



**INTERNATIONAL
SOLIDARITY
FOUNDATION**

ANNUAL PLAN 2024

APPROVED BY THE BOARD ON NOV 7, 2023

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ACRONYMS:

ARP	alternative rite of passage
CSO	civil society organization
Fingo	Finnish Development NGOs (umbrella organization)
FGM	female genital mutilation
IDP	internally displaced people
ISF	International Solidarity Foundation (Solidaarisuus)
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
NGO	non-governmental organization
SACCO	savings and credit cooperative society
SHG	self-help group
VAWG	violence against women and girls

1. INTRODUCTION

The International Solidarity Foundation (ISF) is a Finnish development NGO established in 1970. ISF aims at creating a world where women and girls are empowered to build their own future, their self-determination is fully realised, and their right to bodily integrity is respected. Its vision is to be a pathfinder in empowering women and girls in East Africa by 2030.

For ISF, the vision means first and foremost: 1) the ability to support and encourage local civil societies to operate boldly even in difficult conditions and on taboo topics; 2) sustainable growth and stability that ensures the realisation of ISF's basic function; and 3) resilience in the face of challenges. If the ISF operating environment is favourable and the organisation is capable to employ its full potential, in 2030 it will:

- Be a leading specialist in the empowerment of women and girls by combining the promotion of livelihoods with the prevention of gender-based violence.
- Be an innovative organization whose mission and operating models are relevant, bold and ahead of the time.
- Have a diverse and stable funding base.
- Be an adaptive organisation where learning is at the core of our operations.
- Have efficient stakeholder relations and strategic partnerships.

To achieve its vision, the following strategic objectives will guide planning and decision making in ISF during the 2022-25 strategy period:

- ISF is a key enabler in the eradication of female genital mutilation (FGM) in East Africa
- ISF has growing, stable funding
- ISF is an adaptive and learning organisation

To enhance its role as a **key enabler in the eradication of FGM in East Africa**, in 2023 ISF mapped actors with capacity building and/or coordinating role in FGM prevention in ISF target areas. Based on the findings, in 2024 ISF will intensify efforts to connect and build relations with selected key actors, such as Africa Coordinating Center for the Abandonment of FGM/C (ACCAF), UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the Elimination of FGM, and National Alliance against FGM and Child Marriage in Ethiopia. ISF will also explore membership criteria in End FGM European Network to increase learning and influencing at the European level. In Finland, a stakeholder study to identify new allies and advocates for ISF strategy will be carried out. In external communications, ISF will continue to focus on reaching the relevant audiences through social and traditional media in order to become a top-of-mind organization on FGM.

To achieve its long-term aspirations of **growth and diversified funding**, ISF will continue to map and develop relations with potential donors in East Africa, including local EU delegations, relevant UN agencies, and other main donor within ISF's thematic area of expertise. It will intensify efforts to identify and participate in funding calls with high quality proposals. A new regional position was created in 2023 to support these efforts.

To ensure stability and growth regarding private fundraising, ISF continues with campaigning and private donor acquisition. Fundraising and communications will strive to strengthen brand awareness as noteworthy organisation and cause to donate to. A testament donation pilot for committed long-term private donors will be launched. The cooperation between

institutional fundraising in programme countries and private fundraising in Finland will be strengthened in order to ensure stable and innovative funding base.

To enhance **adaption and learning**, ISF introduces monthly learning by sharing sessions where ISF staff members and implementing partners present relevant topics for sharing, learning and discussing. In the autumn, ISF programme team gets together in Ethiopia to intensively work on the 2026-29 programme. Systematic documentation and sharing of best practices and lessons learnt continue to be a strategic priority in 2024, as well as standardization of financial management practices and supporting the financial management capacity of partners.

Internal and external evaluations play an important role in learning and 2026-29 programme design. In 2024, ISF commences two midterm evaluations in Kenya: the ISF-led Muungano Gender Forum project will be subject to an external midterm evaluation. Together with World Vision Finland who applies similar methodology, ISF will evaluate the alternative rite of passage approach implemented by two partners in Kenya. In Somaliland, SOYDAVO, BARWAAQO and YPEER projects will be subject to a midterm evaluation.

Aligned with the 4-year capacity building plans initiated in 2022, the knowledge and skills of both ISF and partner staff will be strengthened. In Kenya and Somaliland, 2024 training topics include (but are not limited to) budgeting, financial reporting and fraud prevention; men engagement and best practices in FGM prevention, and public speaking. In Ethiopia, the new ISF and partner staff will gain training in ISF programme/project planning and implementation practices. The 6-9 months long planning phase (starting in 2023) will serve as a joint learning pathway into long-term development cooperation.

2. DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PROGRAMME

2024 is the third year of ISF's 4-year development cooperation programme. In 2024, planning of the 2026-29 programme will commence in close coordination with key stakeholders in programme countries.

The current programme is primarily funded by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA), European Union and thousands of Finnish private donors. The goal of the programme is to strengthen women and girls' bodily integrity and livelihood resilience in East Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somaliland). It has five expected outcomes (the programme is presented in more detail in the 2022-25 programme document, available on ISF webpage):

1. Judicial and moral duty bearers take action to mitigate violence against women and girls (VAWG)
2. Women and girls collectively claim their rights
3. Women's sphere of influence has expanded
4. Women benefit from services and networks that support livelihood reform
5. Improved capacity of farm systems to mitigate and adapt to climate change

In **Kenya**, ISF will implement six projects in Kisii and Nyamira counties, including one project with a local cooperative to support women's livelihood resilience, one project with a local NGO to enhance banana by-products value chain, and two projects with local NGOs to prevent VAWG, particularly FGM. Additionally, ISF implements two projects: Muungano Gender Forum serves as a platform for discussing and coordinating efforts to promote women's rights in the Kisii and Nyamira counties. The Grassroot initiative project entails a

scheme for financial support to third parties, which aims to boost grassroots activism and enable for new groups with innovative approaches to join the fight against gender-based violence. Additionally, ISF has a cooperative agreement with Fingo to support the implementation of the Fingo Powerbank project in East Africa. This includes hosting one staff member at ISF Kenya team.

In **Somaliland**, ISF will implement six projects with local NGOs, mainly in the Togdheer and Sanaag regions. One of the projects focuses on the climate resilience of farming systems, while four projects focus on prevention of FGM. Aligned with ISF strategic approach, all but one of the end-FGM projects include a livelihood promotion component. A new project that enhances women's livelihood opportunities in the fishing industry in Berbera (Sahil region) will move from planning to implementation phase early 2024.

In **Ethiopia**, ISF will start implementing its programme in the Somali region together with three local partners. The planning of the projects started in 2023 and will continue in 2024, after which implementation will start in June 2024. Two projects will enhance agro-pastoral women's role in the family and community, their living conditions and sustainable use of natural resources, while the third project focuses on the prevention of FGM. The plan is to mainstream FGM prevention activities to the livelihood projects. In 2024, ISF will also look for a fourth partner to complement its country programme.

In what follows, key contextual issues affecting programme implementation, as well as key activities are described for each programme country (except for Ethiopia where the programme is just entering the planning phase at the time of writing).

Ethiopia

Over the past five years, the political and security situation in Ethiopia has been fragile, influenced by both internal challenges and external factors. Ongoing ethnic conflicts, armed struggles, and the restriction of political space, coupled with a decline in democratic processes, are significantly impacting the overall operational environment in the country.

The Somali region of Ethiopia, however, has experienced relative stability in recent years, with the exception of specific conflict-prone areas. The primary security risks in the region include territorial disputes between the Afar and Somali regions, conflicts in Somaliland, and the potential resurgence of Al-Shabaab. These factors have had humanitarian consequences, leading to internal displacement and an influx of refugees, which further might strain ISF's work in the region.

The conflicts in Ethiopia have exacerbated various human rights violations, including sexual and gender-based violence, mass displacements, arbitrary detentions on a large scale, and the erosion of civil authority through militarized command posts. While Ethiopia has made improvements in the legal framework governing civil society actors, internal conflicts have resulted in a shrinking of the civil society space and limitations on their activities.

In 2024, the primary concern for the Ethiopian economy continues to be political instability. Furthermore, the country is grappling with adverse weather conditions, locust invasions, conflicts, and global factors that contribute to soaring food prices and high inflation. The combination of frequent severe weather events and the long-term effects of climate change not only undermines agricultural and pastoral livelihoods but also poses a threat to overall food security.

Ethiopia has implemented laws and policies that explicitly prohibit and criminalize the practice of FGM. These laws encompass a comprehensive range of actions, including the performance, procurement, arrangements, and assistance related to FGM. Moreover, the legislation also criminalizes the failure to report incidents of FGM. Furthermore, the Ethiopian government has developed a strategic plan aimed at eradicating FGM by the year 2030.

During 2024, ISF will start two women's economic empowerment projects that contribute to ISF programme outcomes 3-5, while the FGM prevention project will mainly contribute to programme outcomes 1-2. In the first half of 2024, the selected partners together with ISF Ethiopia team will carry out a planning phase, resulting in a project plan and a capacity building plan of the partner organisations. The implementation of the projects will start in June. ISF will also look for a fourth partner to complement its country programme.

Kenya

Context-related issues and developments that may affect ISF programme implementation in Kenya in 2024 include inflation which together with changing tax regime will increase the prices of commodities and services, and thereby affect the project budgets.

Threats, intimidation and fear of reprisals towards human rights activists may create a climate of fear, contribute to self-censorship, and thereby limit the freedom of expression among journalists, activists and other duty bearers and role models, particularly in sessions addressing gender, gender-based violence and other topics locally considered as sensitive or controversial.

Based on previous years' experience, heavy rains and hailstorms can reduce the number of participants in some awareness raising activities, such as Muungano Gender Forum grassroots sessions.

Regarding ISF Programme **Outcome 1** (Judicial and moral duty bearers take action to mitigate VAWG), ISF trains religious leaders and local officials on the negative impacts of FGM and other forms of VAWG, and victim-sensitive reporting and investigation practices. Weekly community dialogues facilitated by the ISF-led Muungano Gender Forum and the partner teams provide a platform for the community members to discuss with the trained authorities, building trust in them, and thereby enhancing the reporting of VAWG cases. Muungano Gender Forum and ISF partners also support key Kisii and Nyamira county officials in coordinating efforts to promote women and girls' rights.

To mitigate the medicalization of FGM (cuts secretly performed by health professionals), ISF trains health professionals and community health workers on the legislation prohibiting medicalized FGM; aiming to transform them from cutters to end-FGM advocates who can provide medical and psychosocial support to survivors and raise awareness on the health risks related to the practice.

Regarding ISF Programme **Outcome 2** (Women and girls collectively claim their rights), Muungano Gender Forum community sessions provide rural women with an opportunity to address issues that are relevant in their daily lives. To encourage survivors of VAWG to seek support, ISF continues exploring and improving existing channels, such as the toll-free help line number.

In the school peer clubs, girls are encouraged to identify and claim their rights, and child-parent dialogues are arranged. Girls at the risk age of FGM are invited in the alternative rite of passage (ARP) programme, which honours the culturally valued initiation traditions without

the genital cut. Each programme entails sessions for parents, too, and ends with public declaration to abandon the practice of FGM.

Regarding ISF Programme **Outcome 3** (Women's sphere of influence has expanded), ISF increases women's cooperation with the private sector and innovation and extension services. ISF promotes women's right to use family land, creates opportunities for women to take advantage of digital services and innovative livelihoods, and increases their access to finance and productive inputs, including technology.

Muungano Gender Forum organizes grassroots dialogues that advocate for the importance of women's productive role and participation in the decision making over livelihood resources. The forum also sets up quarterly trade fairs to increase women farmers' visibility and linkages with input suppliers and food companies.

ISF organises men-only discussions about, for example, the benefits of equal household decision-making, shared breadwinning roles and nonviolent conflict resolution practices. Similarly, ISF organises women-only groups where women can safely disclose and discuss partner violence and other challenges they face.

In all projects, role models, such as uncut girls, parents who have rejected FGM, men who oppose VAWG, and women entrepreneurs are invited to speak out among their peers to challenge prevailing views of 'normal' or acceptable behavior.

Regarding ISF Programme **Outcome 4** (Women benefit from services that support livelihood reform), ISF strengthens the operational and commercial capacity of its cooperative partner Nyamira North Women SACCO (NNWS) and trains women farmers in business planning and development. Following the recommendations of the project midterm evaluation (2023), the indigenous vegetables and mushrooms quality chains will be further developed to gain access to new markets and to reduce food waste and production costs. ISF equips satellite collection centres and builds storage, processing and packaging capacity, and—in cooperation with the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) and the Kenya Institute of research and Development (KIRDI)—supports NNWS in the certification of the entire quality chain.

ISF supports NNWS to develop a business model for providing services to its over 2000 members. ISF also plans to start cooperation with the University of Waasa (UWASA) and Strathmore University in Kenya in order to find practical solutions to consumer marketing and branding as well as energy challenges.

Following a planning phase completed in 2023, ISF starts a new livelihood project that enhances the utilization of banana fibre in handicraft production. The project targets young vulnerable women (such as survivors of VAWG) and develops innovative means of livelihood, testing fibre processing techniques and technologies with KIRDI and Mifuko Ltd. ISF promotes product development and trains women in weaving and knitting techniques.

Regarding ISF Programme **Outcome 5** (Improved capacity of farm systems to mitigate and adapt to climate change), ISF promotes circular economy by utilising banana stems and other by-products to make compost for soil amendment and making handicraft products.

Aligned with the project midterm evaluation findings, NNWS will increase production volumes and secure steady harvest throughout and between years to access new markets and maintain contract farming agreements. To succeed, ISF increases the area for vertical farming, improves access to water, scales up seed, spawn and fertilizer production, and trains more women in climate smart vegetable and mushroom farming. Lastly, ISF supports women's access to digital weather services, and use of solar energy in processing.

Somaliland

Context-related issues and developments that may negatively affect ISF programme implementation in Somaliland in 2024 include the conflict between the Somaliland National Army and the SSC-Khatumo forces of the Dhulbahante in the Sool region. The clan conflicts in Burao might also flare up again and cause difficulties in travelling, both to Burao and Sanaag. Additionally, the presidential elections planned for December 2024 may hinder programme implementation.

A persistent drought (or floods) might affect the implementation and effectiveness of ISF programme. ISF Somaliland team and partners follow up the forecasts and build adaptability to account for eventual impact. In extreme drought, ISF is prepared to reallocate resources to aid impacted target communities.

The lack of legislation protecting women's rights continues posing challenges to ISF programme implementation, in particular VAWG prevention. The FGM bill remains pending and the gender-based violence bill faces negligence and setbacks, while women's political participation remains minimal.

Regarding ISF Programme **Outcome 1** (Judicial and moral duty bearers take action to mitigate VAWG), religious and traditional leaders who are highly respected by the local community are trained on the harmful effects of FGM. These trainings are carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Religion (MoRa) and the Ministry of Employment and Family Affairs (MESAF). Lower ranking religious leaders are trained and sensitized on the Islamic stand and perspective of FGM by higher ranking Islamic scholars. The trained religious leaders participate in open dialogues, aiming to demolish the misconception of FGM as a religious obligation.

ISF sensitizes local authorities in Togdheer and Sanaag region and encourages them to involve women's rights organizations and women self-help groups in efforts to address VAWG and other women's rights violations. This aims to strengthen the local ownership and unify the voice of women's groups in lobbying for the implementation of gender equality policies and laws.

Regarding ISF Programme **Outcome 2** (Women and girls collectively claim their rights), ISF will reach out to schoolgirls through Girl Clubs, where the girls gain knowledge on negative consequences of FGM and child marriage and skills in public speaking and advocating for their rights. They conduct peer-to-peer education for other girls and serve as role models. Younger girls and boys are reached through theatrical plays and child friendly booklets.

ISF also targets women who reside in remote villages and internally displaced people's (IDP) communities, where they are susceptible to various forms of discrimination and violence, lack of basic services and education. These women receive information on the negative consequences of FGM and other forms of VAWG through, for instance, local events where traditional and religious leaders are involved.

Regarding ISF Programme **Outcome 3** (Women's sphere of influence has expanded), ISF facilitates women's participation in community level climate adaptation and mitigation planning which increases their access to livelihood resources, such as water, land and seeds. ISF promotes women's access to finance and develops their business activities. In the new livelihood project starting in 2024, ISF promotes women's employment in the male-dominated fisheries industry.

Like in Kenya, ISF crosscuts VAWG prevention in the livelihood projects, in order to mitigate the risk of partner violence often arising when women are empowered. ISF organises discussions on the role of women in agriculture, the negative effects of VAWG, and how to prevent and mitigate them. Respectively, whenever feasible, ISF includes a livelihood component in the VAWG prevention projects to expand women's productive role and decision-making power at home and in the community. The activities include literacy, numeracy and basic business skills classes, training in poultry farming and tailoring. With younger boys, the negative effects of VAWG will be discussed in Boys Against FGM groups.

Regarding ISF Programme **Outcome 4** (Women benefit from services that support livelihood reform), ISF trains women and men in crop marketing and selling and maps potential creditors to improve access to finance. Activities to enhance adaptation to climate change improve the profitability of cooperatives and women entrepreneurs in the self-help groups. ISF also promotes women's active role and decision-making power within the cooperatives and community committees, which increases their access to livelihood resources.

ISF promotes community-led applied research with experts and establishes Farmer Field Schools (FFS) to build farmers' capacities in crop and livestock production. The livelihood partner's (ADO) project team will make an exposure visit to Ethiopia to promote sharing and learning on climate smart dryland farming and disaster preparedness and response.

Crosscutting livelihood improvement into two VAWG prevention projects, ISF trains female beneficiaries in tailoring and marketing reusable menstrual pads, in poultry farming and in egg and meat production and sales. As a new initiative, the role, safety and income generating opportunities of women in the in the male-dominated fisheries industry and in the Berbera fish market will be strengthened.

Regarding ISF Programme **Outcome 5** (Improved capacity of farm systems to mitigate and adapt to climate change), ISF establishes community level natural resource management (NRM) committees that will be responsible for implementing the community level climate adaptation and mitigation activities. Female and male farmers alike will be trained in sustainable NRM practices.

ISF promotes rainwater harvesting and irrigation, flood mitigation, and greenhouse farming to increase food production and productivity. ISF has developed and tested a greenhouse prototype that can withstand the windy conditions and extreme heat in the project areas. In 2024, the greenhouse production with drip irrigation is ready to start.

To improve access to drought-resistant seed varieties, ISF trains women and men in on-farm seed selection, plant breeding, and seed handling and storage. ISF also enhances sustainable rangeland management and promotes apiculture and poultry farming for agricultural diversification.

3. COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY IN FINLAND

Communications encompass activities related to global education, volunteerism, and advocacy campaigns. The primary objective is to enhance the understanding and inspire active engagement among Finnish audiences in global issues aligned with ISF's mission. Strategic communication efforts play a vital role in supporting ISF's initiatives to combat gender-based violence, empower women and girls to reach their full potential, and underscore the significance of civil society in driving worldwide transformation and fostering active citizenship.

Advocacy pertains to the political and public endeavors aimed at influencing Finnish development policies and funding. The overarching goal is to ensure the realization of women's and girls' rights to bodily integrity and self-determination. ISF's advocacy work is grounded in the principles of Agenda 2030 and its call for global responsibility.

An important development focus for the year 2024 is to enhance the organization's visibility in Kenya, Somaliland, and Ethiopia to better support institutional fundraising.

Communications and global education

Drawing from the accumulated knowledge of our target audience over the past three years, ISF aims to establish itself as the foremost organization in their minds. Being 'top-of-mind' means being the first organization that people think of when it comes to a particular area or theme. Achieving this status necessitates a deeper understanding of the causes that ISF champions, including the fight against FGM. ISF will continue the work initiated in 2023 to utilize search engine optimization for reaching new audiences.

In pursuit of its strategic and programmatic objectives, ISF will expand its focus beyond social media. While social media has proven effective in engaging audiences on global women's and girls' issues, it has become increasingly essential to reach audiences beyond the confines of social media to establish ISF as the 'top-of-mind' organization addressing FGM.

Efforts in both social and traditional media will concentrate on specific key dates when relevant topics are widely discussed. ISF will actively participate in ongoing discussions in both social and traditional media, integrating themes pertinent to ISF into daily discourse.

In 2024, ISF's communications and fundraising campaigns will be guided by the goal of enhancing brand awareness among key audiences. ISF has planned a targeted awareness-raising campaign for the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation and the International Day of the Girl. ISF will continue collaboration with a communications agency to create meaningful campaign initiatives.

Traditional media outreach will primarily involve personalized media contacts and pitching ISF senior advisers and their expertise, along with selected development themes, to interested journalists. ISF also aims to generate social media discussions that may be picked up by traditional media outlets.

Social media influencers will remain pivotal in our communications and fundraising campaigns. ISF continues testing the global education model on selected social media channels, focusing on peer-to-peer content, and exploring how social media influencers can engage with their audiences in a meaningful way. This will involve identifying influencer partners for long-term collaborations.

In 2024, ISF will maintain the momentum by continuing to create engaging and informative web articles, along with meaningful audio-visual content. ISF will continue to produce video content for social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram Reels. Ongoing communications for donors and supporters will encompass email newsletters and printed reports or magazines.

An important aspect of development communication will be the amplification of local voices from ISF target areas while reducing colonialist and 'white savior' aspects in the communication materials. This approach will be integrated into all stages of ISF's communications, from content production to the tone and substance of the material itself. In accentuating local voices, ISF will strengthen connections between the Helsinki communications team and ISF offices in the programme countries.

Additionally, ISF will seek ways to sustain influencer training and engagement with the Finnish Somali diaspora, by for instance, providing webinars on FGM, anti-racism, and global women's rights issues to active followers and supporters.

Political advocacy and networking

The goals of ISF's political advocacy in Finland include:

- Ensuring funding for women and girls in development.
- Incorporating gender perspectives into Finnish development and foreign policies.
- Securing development funding for small farmers' climate adaptation and mitigation.
- Promoting policies and practices that enhance the resilience of women's livelihoods on a global scale.
- Advocacy in relevant working groups and networks in the field of sexual rights, particularly in the fight against female genital mutilation.

ISF is an active member of Fingo's Food Security and Livelihood working group that includes members of civil society, state administration, and research community and monitors Finland's and EU's development policy from the food security perspective. In 2024, the group organises research seminars and promotes food security discussion during EU Parliamentary elections.

ISF actively participates in Fingo's Taxation and Global Justice working group, which discusses current national and international political processes, engages in advocacy and organises public discussions. The group works closely with Tax Justice Network Africa and Tax Justice Network Europe. In 2024, key agenda items will be Finland's Action Plan on Tax and Development and UN's leadership role in a global tax agenda.

ISF also participates in Fingo's Climate Finance working group and Gender and Development working group and extends its support to the Finnwatch research program concerning labor rights and rights of association.

ISF is involved in the FGM Working Group of the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) and advocates for sexual and reproductive health and rights through the Sexual Rights Network (Seksuaalioikeusverkosto) coordinated by the Family Federation of Finland (Väestöliitto).

On the European level, ISF conducts advocacy through Fingo and the European SOLIDAR network. ISF will also explore membership criteria in the End FGM European Network.

Globally, ISF has made a commitment to the Gender-Based Violence Action Coalition of the Generation Equality, the UN Women-led initiative (2021-26) aimed at fulfilling the promises of the Beijing Platform for Action and accelerating equality, leadership, and opportunities for women and girls worldwide.

4. GOVERNANCE, HUMAN RESOURCES AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Governance

ISF's governing structure includes the Delegation, the Board (of trustees) and the Executive Director. The Executive Director is responsible for ISF operations under the supervision of the Board. She is supported by the Management Committee, consisting of headquarter-based directors and managers. Extended Management Committee (Management Committee and Country Directors) discusses strategic matters.

The Board oversees the execution of ISF's operations and resources. It approves ISF's statutes, rules, regulations, and policies, as well as annual plans and reports. It oversees risk management by updating the risk register and risk mitigation plans annually. It also oversees the organization's budgeting and financial management and is responsible for investments.

The new chairperson of the Board nominated by the Delegation in November 2023 will start his/her period in 2024 as a head of the foundation. The Board assembles around 8-10 times a year. Its priority in 2024 is to guide and support the smooth implementation of ISF's strategy and programme, as well as to support the preparation of the 2026-29 programme. The Delegation assembles two times for the statutory spring and autumn meetings to appoint Board members and ISF auditors.

Human resources

In East Africa, ISF has presence in Nairobi and Kisii in Kenya, in Hargeisa and Burao in Somaliland and in Addis Ababa and Jijiga in Ethiopia.

The Programme Director in Finland is responsible for leading the development cooperation programme and overseeing field operations. The Team includes a Programme Manager who is responsible for developing planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning. She supervises two senior thematic advisers (based in Hargeisa and Helsinki) and a Grants Manager (based in Nairobi).

Each country operation is led by a locally recruited Country Director who reports to the Programme Director. The standardized field structure includes two thematic coordinators (based in the field locations) and one Finance and Administration Coordinator (based in the capitals together with Country Directors) in each country. In Kenya, a new Country Director recruited by the end of 2023 will start in his/her position by the beginning of 2024. In Kenya, the Team also includes project staff in Kisii for two projects implemented directly by ISF. Furthermore, the Kenya team includes a Partnerships and Innovation Adviser who works for the Fingo Powerbank project and is hosted by ISF.

At the Helsinki headquarters, the Finance and Administration Director is responsible for ISF's financial administration, planning and reporting, including human resources administration. S/he supervises a Programme Controller who assists and develops programme and project level financial control related to both internal (ISF) and partner operations. Additionally, a Financial and Administration Planner is responsible for everyday financial operations and office administration, as well as supports bookkeeping and human resources administration. The

audit services will be tendered out in Helsinki and in the field to complement and back up financial and HR administration.

The Communication and Fundraising Team in the Helsinki office applies joint management. The Communication Manager oversees ISF's communication, global education, and volunteer action, and supervises the Communications adviser and two fixed-term employees: a Communication and Administration Coordinator and a Social Media Planner. The Fundraising Manager oversees private fundraising and campaigning in Finland and supervises the Marketing Advisor and the Loyalty Planner. Furthermore, part-time and seasonal staff will be hired for fundraising campaigning in Finland.

The Occupational Safety and Health Committee is responsible for follow up and development of occupational well-being, monitored via an annual staff barometer. The annual priorities for the Committee will be set in early 2024, including enhancing "global ISF community" and the promotion of work safety in programme countries. At the headquarters, the working hours monitoring system will be renewed.

Risk management

The overall purpose of risk management is to identify risks and develop appropriate risk mitigation plans to support the achievement of strategic and programme objectives. It is an integral part of planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting at all levels (project, country, and organization). It supports decision-making through timely identification, assessment, and preparation for risks. This is particularly important in high-risk environments, such as ISF's target areas in East Africa.

ISF's risk register, risk management plan and risk map (Annex 4 a-c) are updated annually by the Management Committee, approved by the Board, and published as part of the Annual Report. The risk register captures identified risks and an assessment of their impact and likelihood. The risk register includes risks affecting ISF as an organization or its operations, and risks arising because of ISF operations (i.e. risks caused by ISF). The risk register also captures audit observations and theory of change assumptions.

The risk mitigation plan includes information on risk treatment and monitoring responsibilities for risks whose impact is assessed as high or extreme. ISF's policies on fraud and corruption, sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual and gender-based harassment, and staff security are central to the organization's risk management system. ISF's Ethics and Safety Guidelines for projects that target women and girls in vulnerable positions describes how ISF seeks to do no harm. In 2024, ISF will develop a whistle blower mechanism for reporting any misconduct.

5. FINANCE

Financial administration

In the beginning of 2024, the new Finance and Administration Director recruited at the end of 2023 will start in his/her position at the headquarters. During 2024, ISF will continue developing the finance and administrative functions including maximizing the use of accounting software (Netvisor) and standardizing the internal verification and approval procedures of project financial reports. A structure for headquarter-led project financial monitoring will be piloted.

Partners' financial administration capacity gaps will be identified, and a plan of action drawn up, specific attention directed to the new Ethiopian partners. The external audit services will go through competitive tendering both for Helsinki and for the country office audits.

Financial requirements

ISF budget for 2024 is 4,500,145 euros, including 3,962,065 euros for the development programme.

	Budget 2024		Budget 2023 9/2023 update		Financial Statement 2022	
	Whole ISF	Development Programme	Whole ISF	Development Programme	Whole ISF	Development Programme
Kenya	861 787	861 787	899 385	899 385	782 031	782 031
Somaliland	1 013 000	1 013 000	908 886	908 886	1 333 891	1 333 891
Ethiopia	800 000	800 000	230 000	230 000	16 498	16 498
Programme Planning	535 251	535 251	521 071	521 071	390 493	390 493
Communications	390 377	390 377	414 416	414 416	298 267	298 267
Administration	361 650	361 650	408 562	330 418	352 689	313 464
Fundraising and investing	538 080		411 063		540 645	
TOTAL	4 500 145	3 962 065	3 793 383	3 304 176	3 714 514	3 134 644

Funding

In 2024, programme funding is 3,18 million euros, including 2,85 million from the MFA in Finland (89% of programme funding) and 34,236 euros from Fingo. Private sector revenue is expected to be 1,140,000 euros in 2024, covering the immediate costs of fundraising activities as well as 630,364 euros for the development programme (16,4%).

The 2024 programme has a deficit of 146,682 euros. The 2022 surplus 181,762 euros and subsequent deficits/surpluses will offset each other during the programme period. The gradual growth in expenses from the second part of 2023 onwards is largely explained by the delays in starting operations in Ethiopia, and the contingency plans made for possible funding cuts due to the 2023 parliamentary elections in Finland, whereby the planning of some new activities were put on hold. With the exception of a planned entry to Puntland, all delayed and postponed activities will be under full implementation in 2024. The entry to Puntland has been cancelled due to the deteriorated security situation, which makes it impossible to manage operations in Puntland from Somaliland. The funds have been re-allocated to the other programme countries.

The main priority for private fundraising in 2024 is to increase the volume of monthly donors to build a stable donor base through straightforward donor acquisition funnels. New monthly donors will be recruited by continuing investing in outsourced F2F operations throughout the whole year, as well as efficient cross-selling for one-time donors and new leads recruited in

campaigns. Cross-selling, donor loyalty and retention programs will be executed by tele operations and personalized digital funnels. ISF will continue to reach new leads and one-time-donors in digital platforms through distinguishable campaigning and donation products. Testing with search engine marketing and search engine optimizing continue as it has proven to be an important tool for reaching new audiences. Customer experience is developed further with service design methods and learning from donors through interviews. Testing with new donation product brands will continue to tempt new donors. ISF will execute three larger annual fundraising and brand awareness campaigns as well as more agile, smaller marketing campaigns. Fundraising methods remain F2F, digital tools, direct mail and telemarketing. In addition, legacy campaigning will take place a few times a year with event-based marketing methods.

Income

MFA Funding	2 850 000
EU Funding	294 849
Other Income	34 236
Fundraising	1 140 000
Investing	34 378
Total Income	4 353 463

Expenses

Development Programme	-3 962 065
Fundraising	-509 636
Other Expenses	-28 444
Total Expenses	-4 500 145
Deficit	-146 682