

Sisterhood  
Is Global  
Institute

*Donor Direct Action  
A Fund for Women*

# ANNUAL REPORT 2019



The **Sisterhood Is Global Institute** (SIGI) is a feminist think tank founded in 1984 by Robin Morgan and Simone de Beauvoir and women from 80 countries pledged to "visionary yet pragmatic action in support of women's rights, freedoms and power." **Donor Direct Action**, a SIGI initiative, strengthens front line women's rights groups around the world by increasing their access to financial resources, political leaders, and public visibility with minimum bureaucracy and maximum impact. Since its inception in 2011, Donor Direct Action has regranted over US \$3.5 million to front line women's organizations where resources are most needed and have the highest impact. Donor Direct Action supports 14 partners in 13 countries and operates two funds: The Efua Dorkenoo Fund to End Female Genital Mutilation, which has 5 partners in 5 countries, and the Gloria Steinem Equality Fund to End Sex Trafficking, which has 11 partners in 11 countries.

*I have witnessed first-hand the needs of women's rights organizations working on the front lines where so much is done with such limited resources. Donor Direct Action enables anyone anywhere to help these organizations and make a real difference in the lives of women and girls around the world.*

**Navi Pillay, Co-Convenor, Donor Direct Action**

*Nothing is more crucial than getting money to projects on the ground. Donor Direct Action knows how to get the funds where they are most needed and where they will make a real difference.*

**Gloria Steinem, Co-Convenor, Donor Direct Action**

*The Sisterhood Is Global Institute, now celebrating its 35th anniversary as the first global feminist think tank, proudly welcomes the Donor Direct Action initiative - the answer to what global feminism has been asking: minimum bureaucracy, maximum effectiveness, support, contact, empowerment.*

**Robin Morgan, President, The Sisterhood Is Global Institute**

COVER IMAGE: *Sylvia Case is a 17-year old girl who lives at the Tasaru Ntomonok Initiative's (TNI) rescue center for girls who are fleeing FGM and child marriage. Sylvia ran away from her home at age 6 to escape FGM and has lived at the TNI rescue center ever since.*





*Girls participate in a sports camp organized by the Galkayo Education Center for Peace and Development (GECPD) in Somalia.*

The outbreak of COVID-19 has disproportionately affected marginalized people around the world susceptible to the virus, and lock-downs have left them unable to access health care or food. The gendered-impact of COVID-19 is manifest in the large number of women in the informal sector who are now unemployed. And women have quietly shouldered the exponential increase in home-based care while domestic violence hotlines have recorded notably high numbers of cases during the lock-down. Sheltering at home has increased the risk of abuse for women while decreasing their access to protection.

Despite all the odds, women's organizations on the front lines have stepped up their efforts to respond to the needs of survivors and raise awareness about community spread in remote rural areas of the world.

In 2019, we celebrated the 35th anniversary of the Sisterhood Is Global Institute and renewed our commitment to make the women's rights movement more equitable by

increasing funding and visibility for front line women's organizations who are on the ground every day doing the most critical work to end human rights violations against women and to promote gender equality everywhere.

As we commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women held in 1995, it is important to recognize how much progress has been made by the global women's movement. We are stronger than ever before, and yet we still face violence and discrimination in every country around the world.

In 2020, we hope you will join Donor Direct Action and invest boldly in the work of our front line women's rights partners. It is not only the most equitable but also the most efficient and strategic use of resources to build a better world for women and girls.

  
 Jessica Neuwirth  
 Founder & Director

# IMPACT

## MONEY RAISED FOR FRONT LINE PARTNERS

From our inception in 2011 to the end of 2019, Donor Direct Action has raised more than \$3.5 million for its partners around the world from more than 1500 donors in 49 countries. In 2019 alone we raised almost \$750,000 to support the work of the front line women's movement.

**\$748,234**  
Raised  
in 2019

**1534**  
Donors  
in 49  
Countries

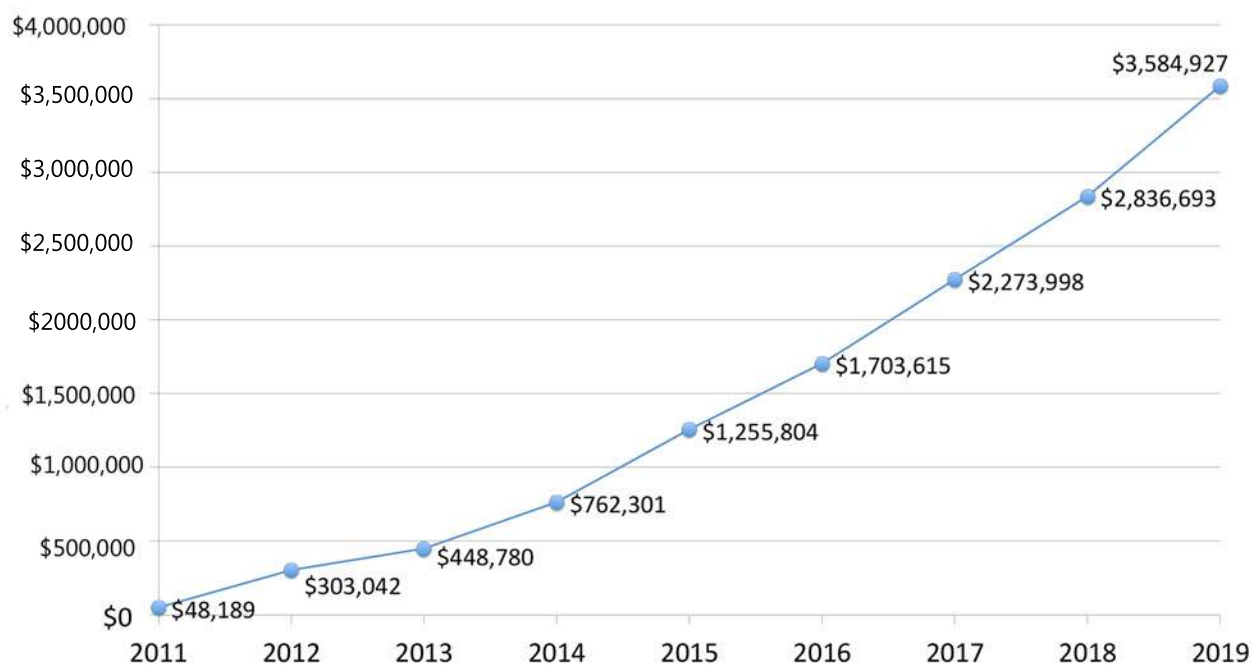
## OUR COMMITMENT

Minimum Bureaucracy for Maximum Impact



90% of all donations made to support our partners' work is regranted directly to them. Donor Direct Action retains 10% to help cover operating costs.

**Funds Raised for Partners**



# CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF THE SISTERHOOD IS GLOBAL INSTITUTE



*(Left to Right) Sapana Pradhan-Malla, Gloria Steinem, Jane Fonda, Jessica Neuwirth, Lynn Nottage and Robin Morgan*



*Dior's Sisterhood Is Global T-shirt, inspired by Robin Morgan's work*



*Women's rights philanthropist Bonnie Schaefer honored by feminist activist Gloria Steinem*



*Award-winning actor and activist Jane Fonda honors author and SIGI co-founder Robin Morgan*



*(Left to Right) Sapana Pradhan-Malla, Gloria Steinem, Sarah Jones, Jane Fonda and Jessica Neuwirth*



*UN Special Representative of the Secretary General Pramila Patten honors Nepal Supreme Court Judge and women's rights activist Sapana Pradhan-Malla*

On December 10, 2019, Donor Direct Action celebrated 35 years of the Sisterhood Is Global Institute (SIGI). The Sisterhood Is Global Institute was founded in 1984 by Robin Morgan, Simone de Beauvoir and women from 80 countries. Donor Direct Action is a flagship initiative of the Institute.

The honorees of the memorable evening were feminist philanthropist Bonnie Schaefer and Nepali Supreme Court Justice Sapana Pradhan-Malla. The evening was a tribute to Robin Morgan, award-winning poet, author

and activist and co-founder of the Sisterhood is Global Institute. Presenters included Gloria Steinem and Jane Fonda, both board members of SIGI, and Pramila Patten, the UN Special Representative to the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Tony award-winning playwright and performance artist Sarah Jones served as Agitator of Ceremonies and Emmy award-winning film and television Director Donna Deitch, also a SIGI board member, produced the evening's program, which featured Sisterhood Is Global T-shirts by Dior, inspired by Robin Morgan's work.



# JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF FEMICIDE IN PERU

23-year old Solsiret Rodriguez was last seen on August 23, 2016 in El Callao, Peru, where she lived with her two children and her partner at the time, Brian Villanueva. Her disappearance came only 10 days following the massive "Ni Una Menos" (Not One Less) march that galvanized half a million people in the streets of Lima, calling for an end to gender-based violence. Solsiret herself was a women's rights activist and coordinator of "Ni Una Menos" in Callao.



Solsiret's mother, Rosario Aybar, is seen holding an image of her missing daughter. Photo credit: Mario Colan, El Pais

Solsiret's parents started looking for her immediately after her disappearance and filed a missing person complaint, which was initially dismissed by the police who said she must have been "hot-headed." While family and friends suspected Solsiret's partner Villanueva had relevant information he was never questioned by authorities. It was clear that it would require sustained pressure to get them



Protestors at a *Ni Una Menos* rally hold cut outs of Solsiret. Photo credit: GEC

to investigate the case. In August 2016, Donor Direct Action's partner **Manuela Ramos** launched a campaign called "We are looking for Solsiret" and stood with Solsiret's mother in demanding justice in her case. In the course of two and a half years following her disappearance, Solsiret's case was sidelined by two prosecutors, and it was only in January 2019 when a third prosecutor, Jimmy Castañeda, picked up the case that a serious investigation began.

In January 2019, Manuela Ramos along with other Peruvian women's rights groups organized a letter-writing campaign - 175 women wrote letters to President Martin Vizcarra on behalf of victims of femicide calling for greater protection for Peruvian women. Following this campaign a delegation including Solsiret's mother Rosario Aybar met with the President. Through the course of 2019, Manuela Ramos was part of the collective that organized several *Ni Una Menos* national marches in Peru to highlight the unacceptable levels of gender-based violence there.

Justice continues to elude victims of femicide in Peru. In 2019, 168 cases of femicide were recorded while only 4 perpetrators were sentenced to prison for femicide.

# CONFRONTING MISOGYNY IN LATVIA



A banner in a series of advertisements by the Ghetto Games in Latvia.



Representatives of MARTA Center met with Ghetto Games staff in July, 2019.

In July 2019, the "Ghetto Games," a street sports event for young people in a Riga suburb of Latvia produced a series of posters aimed at young men with pictures of submissive and sexualized women referring to them as "bitches." **MARTA Center**, a leading Latvian women's rights organization that works against domestic violence and sex trafficking, spearheaded a campaign to shut down these extremely misogynistic advertisements.

MARTA organized a robust campaign involving

the press and social media calling for removal of the posters, noting they were "a blatant violation of the fundamental principles of gender equality and are seen as offensive to the dignity of women and girls." Following their public critique, representatives of MARTA met with Ghetto Games explaining the harms such advertisement campaigns cause. The Ministry of Welfare and The Ombudsman's Office echoed MARTA's criticism of the Ghetto Games ads. The posters were recalled within a few days after their launch.

# STRENGTHENING INTERSECTIONAL FEMINIST UNDERSTANDING IN EL SALVADOR



Susana Chiarotti, DDA's Regional Advisor for Latin America, presents at a workshop in El Salvador.

In November 2019, Donor Direct Action's Regional Advisor for Latin America, Susana Chiarotti, was invited by **ORMUSA** - Donor Direct Action's partner in El Salvador - to participate in a 3-day workshop on intersectional feminism that brought together women's rights activists and government representatives. Susana presented on forced pregnancy and motherhood, violence against women, and discrimination from an intersectional perspective.



# HELPING SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE DR CONGO

## *The Story of Jason and Maman Rose*

Donor Direct Action donor Jason Hackmann first visited **Synergie des Femmes** in North Kivu, DR Congo in 2016. Moved by Synergie's work to help women survivors of sexual violence rebuild their lives, Jason supported Synergie to construct a shelter for survivors in Goma and provided scholarship funds to ensure that all of the children of survivors supported by Synergie would be able to attend school.

During his first visit, Jason met Maman Rose, a survivor who had faced much adversity in her life. During the conflict in the DR Congo, Maman Rose's husband was captured and killed by rebels. After his death, Maman Rose worked for a local church and one day gunfire erupted. When she ran into the bush to escape, Maman Rose was captured by rebels, tied to a tree, raped multiple times and left barely alive. Upon her return home, Maman Rose's in-laws threw her out of her own home when they realized she had become pregnant. She then moved to Goma with her children where her daughter too was raped and became pregnant. Synergie des Femmes provided a home for Maman Rose and gave her the support she needed. Jason Hackmann supported Maman Rose in building a new life and helped her realize her dream of educating all of her nine children.

In 2019, Maman Rose was diagnosed with breast cancer and Synergie helped her get to Uganda for treatment which was unavailable in the DR Congo. Jason visited Maman Rose with Justine Masika Bihamba, founder and director of Synergie, in Kampala, Uganda in May 2019. Maman Rose recovered and returned to Goma, where Jason helped her buy

a house and set up a small business selling timber.

The story of Jason Hackmann and Maman Rose, meeting via Synergie's life-saving work, is a shining example of the global solidarity Donor Direct Action works to promote.

As our Annual Report was going to print we learned that Maman Rose had passed away following a metastasis of cancer to her lungs. Maman Rose was a courageous woman who overcame great adversity, and we will do our utmost to honor her memory through our work.



*Maman Rose greeting Jason when he visited her in 2017.*



*Justine Masika Bihamba, Maman Rose and Jason in Kampala Uganda where Maman Rose underwent treatment for cancer, May 2019.*



# VICTORY FOR RAPE SURVIVORS IN NEPAL

In April 2019, the **Forum for Women, Law and Development** (FWLD) in Nepal took on the case of a 14-year old school girl who was raped by a school worker. The school principal who was also a friend of the perpetrator and knew about the incident did not report it to the police.



*Nepalis march against rape in a rally organized by FWLD.*

In May 2019, two other male students of the same school raped the same girl. Upon her return home from the school hostel, the girl informed her family about both incidents. With help from FWLD, she filed a case against the perpetrators. The school worker charged was taken into custody, and other measures were taken by the court to address the actions of the two accused students, the principal, board members of the school, and the warden at the girl's hostel.

FWLD is effectively combating impunity and securing justice for victims of gender-based violence. Last year, the organization filed a case in the Supreme Court of Nepal arguing for reform of the statute of limitations to report a rape case, which was only 35 days. As a consequence, the Supreme Court issued a directive to the government to review the time limitation of 35 days and increase it accordingly. The time limit was initially increased to six months, and subsequently to one year.

# FIGHTING "HONOR KILLING" IN PALESTINE

In August 2019, 21-year old Israa was murdered near Bethlehem in what looked like an "honor killing" by her family. Israa, a popular Instagram make-up artist, had posted a photo of her and her soon to be fiancé on Instagram. Soon after, it is said that Israa was severely beaten by her brothers and fell out of the window when she tried to escape. She was then hospitalized, and her assailants followed her to the hospital. Witnesses claimed to have heard her screaming in her room. Not long after, Israa died.



*Palestinian women march for justice in Israa's case.  
Photo Credit:  
Miriam Deprez*

Israa's case galvanized considerable momentum as Middle Eastern women's rights organizations called for justice in "honor killing" cases. The **Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling** (WCLAC), which has been tracking "honor killings" in Palestine for several years, was at the forefront of the campaign. As

a result of the public pressure generated, prosecutors charged three unnamed individuals for an assault that led to an unintentional killing, which carries a sentence of at least five years in prison.

Palestinian women continue to be murdered through "honor killings" at a high rate. According to WCLAC's records, since 2016 on average 24 women lose their lives each year in Palestine as a result of "honor killings."

# FRONT LINE ACTIVISM TO END FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

In 2017, Donor Direct Action launched the **Efua Dorkenoo Fund to End Female Genital Mutilation** (FGM) to address the fact that grassroots activism – key to ending FGM – is disproportionately underfunded. In 2019, the Fund re-granted over \$100,000 to four grantees of the Fund to End FGM.

## Sierra Leone



*Girls undergo an Alternative Rite of Passage organized by Amazonian Initiative Movement (AIM) in Sierra Leone, in December 2019.*

On January 2019, Sierra Leone banned FGM. With nine in ten girls being subjected to FGM there is much need for community awareness about the harms of FGM in Sierra Leone. In December 2019, the **Amazonian Initiative Movement** (AIM) organized a mass-based Alternative Rite of Passage for about 100 girls who went through the *Bondo* without the cut. The event raised much awareness within the community about culturally appropriate and safe alternatives to FGM.

## Kenya



*Agnes Pareyio of **Tasaru Ntomonok Initiative** (TNI) in Kenya meets with leaders of a remote Maasai community to raise awareness about FGM.*



*(Left to Right) Meryl Streep, Efua Dorkenoo and Gloria Steinem. Efua was a Ghanaian-British women's rights activist who pioneered the global movement to end FGM.*

## Somalia

In the summer of 2019, **Galkayo Education Center for Peace and Development** (GECPD) organized summer educational programs and activities for children from different communities. Activities included sports for confidence-building and workshops on the physical, psychological, social, and sexual harms caused by FGM. Each year over 2000 girls and women benefit from the programs of GECPD.



*Girls participate in an empowerment camp organized by Galkayo Education Center for Peace and Development (GECPD) in Somalia, in the summer of 2019.*



# FRONT LINE ACTIVISM TO END SEX TRAFFICKING AND PROSTITUTION

In 2018, Donor Direct Action, in partnership with The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) and SPACE International, launched the **Gloria Steinem Equality Fund to End Sex Trafficking**. This fund was created to address the stark lack of support for front line women's groups that are working to end the commercial sexual exploitation of women and girls around the world. All grantees of the Equality Fund work to promote the Equality Model of legislation (also known as the Swedish or Nordic Model) through which those exploited by prostitution are decriminalized while the buyers and profiteers (including pimps and brothel-owners) are criminalized. The approach integrates exit strategies to support women and girls in leaving the sex trade and rebuilding their lives. Several grantees of the Equality Fund are working to build a survivor-led abolitionist movement. In 2019, the Equality Fund re-granted over \$350,000 to 11 groups.



*Abolitionist survivor activist Mickey Meji speaks at a meeting for survivors in South Africa.*

In 2019, **Embrace Dignity** in South Africa further grew Kwanele, the South African survivor-led movement to end prostitution, with 400 active members in 7 provinces. Embrace Dignity also developed an Exit Manual and a database of exit service providers to assist women exiting prostitution in South Africa.

In an effort to build the abolitionist movement across Africa, Embrace Dignity serves as the secretariat for the Coalition Abolition of Prostitution in Africa (CAPA). In 2019 the CAPA Charter was launched with 350 signatories.



*In 2019 **SPACE International** organized two events – in London and New York - that highlighted the voices of women of color who are survivors of the sex trade. This poster promoted the event in London in February 2019.*

*In December 2019 with support from DDA's Equality Fund, **AMADH** in Argentina published a book about survivors of prostitution called **Nuestros Cuerpos No Se Reglamentan**, which highlights the danger of full decriminalization of prostitution in Argentina.*





## EVENTS WITH PARTNERS

On September 9, 2019, in collaboration with the Roosevelt House Human Rights Program at Hunter College, Donor Direct Action and the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women organized a briefing for New York State legislators by Swedish and French government officials about their efforts to combat sex trafficking and prostitution.



*(Left to Right) Taina Bien-Aimé, Gloria Steinem, Swedish Ambassador Per Anders Sunesson, Jessica Neuwirth, Dorchen Leidholdt, Shandra Woworuntu, French Consul General Anne-Claire Legendre, New York Assembly Member Tremaine Wright and New York State Senator Liz Kreuger (D).*



*(Left to Right) Agnes Pareyio (Tasaru Ntomonok Initiative, Kenya), Jessica Neuwirth, Mickey Meji (Embrace Dignity, South Africa), Susana Chiarotti and Carmen Urquilla (ORMUSA, El Salvador).*

On March 8, 2019, Donor Direct Action, in collaboration with the Roosevelt House Human Rights Program, organized a global panel discussion with its partners from Argentina, El Salvador, Kenya, and South Africa for International Women's Day. The event was broadcast on Facebook Live.



*(Left to Right) South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Dr. Denis Mukwege (Panzi Hospital, DR Congo) and Jessica Neuwirth at the South Korean First International Conference on "Action with Women and Peace" in Seoul on July 1, 2019.*



*(Left to Right) Jessica Neuwirth, Justine Masika Bi-hamba (Synergie des Femmes, DR Congo), Margot Wallström (former Foreign Minister of Sweden) and Swedish UN Ambassador Olof Skoog at the New York premiere screening of the film *Feminister* on October 29, 2019 highlighting the feminist foreign policy developed by Wallström.*



## MEDIA COVERAGE

In 2019 Donor Direct Action highlighted the work of its partners in nearly 50 media articles in major news outlets.

### OPINION

#### DRC's First Peaceful Transition of Power Was At Expense of Women

By Justine Masika Bihamba

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#### Young woman dies in fourth 'period hut' tragedy this year in Nepal

Smoke inhalation thought to have killed 21-year-old exiled during menstruation despite ban on custom



#### Five Men Sentenced to Death in Somalia Rape Case

By Mohamed Odi Hassan  
March 02, 2019 11:55 PM

#### Passa a sorpresa la risoluzione ONU contro gli stupri di guerra. Grazie ad Amal Clooney e Nadia Murad

Di redazione - 24/04/2019

### OPINION

#### Why New York Should Not Decriminalize Sex Trade

By Taina Bien-Aimé

Reprint | [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [v](#) | [Print](#) | [Send by email](#)

#### Sierra Leone bans FGM in clampdown on secret societies

by Emma Batha and Nellie Peyron | [@emmabatha](#) | Thomson Reuters Foundation  
Friday, 25 January 2019 15:56 GMT



#### OPINION: UN Security Council should stand in solidarity with survivors of rape in conflict

by Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad  
Tuesday, 23 April 2019 11:08 GMT



#### El Salvador gang violence stifles progress on gender killings: top prosecutor

Anastasia Moloney

4 MIN READ



### SOUTH AFRICA

#### Don't decriminalise sex work, former Cape Town prostitute tells world congress

04 April 2019 - 16:10  
BY MATTI GELLMAN

## VIDEOS

In 2019, Donor Direct Action expanded its capacity for in-house video production, making four short videos. Please visit Donor Direct Action's YouTube channel to view all of our videos at: <https://youtube.com/DonorDirectAction>



# THANK YOU

We are deeply grateful to everyone who has supported Donor Direct Action and the Sisterhood Is Global Institute during the past year.

Vicky Abundo	Flora Family Foundation	Kristina Lyons	Bonnie & Jamie Schaefer
Lani & Michael Adler	Jane Fonda	Nankali Maksud	Marla Schaefer
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Virginia Fauvre	Ann Lief		



# FINANCIALS\*

	2019	2018
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$232,864	\$303,560
Pledges receivable	\$639,305	\$150,000
Prepaid expenses and other assets	\$9,535	\$9,891
Investments in certificates of deposit	\$1,014,404	\$612,199
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$1,896,108</b>	<b>\$1,075,650</b>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accrued expenses	\$22,883	\$25,979
Grants payable	\$10,000	\$60,000
Total Liabilities	\$32,883	\$85,979
NET ASSETS		
Net assets without donor restrictions	\$1,016,346	\$588,391
Net assets with donor restrictions	\$846,879	\$401,280
Total Net Assets	\$1,863,225	\$989,671
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$1,896,108</b>	<b>\$1,075,650</b>
Change in Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions:		
PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE		
Contributions and grants:		
Foundations	\$336,000	\$260,751
Individuals	\$552,375	\$33,232
Corporations	-	\$7,000
Donated services	\$80,000	\$80,000
Donated use of facilities	-	-
Special events, (net)	\$382,836	\$51,969
Service fees	\$12,200	\$25,182
Interest income	\$13,275	\$9,263
Realized gain (loss)	\$4074	\$774
Unrealized loss (gain)	(\$5,668)	(\$2,367)
Public Support and Revenue Before Releases from Restrictions	\$1,375,092	\$465,804
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	\$749,885	\$562,885
Total Public Support and Revenue	<b>\$2,124,977</b>	<b>\$1,028,689</b>
EXPENSES		
Program services	\$1,529,092	\$933,010
Management and general	\$124,265	\$121,699
Fundraising and development	\$43,665	\$19,349
Total Expenses	\$1,697,022	\$1,074,058
Change in Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	\$427,955	(\$45,369)
Change in Net Assets With Donor Restrictions:		
Contributions and grants:		
Foundations	\$651,500	\$525,396
Individuals	\$407,984	\$133,787
Corporations	\$136,000	\$53,500
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	(\$749,885)	(\$562,885)
Change in Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	\$445,599	\$149,798
Total Change in Net Assets	\$873,554	\$104,429
NET ASSETS, Beginning of Year	\$989,671	\$885,242
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$1,863,225</b>	<b>\$989,671</b>

\* Copies of the complete audited reports may be obtained from Donor Direct Action or from the State of New York, Department of Law, Office of Charities Registration

## The Sisterhood Is Global Institute

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### **Democratic Republic of Congo**

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### **El Salvador**

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### **Kenya**

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Libyan Women's Platform for Peace

### **Nepal**

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### **Palestine**

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### **Peru**

Manuela Ramos

### **Somalia**

Galkayo Education Center for Peace  
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### **South Africa**

Embrace Dignity

### **Syria**

Syrian Women's Forum for Peace (SWFP)

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