

sahiyo

United Against **Female Genital Cutting**

Annual Report 2025

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A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on 2025, I am filled with gratitude for the courage, resilience, and leadership of the survivors and communities we serve. This year, we continued advancing safety, dignity, and justice for women, girls, and gender-nonconforming individuals impacted by female genital cutting (FGC), strengthening both our programs and our global community of changemakers.

In July, we helped launch the Americas Alliance to End FGM/C, connecting survivor leaders and organizations across the region to share strategies, amplify voices, and drive community-led change. The Alliance was also invited to host an informational panel for the first time ever on the issue of FGC at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights annual meeting.

In November, we launched the Holistic Organized Partnerships to End Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) in Massachusetts (HOPE MA) website, creating a centralized platform to expand access to resources and support for individuals and families impacted by FGC in Massachusetts. Through HOPE MA, we work with community partners and service providers to raise awareness, strengthen referral networks, and improve culturally responsive support for survivors.

In December, Sahiyo convened in London to examine and dismantle racism within the global anti-FGC movement, an important step toward ensuring that our work is inclusive, equitable, and survivor-centered.

In addition to our programmatic achievements, 2025 marked several organizational milestones. In September, Sahiyo secured 501(c)(3) status, strengthening the foundation for sustainable growth and expanded impact. We also opened an endowment account to support future generations of changemakers. Reflecting our continued commitment to accountability and transparency, Sahiyo earned the Platinum Seal of Transparency from Candid. We closed the year by celebrating Sahiyo's 10-year anniversary, raising over $17,000 in honor of a decade of survivor-led progress.

On a personal note, I was honored to be selected as a finalist for the Pathways to Peace Exceptional Woman of Peace Award, a recognition that reflects the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and survivor leaders who inspire everything we do.

Each of these accomplishments reflects the courage of survivors and the commitment of our broader community. Your support allows Sahiyo to continue building a future where women and girls can live free from FGC, with safety, dignity, and choice at the center.

As you read this report, I hope you feel inspired by the impact of our community-driven work and the resilience of the individuals at its heart. Together, we are shaping a world where change is led by those who know these challenges best.

With gratitude and hope,



Mariya Taher, **MSW, MFA**

Co-founder and Executive Director

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IMPACT AT A GLANCE

12
Activists Retreat Participants

201,028
Cumulative Views on Voices to End FGM/C videos

30
Community Outreach and Education Events

250,951
Sahiyo Blog Views



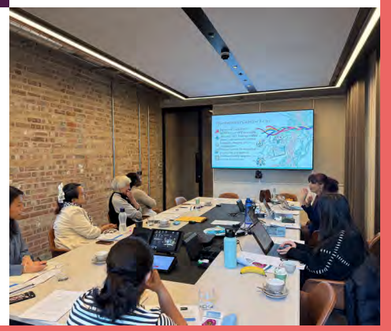
28
Policy Education Events/ Meetings in Connecticut, Washington, California, Hawaii, the DMV Area, and the Americas

20
Bhaiyo Volunteers

25
Interns & Fellows



114
Active Volunteers



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ABOUT SAHIYO

Sahiyo, derived from the Bohra Gujarati word *saheliyo*—meaning "female friends"—embodies **our mission to empower Asian and other communities to end FGC and create positive social change through dialogue, education, and collaboration based on community involvement.** Sahiyo was co-founded by five women connected to the Dawoodi Bohra community, where conversations about FGC helped inspire the organization's work.

The World Health Organization defines FGC as "all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injuries to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons." Today, over 230 million people worldwide, including an estimated 421,000 to 577,000 individuals in the United States, have experienced or are at risk of FGC. Recognized as a human rights violation, FGC can result in lifelong physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual harm.

At Sahiyo, we envision a world free from FGC. Our goal is to cultivate a culture where women's and girls' bodies and sexuality are not feared or suppressed but celebrated as natural and normal. Central to our mission are the values of consent and women's and children's fundamental right to autonomy over their own bodies.

Sahiyo operates transnationally, with a primary focus on initiatives in the United States. We collaborate with survivors, families, and religious and ethnic communities where FGC continues as a social norm. Together, we create spaces for learning, healing, and community-driven change so that future generations can live free from harm.

We work to ensure underrepresented communities are included in conversations and solutions addressing FGC, using grassroots engagement, social mobilization, and storytelling to support individuals in speaking out and leading change from within. Sahiyo also partners with frontline professionals, including healthcare providers, to strengthen culturally responsive systems of care, and works alongside government partners to advance policies that protect those at risk. Together, these efforts help build safer, more informed communities and advance the movement to end FGC.



THEORY OF CHANGE

Sahiyo's Theory of Change is grounded in both global research on FGC and independent research conducted by Sahiyo involving over 400 women from communities impacted by FGC. We developed a theory of change that leads to two primary outcomes:

1 **Increased abandonment of FGC among future generations.**

2 **A strong network of community advocates raising awareness about FGC and driving social norm change toward abandonment.**

Our approach aligns with the social norm framework recommended by the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation. This approach recognizes that **FGC continues because it is a deeply embedded social norm, justified by cultural or religious beliefs and/or the perceived need to control women's sexuality.** Social norm theory suggests that individuals fear social rejection if they make different choices from those of the group.

Sahiyo's research revealed that while 81% of the Bohra community surveyed does not support the continuation of FGC, a prevalent culture of silence has allowed FGC to persist. Sahiyo recognizes that only by building a critical mass of voices willing to challenge FGC will the trend toward abandoning it gain momentum. **Creating safe spaces where individuals can discuss FGC openly without fear of reprisal––and establishing support systems if reprisals do occur––is crucial for fostering sustainable social change.**

Evidence shows that once 25% of a social group adopts a new social norm, the rest of the group is likely to follow. To reach this tipping point that shifts the social norm from cutting to not cutting, Sahiyo engages large numbers of community members in informed, meaningful conversations about FGC, using storytelling and social mobilization to raise awareness and inspire action.

Sahiyo's programming focuses on breaking the silence around FGC, supporting survivors, raising awareness, and advocating for systemic change. Our decade-long groundwork has empowered community members to engage in critical conversations regarding FGC within their families and social networks, and sparked a continued, growing, broader movement toward ending FGC.

OUR PROGRAMS

Sahiyo's programs support survivors, strengthen community-led advocacy, and advance efforts to end FGC through storytelling, retreats, community engagement, research, and training.

In 2025, Sahiyo's programs and campaigns were featured in 18 media outlets, including:

- Al Jazeera, "'Something has been taken away': Pakistan's well-kept FGM secret"
- Health Care For Humans "64 | Trauma-Informed Care for FGM/C (Part 2) — Community Engagement and Survivor-Centered Strategies From (Sahiyo)"
- The 19th, "Anti-trans policies aren't preventing genital mutilation — they're disrupting efforts to stop it"
- PolitiFact, "Five misleading claims from Trump's executive order on trans youth health care"
- Equality Now, "FGM/C in California: Past, Present & Future – Launching the California Coalition to End FGM/C"

The following sections highlight the programs and initiatives that shaped Sahiyo's work during this reporting period.







ACTIVISTS RETREAT

> *"Each time I leave a Sahiyo retreat, I carry something new with me. This time, I carried the realization that healing isn't a straight path – it's a series of moments, conversations, and even uncomfortable truths that slowly bring us closer to ourselves."*
>
> – Lubaina Plumber, Activists Retreat Alum

Since 2017, Sahiyo has hosted Activists Retreats to support individuals working to end FGC, many of whom carry out their advocacy in isolation and seek opportunities for connection. These retreats strengthen relationships among geographically dispersed activists, share best practices, and provide tools that strengthen advocacy efforts. The impact is clear as participants integrate these approaches into their work and form new collaborations with fellow retreat attendees.

In February 2025, Sahiyo hosted its 9th Activists Retreat in Atlanta, Georgia, bringing together **12 FGC survivors and activists** for three days to raise community awareness, strengthen survivor-led initiatives, and strategize with fellow advocates committed to ending FGC.

Since the program's inception, Sahiyo has **trained 122 advocates** who have gone on to lead workshops, conduct outreach campaigns, and provide critical testimony at policy briefings across multiple states.











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SPOTLIGHT

Who Can Help: A Guide to Finding the Right Medical Care for Survivors of FGC

At the 2025 Activists Retreat, participants engaged in an action-planning session to turn ideas into concrete steps toward ending FGC. During this session, retreat participant Dr. Arefa Cassoobhoy identified a critical gap: survivors often lack clear guidance on where to seek medical care for FGC-related complications.

Following the retreat, she partnered with retreat guest speaker Dr. Stacia Crochet, a gynecologist at the Emory Clinic at Emory University, to address common questions survivors face when seeking care, such as *Who can you turn to for care? Who is qualified to provide medical or surgical treatment?*

In December 2025, Sahiyo published Who Can Help: A Guide to Finding the Right Medical Care for Survivors of Female Genital Cutting, a Q&A resource featuring Dr. Cassoobhoy and Dr. Crochet that answers these urgent and frequently asked questions.



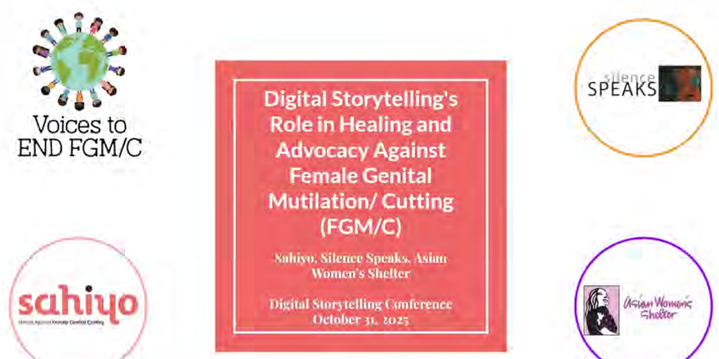
VOICES TO END FGM/C

> *"The facilitators are compassionate and skilled. You will be supported in a safe environment, and you will find new friends. There is an amazing sense of relief when your story is no longer a secret, and you will be exploring life experiences with women who are on similar journeys toward wholeness. This opportunity is a blessing."*
>
> *– Renée Bergstrom, Voices to End FGM/C Alum*

The Voices to End FGM/C (Voices) digital storytelling program mobilizes a global network of survivors and advocates breaking the silence around FGM/C. Through the healing power of storytelling, the program brings together individuals to process their experiences, connect with others, grow as leaders within their communities, and create compelling short films calling for an end to this human rights violation.

Since its launch, Voices' stories have received over **200,000 views** across Sahiyo's social media platforms. These narratives highlight the multifaceted experiences of FGM/C, bridging crucial data gaps and strengthening survivor-informed advocacy and support.

In 2025, Sahiyo hosted webinars showcasing the Voices methodology and its role in healing and advocacy, including Digital Storytelling's Role in Healing and Advocacy Against FGM/C.





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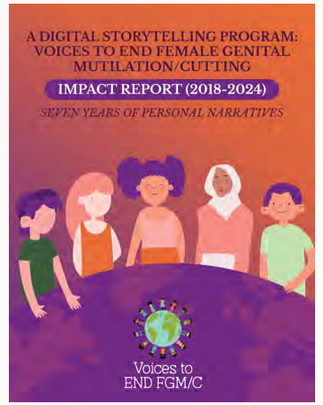
SPOTLIGHT

Voices Impact Report

Sahiyo published A Digital Storytelling Program: Voices to End FGM/C – Impact Report (2018–2024).

This report highlights seven years of personal narratives from survivors, advocates, and community members who have participated in the digital storytelling program. During this period, the program hosted **9 storytelling workshops** and supported **82 storytellers** in creating **88 digital storytelling videos** that share their experiences and call for an end to the practice.

The report also outlines the Voices workshop model, outcomes, and alumni reflections. Notably, **92% of participants** remain engaged in advocacy to end FGM/C, showing how storytelling supports healing, connection, and leadership within their communities.



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COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

> *"Sahiyo's outreach and training sessions are not only integral to raising awareness about FGC, but they also contribute towards social change. By reaching out to people, organizations, communities, and researchers, Sahiyo is creating space for much-needed conversations about bodily autonomy."*
>
> – *Huda Syyed, Volunteer*

Sahiyo actively engages communities through thoughtful and inclusive outreach and educational events focused on various aspects of FGC and our mission. These events spark dialogue, amplify participants' voices, and strengthen efforts to end FGC. During this period, **Sahiyo hosted and participated in 30 events, reaching over 1,500 individuals globally.** Notable events include:

- Breaking the Cycle: Saying 'No' to Female Genital Mutilation/ Cutting (FGM/C)
- Framing FGM/C in Providing Services, Public Perception, and Advocacy
- Sahiyo Discusses x UNMUTED: Centering a Few to Echo the Many

Recognizing how vital outreach is in community-based work, Sahiyo released How to Engage Survivors and Communities Impacted by Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: A Toolkit for Creating Engagement. This toolkit, taking over a year to produce, gathered community engagement strategies from Sahiyo and other U.S.-based organizations working in FGC prevention, education, and support, to serve as a roadmap for others seeking to join the movement. To further share the resource, Sahiyo hosted a webinar highlighting key strategies for engaging survivors and communities impacted by FGC.





SPOTLIGHT

Thaal Pe Charcha (TPC) Program

In July 2025, Sahiyo received ARROW's National Advocacy Grant to expand community education and outreach through its TPC program in India. As a result, two community-based events were held in Mumbai and Ahmedabad.

TPC – loosely translated as "discussions over food," involves creating safe, culturally familiar spaces for survivors and community members to learn about and discuss FGC while bonding over a traditional meal.

In 2025, Sahiyo enhanced the TPC model by incorporating film screenings to spark dialogue. The two events featured *The Beginning*, a short fiction film by Sahiyo Co-founder Insia Dariwala exploring FGC in the Bohra community.

The first event was held in Mumbai in August 2025, as part of a youth-focused cohort for participants aged 18-35 from the Dawoodi Bohra community. The second event was held in Ahmedabad in September 2025, as a pilot TPC in the state of Gujarat. It was specifically for women from the community.

Across both private gatherings, **16 participants** engaged in open discussions about their experiences, the challenges of speaking out, fear of community backlash, and how the film resonated with them.





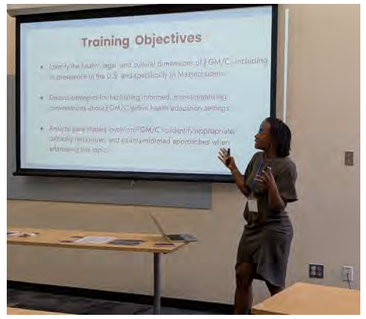
TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Sahiyo provides training and technical assistance (TTA) to enhance the knowledge and capabilities of service providers and frontline professionals addressing FGC. Our programs are designed to empower organizations working to end gender-based violence alongside social work, healthcare, mental health, law enforcement, and educational institution collaborators.

During this period, Sahiyo delivered TTA to a diverse group of key stakeholders, including the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women grantees, state agencies, immigrant and refugee organizations, advocates working in anti-trafficking, and more.

Additionally, Sahiyo, in partnerships with Asian Women's Shelter, and Silence Speaks, released the case study Using Storytelling to Build Capacity for Cultural and Community-Based Organizations to Support Survivors of FGM/C. The report shares lessons from a 3-year project that provided culturally grounded, trauma-informed methods that integrate storytelling, community outreach, and professional training to help gender-based violence organizations better support FGC survivors.

Sahiyo co-hosted a webinar, Integrating FGM/C Awareness and Action into Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services, with George Washington University - Milken Institute School of Public Health, The U.S. End FGM/C Network, and Global Woman P.E.A.C.E. Foundation to uplift the work captured in this report.



















SPOTLIGHT

HOPE MA

2025 marked year two of a 5-year project funded by the Massachusetts Community Health and Healthy Aging Fund, during which HOPE MA **(Holistic Organized Partnerships to End FGM/C in Massachusetts)** launched. Key milestones included the development of a dedicated website, a statewide needs assessment, and new resource materials.

Through HOPE MA, Sahiyo, in partnership with The U.S. End FGM/C Network and UMass Chan Medical School Collaborative in Health Equity, works to create systemic change for FGM/C prevention, healing, and community empowerment across Massachusetts. The team engaged stakeholders across healthcare, education, social services, and advocacy sectors throughout the state.

Olivia Harris joined the project as Massachusetts Community Training & Technical Assistance Coordinator in January, strengthening statewide coordination and engagement.

The team delivered **six trainings reaching 115 participants,** including presentations at the Massachusetts Nonprofit Network Annual Conference and the New England Sex Education Conference, as well as training sessions for the Massachusetts Children's Alliance, the Coalition for a Healthier Greater Worcester, and Plymouth Health Services.

SAHIYO BLOG

> *"Thanks to [Sahiyo's] innovative programs, storytelling became a common tool for many organizations to replicate in their own initiatives. Storytelling is a powerful tool, and it's important to remember that behind every statistic, there are human experiences that we shouldn't forget."*
>
> – Insia Dariwala, Sahiyo Co-founder

The Sahiyo Blog provides survivors, community members, and advocates a platform to share stories, opinions, research, and perspectives on ending FGC. Storytelling is an important medium for healing, allowing those impacted by FGC to narrate their experiences in their own words and connect with others through shared experiences.

During this period, the blog **published 98 posts and reached over 250,950 views,** with readers and contributors from the U.S., India, the U.K., Pakistan, Kenya, and beyond. The blog amplifies survivor voices, equips activists with knowledge to enact change, and highlights underreported issues around FGC.

Some of our most viewed blogs and posts from 2025 included:

- Supporting Survivors in the LGBTQIA+ Community: How Sahiyo Helped Afiqa Attend the ASEAN Queer Leadership Week
- Relearning Masculinity by Turning Culture into Care, not Control
- Healing, Resistance, and Care: What Ethiopia's Movement Against Female Genital Cutting Taught Me:
- Addressing Female Genital Cutting Requires Context and Compassion
- Positive Masculinity; A Critical Tool in the Movement to End FGM/C



SPOTLIGHT

The Leaking House

Reflecting Sahiyo's holistic approach, the blog showcases diverse perspectives and highlights the intersectional nature of FGC. Storytelling takes many forms, including creative writing and poetry. In The Leaking House, a survivor reflects on her experience and reclaiming her voice after FGC. As Inisa writes:

"I remember the smell of antiseptic, and my father waiting outside.

I remember feeling like something invisible had been rearranged inside me.

That day, an important part of my womanhood was taken from me.

That day my body was changed without my consent.

...

When I grew older, I found words for it.

Articles, survivor stories, laws that didn't yet exist. I realised what had been done had a name.

Female genital mutilation.

A ritual disguised as care.

I felt anger, but more than that, I felt recognition: a return of a voice."

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POLICY

> *"Sahiyo has helped me recognize the tireless work from nonprofits, legislators, activists, volunteers, and community members that legislative change requires. When speaking with anyone involved in our organization, it's evident that this work is an uphill battle... This experience has taught me that no one can end such monumental tasks alone, but when people come together to address an issue, there is no end to what can be accomplished."*
>
> – Katie Bai, Policy Intern

This year, Sahiyo expanded its leadership in policy by actively coordinating activities in coalitions across Connecticut, Washington, Hawaii, California, and the D.C., Maryland, Virginia (DMV) region, as well as co-founding the Pennsylvania coalition. In all coalitions, Sahiyo educated policymakers and stakeholders on the need for strong policy solutions to close legal gaps and strengthen or update outdated legislation.

In Connecticut, SB 1438 marked the state's most significant legislative advancement addressing FGM/C. The bill progressed through hearings and received unanimous committee approval before reaching the Senate floor. While it was not brought to a final vote, SB 1438 represented a major milestone and laid critical groundwork for future legislative sessions.

Internationally, Sahiyo co-founded the Americas Alliance in February. In November, the Alliance was invited to hold a public hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) for the first time ever on the topic of FGM/C across the Americas.

Read more about Sahiyo's policy work:

- Connecticut Bill Addressing Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting, Senate Bill 1438, Fails to be Raised for a Vote
- Washington D.C. Passes Comprehensive Law to Protect Children from Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
- Sahiyo's response to recent Executive Orders by the Trump Administration
- FGM/C in the Americas: 5 things to know about the Inter-American Human Rights hearing

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BHAIYO

bhaiyo
MEN AGAINST FGC

> *"After they became aware, a lot of men showed interest in spreading awareness among their male friends and also took a firm stand against it within their families. I believe it is very important for men and women to take a collective stand against it. It will have a great impact on reducing this harmful practice overall."*
>
> *– Chandni Shiyal, Sahiyo India Administrator*

Bhaiyo, meaning 'male friends' or 'brothers' in Bohra Gujarati, mobilizes men and male-identifying individuals as allies to educate their communities and the greater public about the need to end FGC. Through discussions, community meetings, public outreach campaigns, and other grassroots efforts, Bhaiyo members raise awareness and develop strategies to increase male engagement. The program uplifts the critical role men play—as father figures, caregivers, and decision-makers—in ending FGC within their households and across communities.

This year, Bhaiyo achieved:

8
participants in public awareness campaigns

2,291
people reached through awareness campaigns

3
blog posts uplifting the voices of male activists

Read more about Bhaiyo:

- 10 Years of Sahiyo: Spotlighting Bhaiyo Volunteer Brad Mazon
- 10 Years of Sahiyo: Spotlighting Bhaiyo Program Participant and Sahiyo Administrative Manager Chandni Shiyal
- Relearning Masculinity by Turning Culture into Care, not Control

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BHAIYO MEMBERS ACROSS THE GLOBE



RESEARCH

> *"My work with the Sahiyo Research Program has had a profound impact on both my career goals and personal journey. As a future physician, it deepened my commitment to providing trauma-informed, culturally sensitive care to survivors of FGC and other forms of gender-based violence. It also broadened my understanding of how deeply social, racial, and gendered injustices are woven into health outcomes."*
>
> – Naquia Unawala, Research program participant

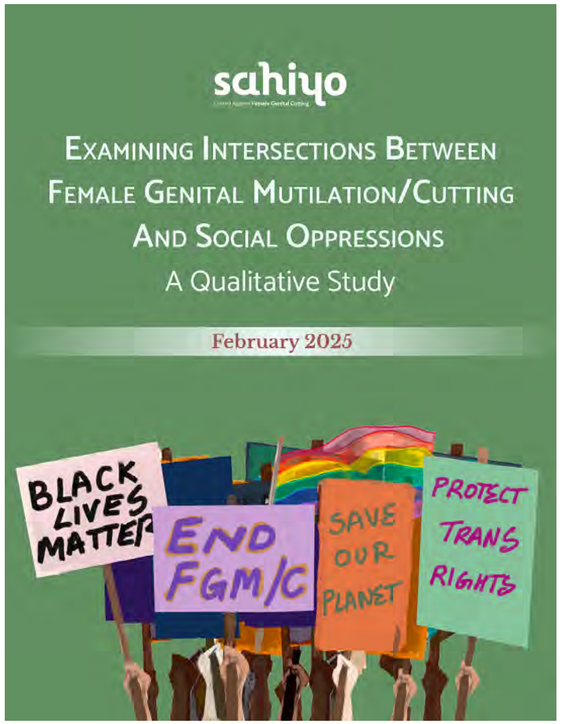
Research is critical to understanding the prevalence and impact of FGC, as well as how to engage in programs and methods to end it. Sahiyo conducts innovative research to address gaps in global data and strengthen awareness and advocacy on the topic of FGC within impacted communities.

In 2025, Sahiyo published the third and final report in the Critical Intersections project. Examining Intersections Between Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting And Social Oppressions: A Qualitative Study. This report built upon Part I (Scoping Review, October 2023) and Part II (Mixed Methods Report, February 2024). The project examined how FGC intersects with broader systems of oppression, such as racism, xenophobia, religion (e.g., Islamophobia), and gender inequality. Part III explored how systemic oppression shapes the anti-FGM/C movement through 29 in-depth interviews with experts working in the FGC movement and related social justice fields.

Since the release of the project, Sahiyo provided training to share findings and support partner organizations to implement recommendations into their programmatic work. These organizations included The Girl Generation, APIGBV, The World Bank Group's FGM Legal Working Group, Asian Women's Shelter, Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault, and AshaKiran.

The research also led to new areas of collaboration. Sahiyo partnered with Shobana Powell Consulting (SPC) and Nomi Network to explore the intersection between FGC and human trafficking, conducting 29 exploratory interviews with experts working on FGC and/or human trafficking across 24 countries.







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SPOTLIGHT

Sahiyo in London: Confronting Racial Hierarchies Within the Global Movement to End FGM/C

From December 10-12, 2025, Sahiyo partnered with Dr. Leyla Siirad Hussein Gikand to confront and dismantle anti-Blackness and racial hierarchies within the global movement to end FGM/C in London, U.K. Findings from the *Critical Intersections* project highlighted significant challenges, including racialized framings of FGM/C and the perpetuation of "severity hierarchies" that undermine solidarity and survivor support.

Sahiyo and Dr. Hussein convened a small, in-person gathering of 7 survivor-experts from Africa, Asia, and the United States to foster honest dialogue, healing, and redesign the movement to center survivor expertise and embed anti-racism principles at its core. Participants shared lived experiences as survivors and professionals working in the field of FGM/C prevention and response. Discussions emphasized the importance of intersectionality in movement-building, acknowledging how race, gender, migration status, religion, socioeconomic status, sexuality, and geography shape experiences of harm and access to resources.

Discussions highlighted the power of creative practices, including art and storytelling, alongside policy advocacy, sustainable community-based organizing, research, and service provision as tools to challenge dominant colonial narratives and disrupt systems of racism and anti-Blackness within the FGM/C movement. The convening reinforced the importance of intersectional, cross-sector approaches across health, education, legal, arts, gender-based violence, and grassroots spaces to achieve sustainable change.

INTERNSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

> *"My involvement with Sahiyo has deepened my understanding of cultural sensitivity and the importance of advocating with empathy. It has reinforced the need to listen to survivors and amplify their voices."*
>
> – Kaothar Olateju, Volunteer

Sahiyo's internship and fellowship program offers practical experience in a survivor-led social justice organization. Fully remote, the program allows interns and fellows to join us from across the country. We typically host **7-12 interns** at a time, working across Development, Editorial, Events and Programs, Policy, Research, and Social Media and Communications. Their work strengthens Sahiyo's organizational capacity, expands our global impact, and equips them with professional skills to advance gender justice and human rights in their future careers.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Volunteers are central to Sahiyo's work. During this reporting period, we were supported by over **114** volunteers from around the world, including India, Pakistan, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, and beyond.

Volunteers contributed remotely and in person, supporting research and storytelling efforts, leading training sessions, and assisting with report development and event planning. Their dedication is essential to advancing Sahiyo's mission and amplifying our global reach and impact.



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Volunteer Map:



GET INVOLVED

DONATE

Your support sustains our programs and uplifts survivors' voices. Donate today.

CONTRIBUTE TO SAHIYO'S ENDOWMENT FUND

Help ensure the long-term sustainability of our work by investing in the future of survivor-centered programming and impact. Invest in the future.

VOLUNTEER

Our volunteers come from all skill levels, ages, backgrounds, and abilities! We offer opportunities to contribute to our social media advocacy, translation, content and report writing, community outreach, and more. Become a volunteer.

INTERN

If you are driven to create content and conversations on gender-based violence and human rights, then Sahiyo is looking for you! Our internships in Editorial, Policy, Fundraising, Social Media, Events, and more are fully remote. Apply for an internship.

HOST A FUNDRAISER

Organize a fundraising event in your community or online to raise awareness and support for FGC survivors. For guidance and resources, reach out to michelle@sahiyo.org.

CONTRIBUTE TO OUR BLOG

We recognize the power of storytelling. If you have a story you are ready to share about your own experience or the experience of someone close to you, our Editorial team is here to help throughout the process. Send your submission.

BECOME A BHAIYO

Join Sahiyo's Male Allyship program to help raise awareness, support survivors, and promote prevention for future generations. Become a Bhaiyo.

SERVE ON THE ADVISORY BOARD

Our Advisory Board includes experts in health, law, media, and other fields critical to our mission. To contribute your expertise, email info@sahiyo.org.

SERVE ON THE GOVERNING BOARD

Sahiyo's Governing Board helps guide the organization's strategy, sustainability, and growth. If you are interested in contributing your leadership and expertise, please email info@sahiyo.org.

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OUR TEAM

As a women-led organization with diverse leadership and staff representing different ethnicities, religions, sexualities, and ages, we embrace the strength from multiple perspectives. This diversity enriches our work to support and advocate for those impacted by FGC.

Over the past year, **10 staff members, 3 Governing Board members, 12 Advisory Board members, 114 volunteers, 22 interns, and 3 fellows** supported our efforts to raise awareness and create change, reaching communities around the world.

Sahiyo Demographics

Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)	FGC Survivor or Friend/ Family Member a Survivor	Identify as Female
72% Staff and Board	69% Staff and Board	97% Staff and Board
78% Interns, Fellows, and Volunteers	39% Interns, Fellows, and Volunteers	92% Interns, Fellows, and Volunteers

STAFF



Olivia Harris
Massachusetts Community Training & Technical Assistance Coordinator



Samman Masud
Community Engagement Coordinator



Kristel Mendoza Castillo
Communications Coordinator



Kira Omans
Communications Assistant



Ziming Rao
Accountant



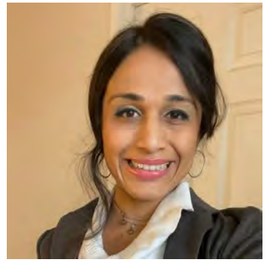
Megan Seaver
Editorial Assistant



Chandni Shiyal
India Administrator



Michelle Taylor
Development Director



Sheena Vasani
Editorial Coordinator



Nuzhat Zaman
Training & Technical Assistance Coordinator

We thank Aries Nuno for her role as Sahiyo's Training & Technical Assistance Coordinator from August 2023 to March 2025.

Development Interns & Fellows

- Elaina Baliner, Fellow
- Kierra Benning
- Abigail Cervantes
- Cloe Clocchiatti
- Emilia Mina Oh
- Heather Motta
- Archisha Pal
- Sarah Rennie, Fellow
- Molly Warner
- Lydia Xie
- Lisa Zhu

Editorial Interns

- Abigail Moisan
- Kaitlyn Sze Tu

Events and Programs Interns

- Cecilia Priya Voetsch

Policy Interns & Fellow

- Rachel Aguilar
- Katie Bai
- Sara Khattak
- Hiromi Nishida
- Nareen Pogozelski
- Khushi Prakash
- Juliet Shires, Fellow

Research Interns

- Simar Kaur
- Jasmine Valencia

Social Media & Communications Interns

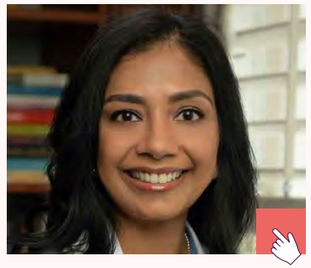
- Taylor Calonzo
- Elisha Telesford

GOVERNING BOARD & ADVISORY BOARD

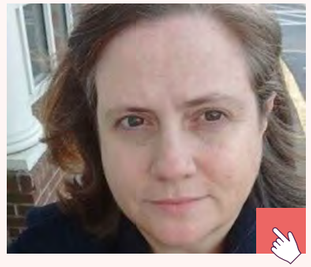
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Arefa Cassoobhoy



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Renee Bergstrom



Insia Dariwala



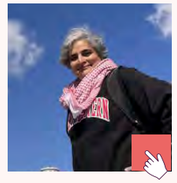
Dena Igusti



Aarefa Johari



Neelam Khaki



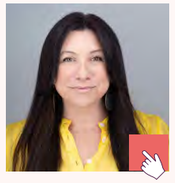
Kaneez Madraswalla



Absa Samba



Joanna Vergoth



Kristen Zaleski

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Total Operating Budget:

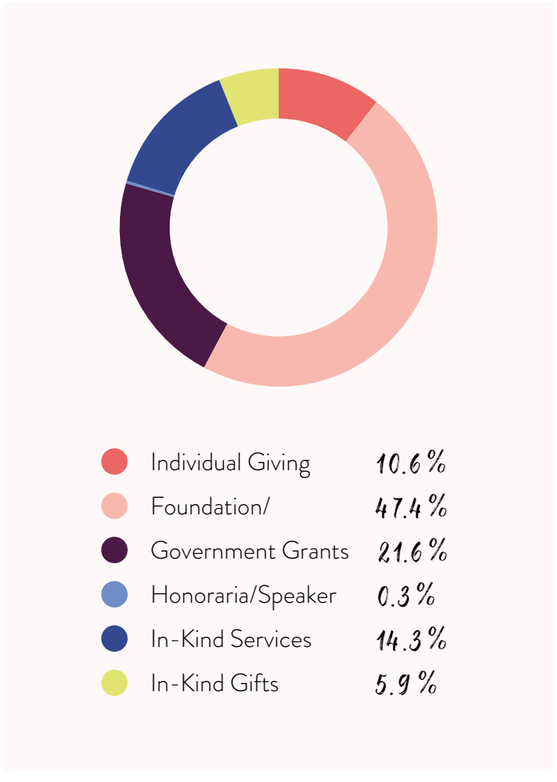
$996,226.03

Income:

Sahiyo's work in 2025 was made possible through a diverse mix of funding sources, including foundations, fellow nonprofit organizations, both federal and state government agencies, individual donors, and in-kind contributions:

- **Foundation and Organizational Support:** Wallace Global Fund, Massachusetts Community Health and Healthy Aging Funds, Asian Community Fund at The Boston Foundation, The Murmurations Movement Fund at South Asian SOAR, Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women (ARROW), and Serenity After Silence, Inc.
- **Government Funding:** Subcontracts with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, and the Washington State Department of Health.
- **Individual Contributions:** 2025 saw growth in individual giving, including donations through our annual CelebrateHer: Comedy & Auction, our 10-Year Anniversary fundraiser, donor-advised fund recommendations, and monthly support through Sahiyo's Giving Circle.
- **Honoraria and Speaker Fees:** We received increased honoraria and speaker fees this year, including engagements with the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ICASA) and the Freedom Fund.
- **In-Kind Support:** Over $142,200 in services from interns, volunteers, and pro bono legal support, along with more than $58,600 in donated goods.

These diverse streams reflect the deep commitment of our partners, donors, and community to advancing Sahiyo's mission.

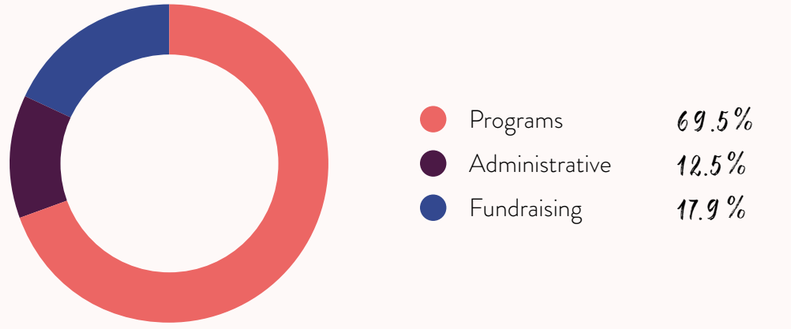


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Expenses:

Sahiyo invests in programs that connect with FGC-impacted communities and drive systemic change:

- **Survivor Support:** Guiding individuals on their healing journeys
- **Community Engagement:** Amplifying voices to prevent FGC and protect future generations
- **Professional Partnerships:** Strengthening systems of care through collaboration with healthcare providers, child protection workers, social workers, legal professionals, and government officials



OUR VALUED SUPPORTERS

Funders

THE ASIAN COMMUNITY FUND AT THE BOSTON FOUNDATION

CITY of BOSTON

ICASA Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Gates Foundation

Givebutter

MAGNUSON TRUST

Massachusetts COMMUNITY HEALTH AND HEALTHY AGING FUNDS

Serenity After Silence

THE FREEDOM FUND

THE KEMPER FOUNDATION

SOUTH ASIAN SOAR

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) U.S. Department of Justice

WALLACE GLOBAL FUND For a sustainable future

Washington State Department of HEALTH

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Nesha Abiraj
Moataz Abo Shelle
Elizabeth Bain
Paradees and Eric Barona
Wafiqah Basrai
David Tipp and Cheri Bazley
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Aparna Bhattacharyya
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The Social Gospel Fund
Joanna Vergoth
Amina Virani
Razia Zabeen
Nadia Zakaria
Kristen Zaleski
Kiran Zaman
Nuzhat Zaman

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sahiyo
United Against Female Genital Cutting

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