellers and activists from across the globe by bringing people together to share and heal from their experiences of FGC; connect and grow as leaders in their own communities; and create short videos calling for an end to this harmful practice. In 2021, Sahiyo hosted our 5th workshop virtually over a 6-week period. As a result, 11 new stories created by workshop participants were added to the Voices Collection. These stories have been used on a variety of platforms to act as educational material not only in communities that practice FGC, but also with healthcare professionals and government officials. In all, 46 Voices to End FGM/C videos have been shared with the wider public through YouTube and our educational outreach programming.

In each digital storytelling workshop, storytellers have expressed their satisfaction and personal growth from this program and have asked Sahiyo to host additional workshops to support even more survivors and community members. After taking part in our Voices program, 95% of our workshop participants have continued to stay involved with our organization and its work in various ways as Sahiyo ambassadors and volunteers.

Workshop participants range in diversity with storytellers representing various races / ethnicities, genders, and geographic locations. Participants have hailed from 16+ countries, including Singapore, Tanzania, Egypt, Chad, Pakistan, Bahrain, India, the U.S. and Zimbabwe. These stories span across the globe, but have one powerful common thread: a hope to protect future girls from this harm.



After meeting women in the Voices to End FGM/C Digital Storytelling Workshop, I'm even more inspired to support Sahiyo's goals to empower others create positive change and stop FGM/C in their communities.

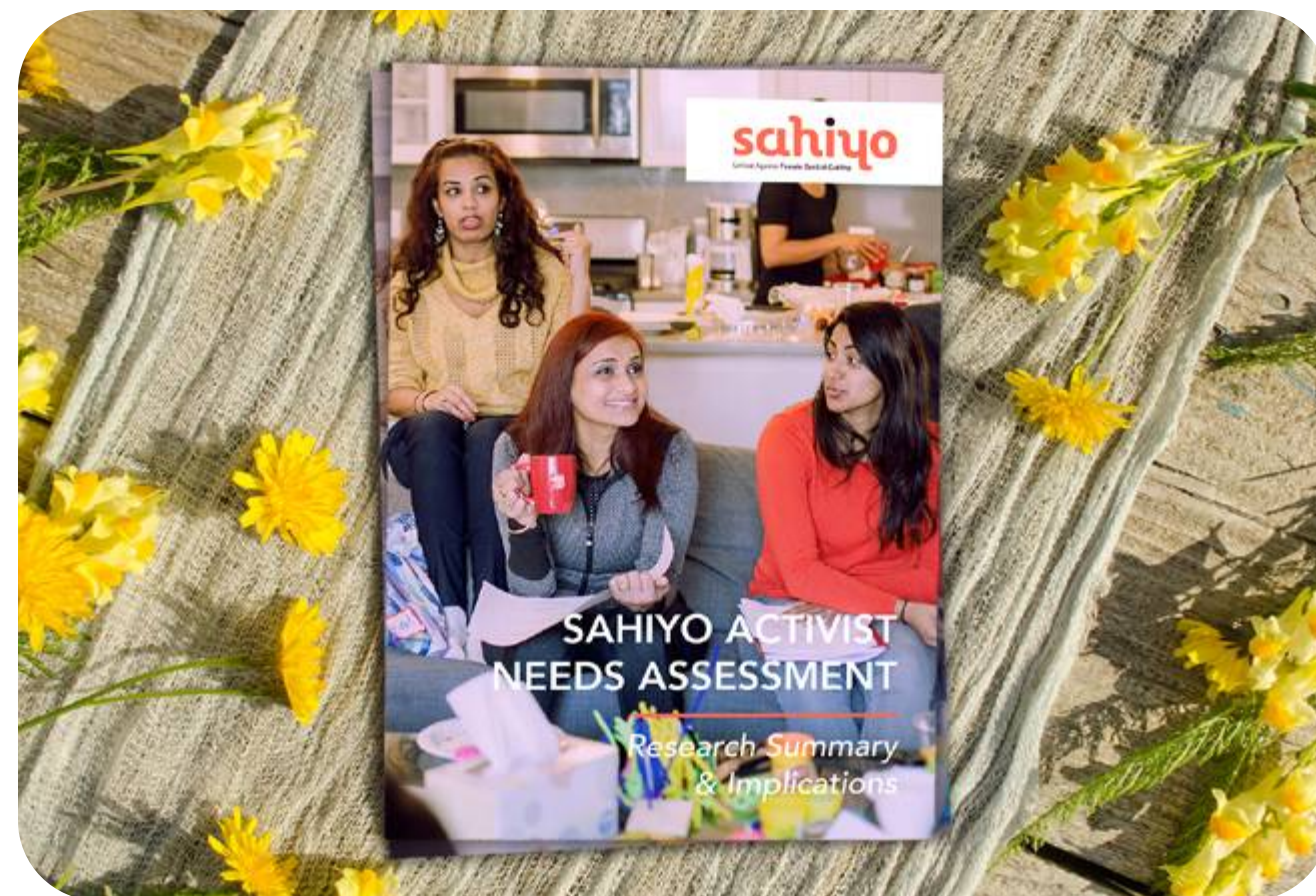


Arefa Cassoobhoy



Activist Retreats:

Starting in 2018, Sahiyo has hosted an annual activist retreat to connect those from the Bohra community who are working, or want to work, to end FGC. This came following a recognition that many activists worked in isolation and therefore felt a desire to be connected with others. A 2017 Needs Assessment Report surveying anti-FGC activists found that discussions about their own experience and the impact of their activism helped identify ways of overcoming associated challenges with advocating against FGC. In April 2021, Sahiyo U.S. hosted our fourth retreat virtually. Since program inception, Sahiyo has trained over 60 advocates, who have gone on to organize and host workshops to raise awareness of FGC; participated in outreach campaigns within communities; and given testimony at policy briefings in various states on FGC.



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[Download Sahiyo Activist Needs Assessment](#)



Deadline to submit the interest form is March 20, 2021

spaces are limited!

“

A retreat is often associated with time away. But we often forget the hard work that goes into growing, healing, advocating. There are a lot of growing pains when you are an activist and this retreat has taught me the beauty in embracing the discomfort. Having conversations, being a listener, allowing myself to hold space in complexity are of the many roles I had the honor to take part in. In the last year, the world turned upside down. Masks, 6 ft, quarantining, all symbols of unprecedented change. For Sahiyo to still provide a healing space, albeit remote, gave a small ounce of normalcy and safety in a very chaotic time.

”

Anonymous

More Than A Survivor



“
As a time supporter of Sahiyo and a US Advisory Board Member, I am proud of the work Sahiyo does in bringing awareness to the issue of FGM/C as well as its support of activists who are working to end FGM/C in all its forms and in all communities.

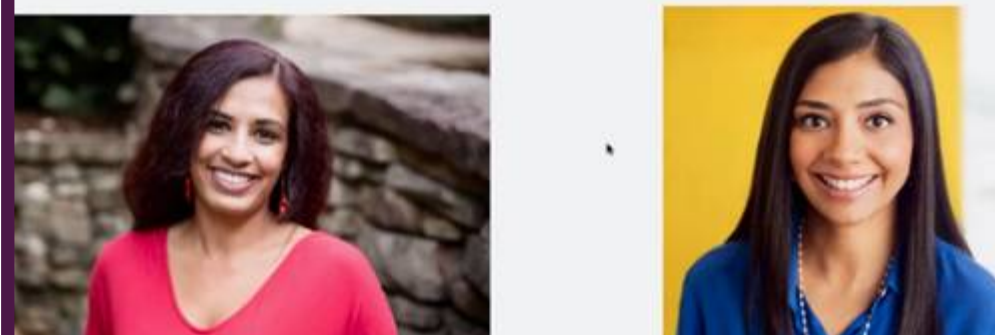
”
Zehra Patwa

Community Outreach

Sahiyo offers a variety of presentations to educate the community on female genital cutting and its consequences. Over 30 webinars have been held since last year. Participants have included a diverse pool of stakeholders, from survivors and community members, to students, healthcare professionals, and government officials. Webinar topics have included focuses on healthcare, engaging male allyship, sexuality/mental health, and art as activism and education. Sahiyo has partnered and co-hosted these webinars with groups such as GirlUp, Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence, The U.S. End FGM/C Network, Connecticut Commission on Women, Children, and Seniors, and more.

Additional outreach efforts include creating conversations and spaces for FGC education through social media campaigning. Since July 2021, we have hosted 3 social media campaigns, including More Than a Survivor, The U.N. organized Gender-Based Violence Disruptor and Father’s Day. These campaigns have served to spread awareness about FGC and helped survivors and FGC-impacted communities to reach out to us for support and take part in our programs. Over the last year, we’ve seen growth in visibility of our work through our various social media channels, gaining over 1200 new followers across all of our accounts.

Speakers



Presentation Overview

- Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in the U.S.
- Background on Voices to End FGM/C Project
- Participatory Storytelling methodology
- Sharing the Stories: Education and Policy Impact





Bhaiyo allows men to have open and honest conversation about a topic they may or may not know should be important to them. As brothers, it's our collective responsibility to leave the world safer than we found it for those that we love. Bhaiyo aims to raise awareness to help advocates and survivors working to end FGC today.

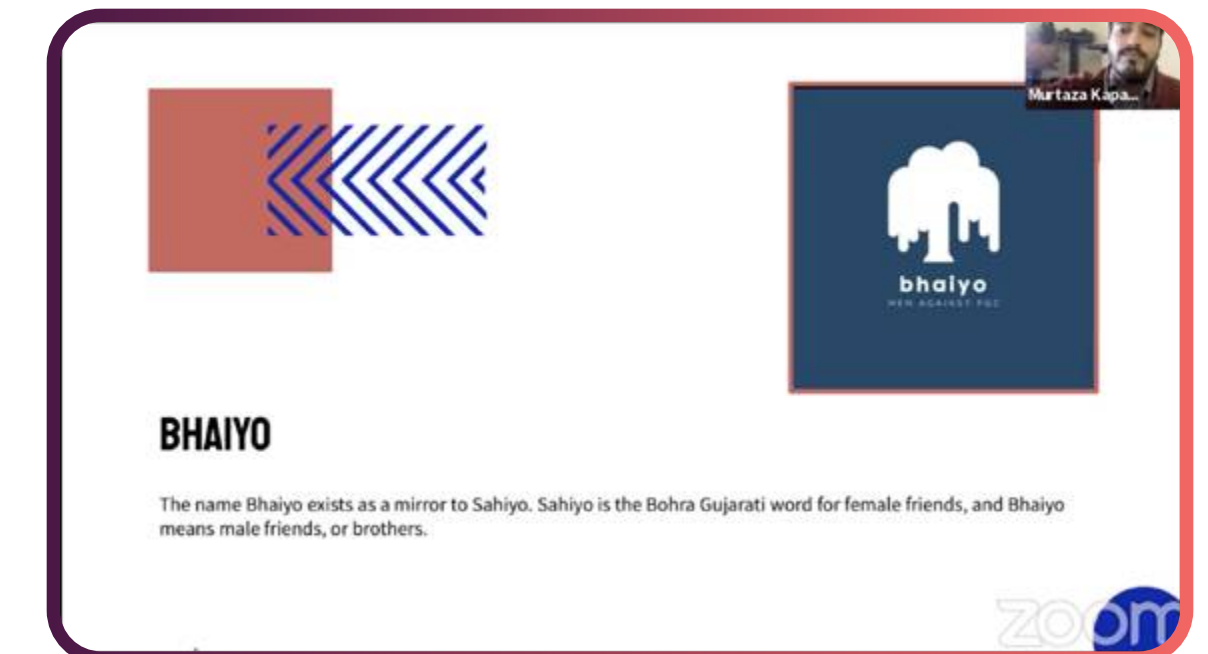
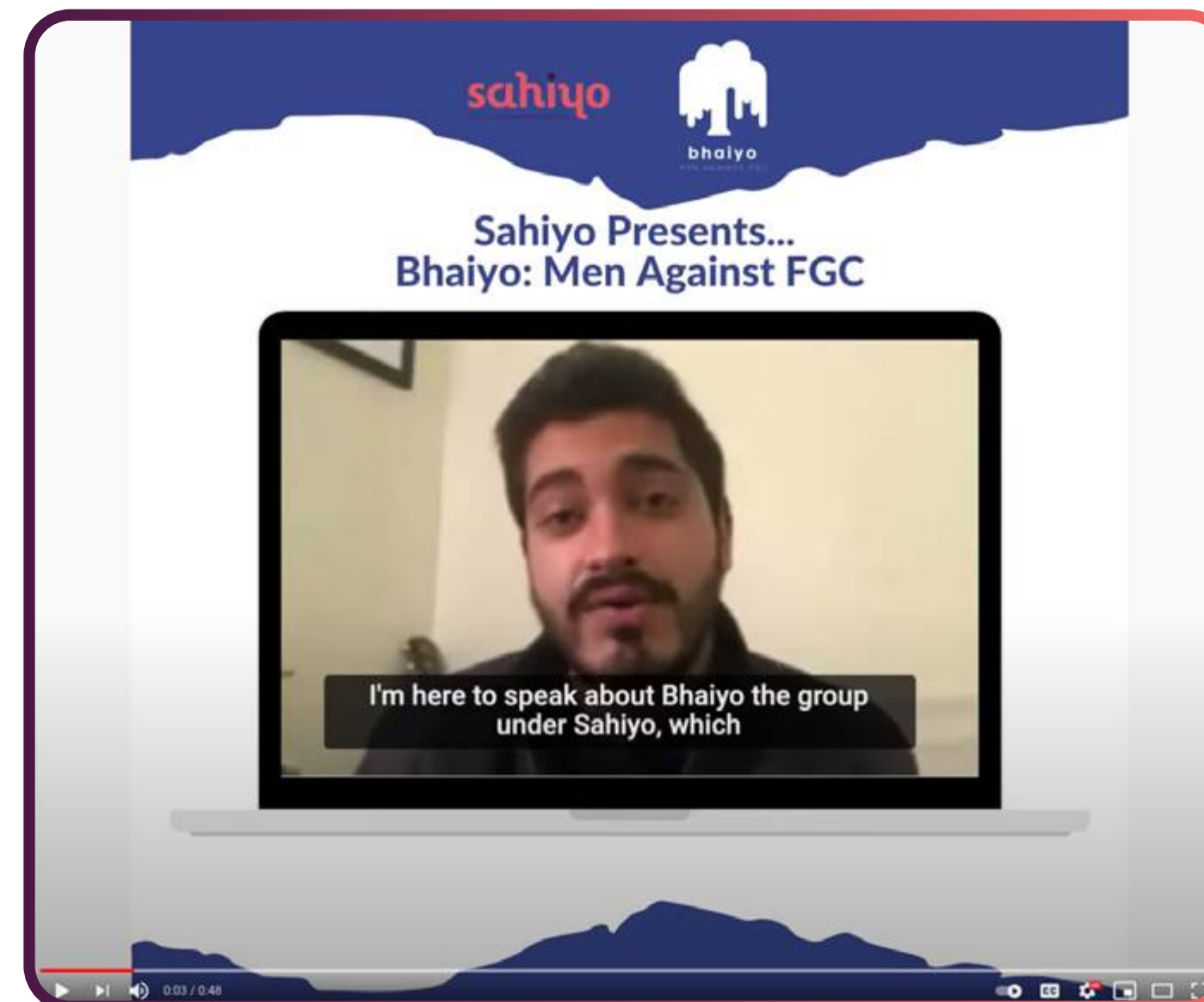


**Murtaza Kapasi,
Bhaiyo Founder**

Bhaiyo

The name Bhaiyo exists as a mirror to Sahiyo, the Bohra Gujarati word for 'saheliyo' (female friends). Bhaiyo's translation is male friends or brothers. As an initiative emerging from male allies who attended the 2020 Activists' Retreat, Bhaiyo officially launched in February 2021, to purposefully create a space where male allies could gather to collaborate, spark dialogue, and spread information about FGC and its harmful impacts. The program's inaugural event was a webinar with guest speakers Jeremiah Kipainoi, Khadijah Abdullah, Hatim Amiji, Murtaza Kapasi, and Tony Mwebia speaking to the importance of male engagement and the work they have done in Kenya, the United States, and India. Over 50 attendees tuned in and half of the attendees were new to Sahiyo's work. The webinar touched on the role men play as brothers, sons, and fathers of survivors of FGC, which extended to a broader conversation about the larger system of gender-based violence. The overall response to Bhaiyo has been amazing as men from across the globe, including Ghana, Kenya, multiple regions of India, and the U.S. have stepped up to take part.

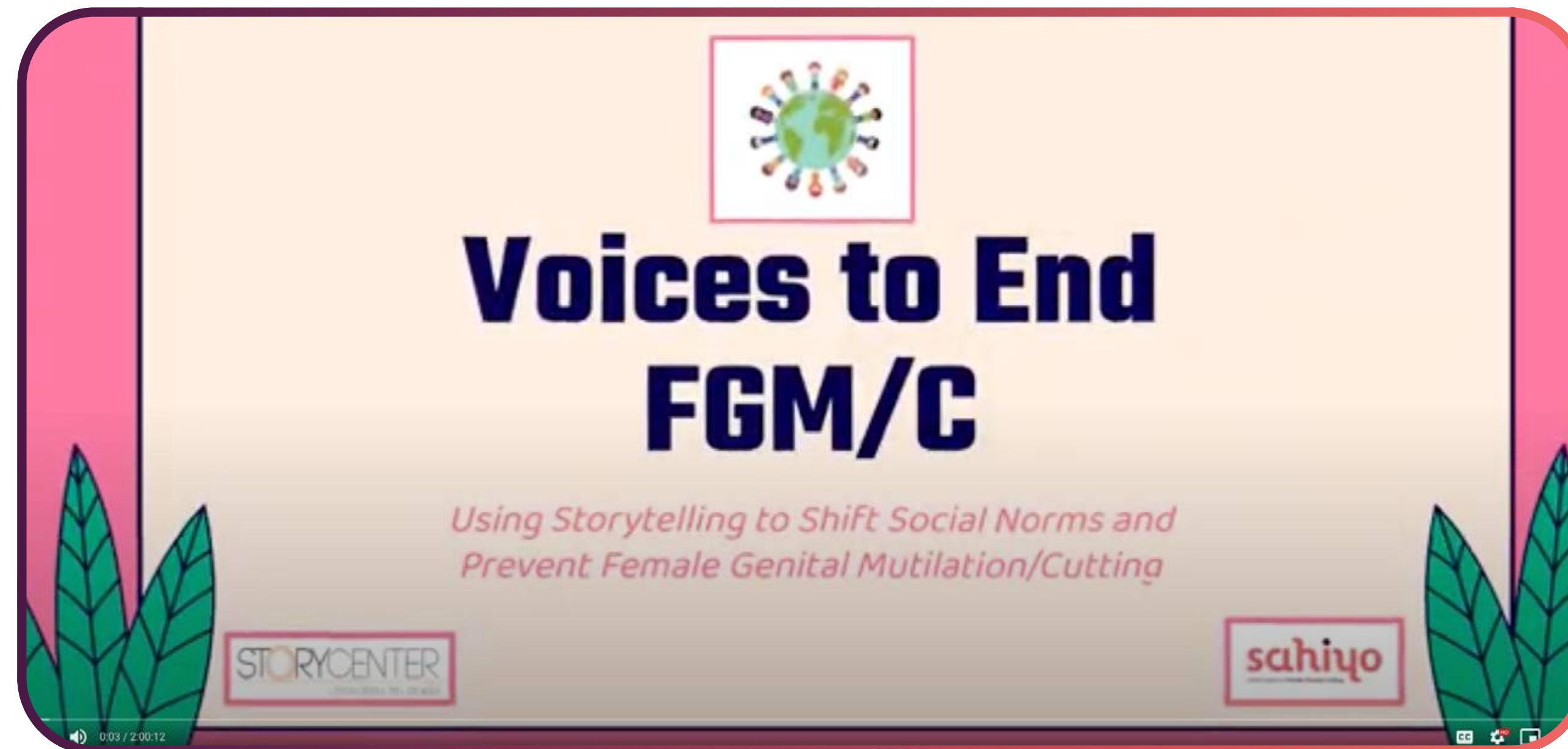
In June, Sahiyo initiated a Father's Day social media campaign, highlighting the role men play in empowering their communities to end FGC—particularly focused on their roles and experiences as fathers, or future fathers, and brothers. This project was open to all male-identifying individuals, and we had over 17 men from 6 countries take part.



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[Download Bhaiyo Press Release](#)

Research

Research is critical to understanding the prevalence and impact of FGC as well as how to engage in programs and methods to end it. Over the past year, Sahiyo has supported undergraduate and graduate students in conducting research projects to contribute to this knowledge base. Within this time, we've worked with students from Brandeis University, Brigham Young University, University of Massachusetts and Cleveland State University. Sahiyo has supported these students on their capstone projects, theses, and dissertations on topics such as psycho-sexual health and healing, raising awareness in education institutions, the importance of male allies, and funding around FGC.



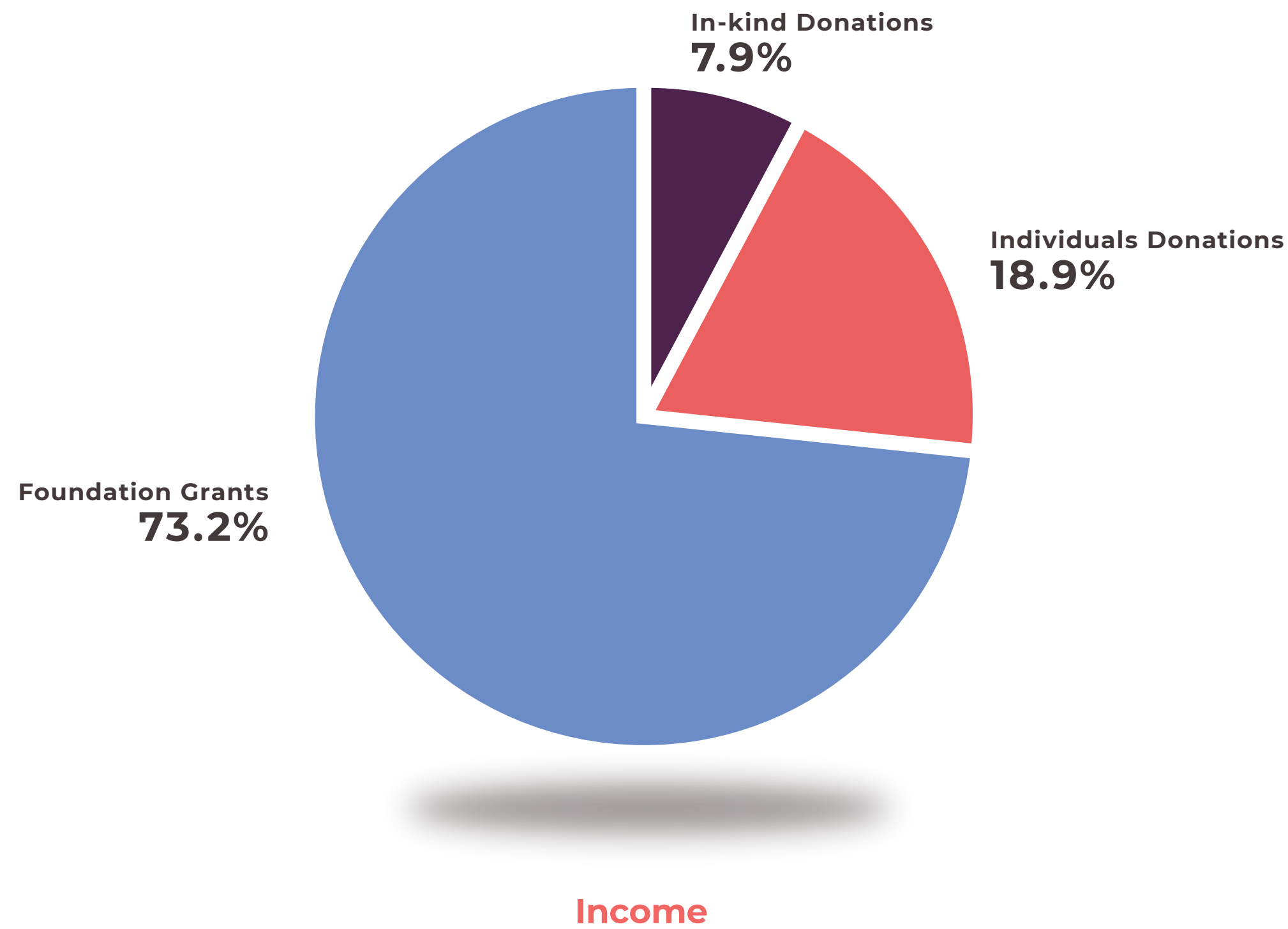
“

I was able to talk with some of the most incredible individuals and listen to experiences from people with different backgrounds. It was truly eye-opening and life-changing. I learned so much from my time interviewing everyone, and I am so grateful to Sahiyo for making it all happen.

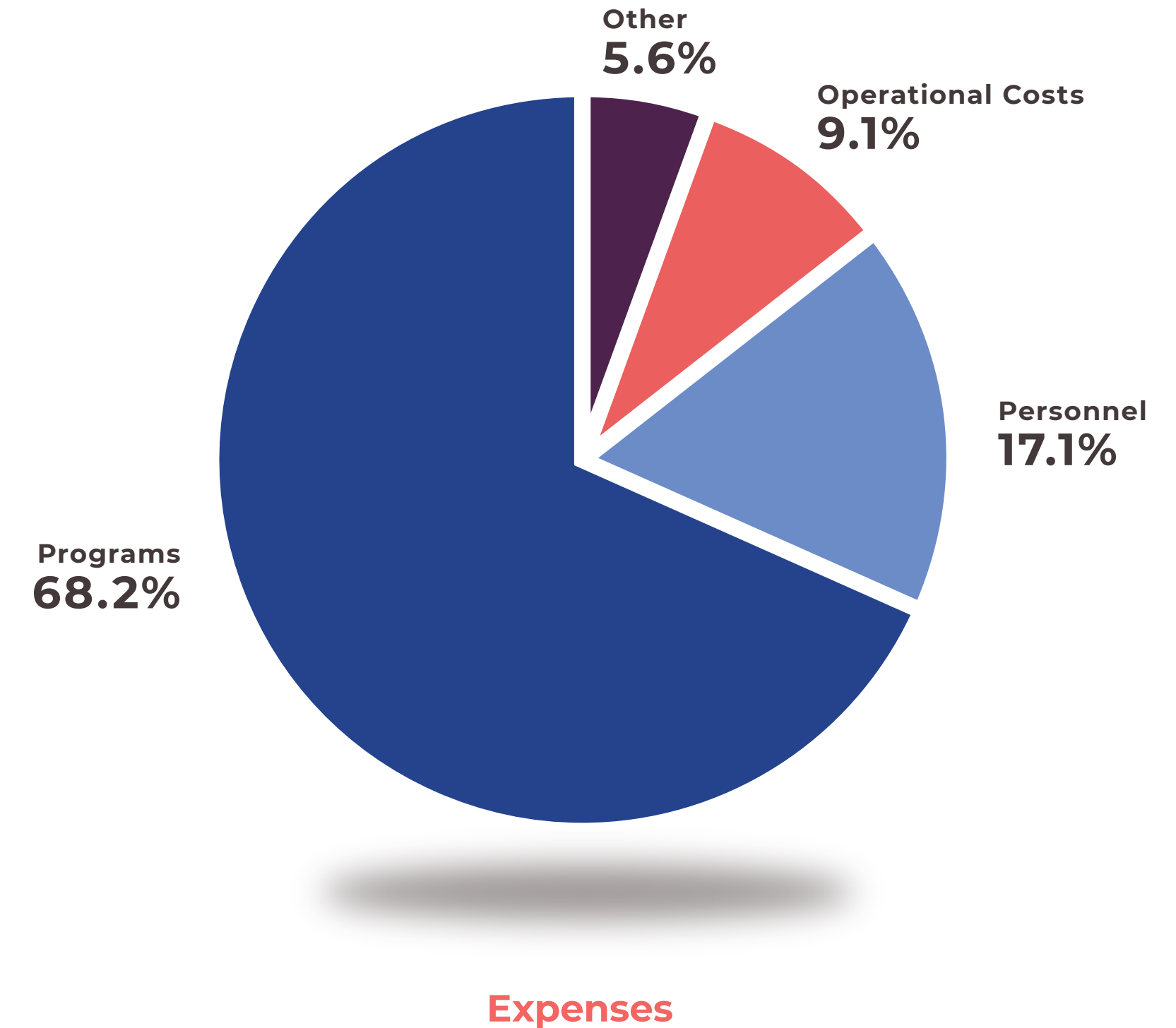
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Hunter Kessous

Total Operating Budget: \$78,788.46



Each year, Sahiyo continues to increase and diversify our funding streams. This past year, we received foundation funding from Wallace Global Fund, Resist, and Crave Foundation for Women. Additionally, Sahiyo has received donations from our supportive community, and our Sahiyo volunteers and interns give in-kind contributions by providing countless hours of volunteer time to our programs.



Sahiyo's main expenses go toward fulfilling our programmatic mission to connect with FGC-impacted communities and survivors. These actions include:

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

Sahiyo wouldn't be able to carry out our work without the support of our volunteers and generous donors. If you would like to get involved with Sahiyo, please consider these actions to make a difference:

Donate

Support survivors of FGC by donating to help our programs continue to support them.

Volunteer

Support Sahiyo in our journey, using whatever expertise, interest and time you have to contribute. Volunteer work ranges from working on newsletters to translating text to supporting at events.

U.S. Advisory Board

This board gathers experts from various fields in the U.S., such as health, law, and media to help guide Sahiyo's strategic vision forward and ensure we continue to meet our mission. If you're interested in learning more about the advisory board, email info@sahiyo.com.

Intern

Interns help with different areas of Sahiyo's work, such as development, communications, social media and programs. Sahiyo internships are currently a minimum commitment of 6 months for 5 to 10 hours per week. These positions are remote and offer fantastic career experience for anyone interested in these fields and human rights.

Blog contributor

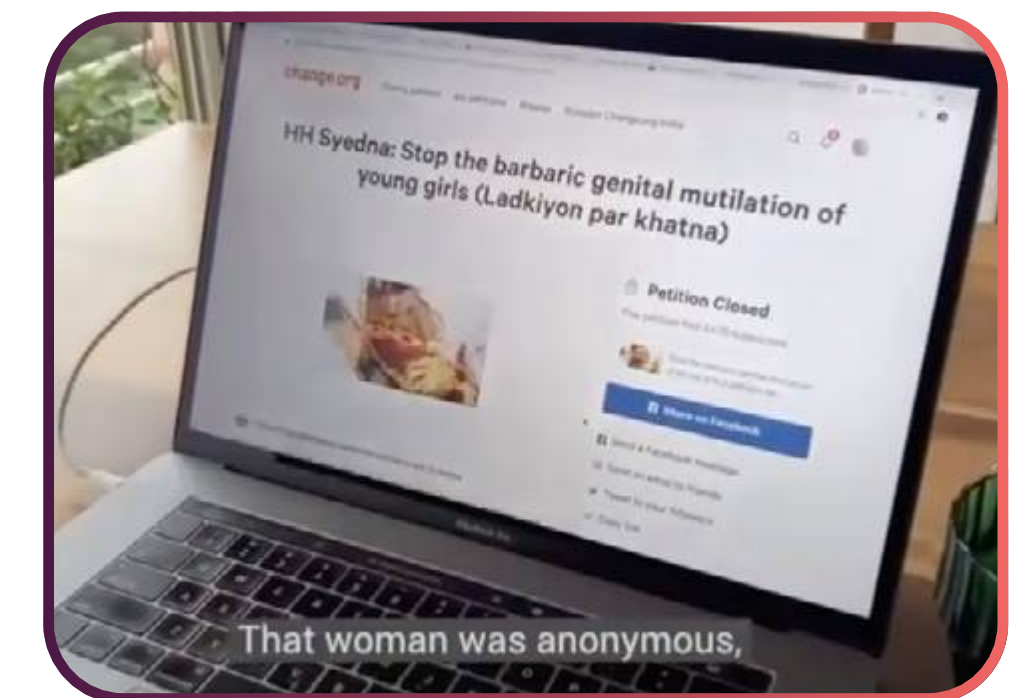
Be part of the collective of voices speaking about their knowledge or experience of female genital cutting. Throughout the process of creating a blog piece, writers can work with Sahiyo's editorial staff for support. Contact editor@sahiyo.com for more information.



I am so thankful for being able to work with this organization, and being able to volunteer has made an incredibly positive impact on my life.



Nicole Mitchell



“

Sahiyo has created a strong platform for women like me to come out and express their grief and opinions to create awareness.

”

Alifya Sulemanji

Special 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.



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Thank you to our volunteers from 2020 to 2021.

Our volunteers and interns have provided over 600 hours of support this year in areas such as blog and grant proposal editing, communications, development, and social media.

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