



INTERNATIONAL SAFE SHELTER FOUNDATION 2023-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

INTERNATIONAL SAFE SHELTER FOUNDATION

<https://issf-us.org/>

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SWOT Analysis

In 2023, we completed our second strategic planning SWOT Analysis. A SWOT analysis is a useful tool for evaluating the business by zooming in on its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities available, and potential threats. Consider the following:

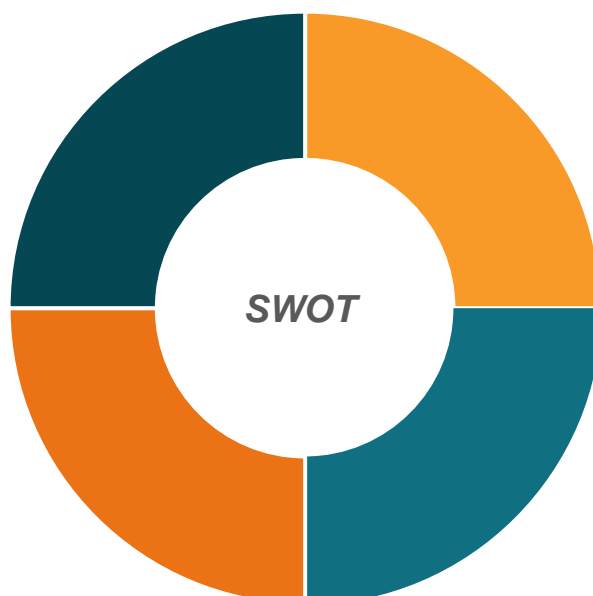
- **Strengths** – What strengths does the organization have now and how will these strengths evolve moving forward?
- **Weaknesses** – What are the deficiencies in the services? Which areas of the organization should be improved first?
- **Opportunities** – How can the organization leverage partnerships and new innovations to grow the organization? Which other segments of the domestic violence prevention, advocacy, and protection would the organization consider entering in future?
- **Threats** – Are there external factors (controllable and uncontrollable) that could potentially stifle cash flow or organization growth?

STRENGTHS

- Advantage
- Capabilities
- Assets, people
- Experience
- Financial reserves
- Value proposition
- Price, value, quality

OPPORTUNITIES

- Areas to improve
- New segments
- Industry trends
- New products
- New innovations
- Key partnership



WEAKNESSES

- Disadvantages
- Gap in capabilities
- Cash Flow
- Suppliers
- Experience
- Areas to improve
- Causes of lose sales/partnerships etc.

THREATS

- Economy movement
- Obstacles faced
- Competitor actions
- Political impacts
- Environmental effects
- Loss of key staff
- Market demand

<p>STRENGTHS (internal) <i>After completed, go back and rank by priority</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you do well? • What unique resources can you draw on? • What do others see as your strength? • Able to navigate and maintain relationships with Juarez shelter and other local partners in the Paso del Norte area. • Others can see the direct impact we can have almost immediately. • ISSF's adaptability and flexibility (move from physical location to remote, virtual way of working) • Our members: Different talents, technical skills, RPCV backgrounds with a large % of members, diverse group of people, access to personal and professional networks • Collective passion and interest for organization's mission, domestic violence in Latin America • Great foundation with new website we can capitalize on • Access to personal connections, relationships built over the years, such as with donors and proven we can fundraise successfully. 	<p>WEAKNESS (internal) <i>After completed go back and rank by priority</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could you improve? • Where do you have fewer resources than other? • What are others likely to see as weaknesses • Follow up with shelter through regular, standardized reports to improve accountability. • Timely action by board, but often impeded as board is all-volunteer and therefore outputs are irregular due to time constraints, other life obligations. • Commitment is variable for members, difficult to maintain it, especially for new folks (turnover) • More creative, compelling fundraising ideas/messages • Diversify --women's advocacy and specialists in domestic violence. • Market ourselves better, improve the ASK (credibility packet, strategic plan, annual reports) • Tools could be more available for transparency, like new website, social media sites. • We could enhance our organizational development skills, solicit more feedback. • Fitting/matching best person with roles in org. • Develop more partners/partnerships.
<p>OPPORTUNITIES (external) <i>After completed, go back and rank by priority</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What good opportunities are open to you? • What trends could you take advantage of? • How could you turn strengths into opportunity? • Cultivate new donors and interested parties. • More people paying attention to social media and using online modalities--establishing presence pertinent and essential. • Prioritize regular communications with donors and interested parties, ask for assistance when it is offered. • Prioritize new /updated content. • Bring people on who have desired skill sets: fundraising, technology, certain platform experts, influencers. • Pursue grant opportunities. • Capitalizing on smaller programs like Amazon Smile, getting friends to use it when they make purchases. • Diversifying our fundraising methods 	<p>THREATS (external) <i>After completed go back and rank by priority</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What trends could harm you? • What is your competition doing? • What threats do your weaknesses expose you to? • We could get lost in social media "noise"--everyone is on • How to get our message across so we are relevant • Threats--losing the cultivated interest, losing members. • Our competition---other orgs have paid staff that can devote time and expertise, better organized boards, board structure. • No physical location, located in various places, things get lost in zoom and email. • Burnout is real--no ready replacements. • Message of DV may be too deep/intense. • Potential economic challenges could affect donor giving. • Shelters may be lacking capacity to provide proper documentation, photos, receipts, etc.,

- Improve our knowledge in DV, organization skills, use a consultant/trainer.

which could affect our ability to be outwardly transparent.

Reflection on 2021-2023 Strategic Plan

Overall, the board rated our achievement of our previous goals and outputs as better than average and felt we met the majority of our objectives.

Progress to Goals

Output 1

- In February of 2022 the Board recently nominated Ana Pineda Reyes as the designated point of contact (POC) for shelter engagement and she will serve as the organization's Bilingual Cultural Liaison Officer. Soon thereafter, Karen Rodríguez also joined the board to support Ana in her role. Prior to her engagement, Katharine Perez-Lockett served as both Treasurer and Bilingual Cultural Liaison and was the regular point of contact for Mujer a Mujer. Both Katharine and Ana have an established quarterly check-in with the director and receive quarterly fiscal and technical reports.
- In 2020-2021, we were unable to contact new shelters due to our strategic focus on improving coordination with our current shelter partner. In 2022, we focused on developing a strategy for identifying and engaging new shelter partners and in late 2022, we identified two new shelter partners in Honduras and Jamaica.
- In 2021, Mujer a Mujer submitted a financial request form (grant application) and worked with our Bilingual Cultural Liaison to develop a funding plan and technical/fiscal reporting schedule. The project began in October 2021 and the shelter submitted their first financial and technical quarterly report in January 2022. The report has been translated into English and we are continuing to work with the shelter to improve their reporting techniques.

Output 2

In 2021, we advertised for a Social Media Officer on LinkedIn. Although we did not elect a new officer before the end of 2021, we made considerable progress on our goals. In 2022, we engaged three new donors through Facebook, made social media outreach, and developed a LinkedIn page. Our Facebook posts have increased their overall reach. Our most successful post in 2021 reached 778 people. Our LinkedIn Page has 66 new followers ranging from executive directors of non-profits to technical experts.

Prior to our Annual Fundraiser in 2021, the Board sent out letters to each of our previous donors discussing the Transitional Housing Project with Mujer a Mujer and requesting their support. The letters were helpful in engaging our previous donors. Katharine Perez-Lockett and Nevin Kohler interviewed and recorded Angela Fierro Sandoval, the director of Mujer a Mujer and created four YouTube videos to further engage our audience and share information about shelter needs. The posts have been shared on ISSF Facebook and LinkedIn pages and have helped increase donor understanding of our projects. We have regularly updated donors via Facebook and LinkedIn on the results of our annual fundraisers and these posts have also been helpful in encouraging new donors.

Ana Pineda Reyes recently joined the board of directors and expressed interest in serving both as Bilingual Cultural liaison and Social Media Officer. She began these roles in February 2022. She will develop an Instagram account for ISSF and link the accounts to monitor social media analytics. She will also schedule posts on our accounts so that we can continue reaching a larger audience. Karen Rodríguez has also been nominated to work as our liaison between ISSF and our website developer Angelica Granados. As both board members have expressed interest, they work in tandem for the roles of Social Media Officer and Bilingual Cultural Liaison.

Output 3

Our third output focused heavily on recruitment. We developed job descriptions and posted our opportunities on Idealist, Facebook, and LinkedIn. We found that personal outreach has been a more successful tool in board member recruitment. We are still in process of recruiting a Community Development Officer and additional associate members. Our overall goal is to increase our board membership to allow for more flexibility with our members and better meet the needs of our donors and the shelters we serve. We also spent time investing in our current members by doing a series of talks at the end of our meetings on different aspects of domestic violence so that we could continue to grow together as a group in our technical knowledge and experience.

Key Challenges in meeting Goals and Outputs included:

- Shelter partners making last minute changes to implementation and how funding was used. The group agreed that there needs to be some changes made to how we communicate and train on grant implementation rules and policies to shelter grantees.
- Response time for shelter partners. At times, our partners are slow to provide key details that would allow funding to be released and project implementation to move forward faster.
- We have added two additional shelter partners, which involves increased logistical support and fundraising.
- Fundraising in general has been a challenge. We are a small team so increasing our fundraising capacity needs strategic investment and participation.

Key Program achievements to Strategic Plan from 2021-2023 included:

- In 2021, we met the challenge of adding two additional board members.
- Also in 2021, we met the challenge of raising funds for *Mujer a Mujer's* Transitional Support Program, helping five women move from the shelter into a new home and one woman transfer to a safer environment.
- In 2022, we partnered with two additional shelters to support.
- We have increased our social media presence and have been regularly sharing posts and posting on multiple social media sites (LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook).
- We have improved communication with donors through letter outreach and shared reports on our website.
- While still needing improvement, our website was revised and improved to be more functional for donors and potential stakeholders.
- We were able to support *Mujer a Mujer* in making immediate needed improvements to their bathroom and kitchen to improve the safety and health of residents in their shelter. We also went to El Paso Texas to provide a donation of hygiene supplies (Large box from Costco of size 3 diapers, large box of baby wipes, ladies underwear, bras, shampoo, bar soap, conditioner, razors, kids shampoo, tooth brushes, and toothpaste (adult and kids), and deodorant) and industrial strength 2 wall fans.
- We supported Legion Honduras in providing dental care to women and families within their shelter.
- We held an in-person fundraising Zumba event as well as a virtual Zumba event. While the fundraisers did not contribute to significant funds raised, they did raise awareness of our ISSF programs in Latin America and the Caribbean and generated interest in our work. Many people expressed interest in attending future virtual Zumba events. The in-person event was well attended, but finding a lower cost-venue and increasing the cost of tickets may improve the funds raised.

Goals and Objectives for 2023-2025

To better address the SWOT analysis, the team has developed a comprehensive plan for the 2024-2025 fiscal years. The overall goal of the strategic plan is to increase the organizational visibility, presence, outreach, and follow-up by April 2025.

Project Output 1: Improve quarterly communication with shelters and potential shelters through regular email, phone calls, and solicitation. This output addresses the need to improve our overall shelter outreach as well as communication with the shelters we serve. As an organization, our main objective is to support domestic violence shelters in Latin America and the Caribbean. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in the United States, Latin America, and globally, our organization has increased its virtual presence and added two additional shelters. With this virtual presence, the organization has refocused on how we need to reach out to current and potential shelter partners. Our Activities for 2023-2025 include:

- Designate a week each month for follow-up with all 3 shelters to obtain updated documentation (forms, receipts, project updates, needs assessments, etc.).
- Establish a Caribbean Shelter Liaison for our shelter in Jamaica. While we have a board member designated for communication with our Latin American Shelters, it would be great to have one board member designated for our communication with our Jamaican shelter. Currently, this responsibility is being split between our president and our Treasurer.
- Host a training for all grantees in 2023 to go over our granting policies and procedures to improve overall communication and implementation.

Project Output 2: Increase donors by engaging in other online fundraising events, and outreach through solicitation. This output focuses on our public profile and further engagement with donors. Our activities for 2023-2025 include:

- Send donors a copy of our updated strategic plan and annual report by December 2023.
- Send multiple donor letters and updates in order to improve donor communication and outreach for fundraising efforts and communication regarding how funding is being utilized.
- Set a planning meeting for annual fundraiser and other outreach events to set dates, and action plan.
- Continue to regularly follow-up on social media or via Email on Shelter projects/progress to inform donors of how \$ has been utilized.

Project Output 3: Develop and implement an outreach plan for recruitment and increased visibility. This output focuses on the recruitment of additional board members to better support the above objectives. The ISSF team has always maintained a small number of board members and with that a small organization overhead. However, as ISSF has reevaluated our strategic objectives, the group will need to increase the numbers of the board if we are to meet the above goals and objectives. The overall goal of this objective will be incrementally increasing the board members to 8-10 total members with a strategic mix of associate members and officers. New officer positions will include a IT/Website manager, Caribbean Shelter Liaison, Legal and Compliance Officer, and Community Outreach Officer. Other positions will be considered as needed. To fulfill this output, the following activities have been created:

- Develop the message we want to share via email, Facebook, and in person conversations to potential board members.
- Develop a recruitment calendar.
- Develop specific job descriptions (social media officer/digital marketing, community outreach, etc.).

Project Output 4: Identify Programmatic annual Goals for Shelters to fund specific projects. Each year, we work with our shelters to identify key project priorities and to assess their needs. However, with the addition of two new shelters in 2022, we want to make a concerted effort to support shelters in conducting needs assessments and evaluated how we can best support them. We also want to re-evaluate current identified needs for each shelter which include:

- **Legion Honduras:** Early Childhood Intervention training—execute by end of year. Legion Honduras has identified early child intervention and trauma response training as key needs for their shelter and staff. As a result we have identified a trainer to help us support this needs and provide webinars to the shelter via zoom. We will reassess this need, and if needed identify additional trainers to continue providing support.
- **Mujer a Mujer:** Re-assess support for relocation efforts. In 2023, our shelter partner in Mexico received a letter from the government in Ciudad Juarez informing them that their shelter was beyond repair, and they needed to relocate. Prior to that point, we had provided funds for the shelter to make repairs in both their kitchen and bathroom, but after evaluation of the extensive need for repairs, it was clear that the shelter would need to relocate or rebuild. We are working with Mujer a Mujer to identify their current needs in their relocation efforts and how we can best support them (fundraising, grant writing, etc.).
- **Jamaica:** Re-assess support for finishing shelter structure. While the building has been erected there are still some repairs and modifications to the building that are needed before they can open the shelter. They have been receiving private funding and grants from other sources in addition to our in order to meet their goals. Currently, they have identified a need for improved security lighting around the shelter and are costing out the budget for the lightening. We plan to meet with them to further identify other additional structural or programmatic needs for 2023.

Calendar for Engagement:

Output 1: Improve quarterly communication with shelters and potential shelters through regular email, phone calls, and solicitation.								
	Q1Y1	Q2Y1	Q3Y1	Q4Y1	Q1Y2	Q2Y2	Q3Y2	Q4Y2
Activity 1.1 Designate a week each month for follow-up with all 3 shelters to obtain updated documentation (forms, receipts, project updates, needs assessments, etc.).	X							
Activity 1.2 Establish a Caribbean Shelter Liaison for our shelter in Jamaica. While we have a board member designated for communication with our Latin American Shelters, it would be great to have one board member designated for our communication with our Jamaican shelter. Currently, this responsibility is being split between our president and our Treasurer.	X	X	X					
Activity 1.3 Host a training for all grantees in 2023 to go over our granting policies and procedures to improve overall communication and implementation.		X	X					
Output 2: Increase donors by engaging in other online fundraising events, and outreach through solicitation. This output focuses on our public profile and further engagement with donors.								
Activity 2.1 Send donors a copy of our updated strategic plan and annual report by December 2023.	X			X				X
Activity 2.2 Send multiple donor letters and updates in order to improve donor communication and outreach for fundraising efforts and communication regarding how funding is being utilized.	X			X				X
Activity 2.3 Set a planning meeting for annual fundraiser and other outreach events to set dates, and action plan.	X			X				X
Activity 2.4 Continue to regularly follow-up on social media or via Email on Shelter projects/progress to inform donors of how \$ has been utilized.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Output 3: Develop and implement an outreach plan for recruitment and increased visibility.								

Activity 3.1 Develop the message we want to share via email, Facebook, and in person conversations to potential board members.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 3.2 Develop a recruitment calendar.	X	X	X					
Activity 3.3 Develop specific job descriptions (website manager, community outreach, etc.).	X	X	X					
Output 4: Identify Programmatic annual Goals for Shelters to fund specific projects. Each year, we work with our shelters to identify key project priorities and to assess their needs.								
Activity 4.1 Legion Honduras: Early Childhood Intervention training—execute by end of year.	X	X						
Activity 4.2 Mujer a Mujer: Re-assess support for relocation efforts.	X	X	X	X				
Activity 4.4 Jamaica: Re-assess support for finishing shelter structure.	X	X	X	X				
Re-evaluate and reassess all shelter needs for 2024-2025 FY					X	X		

Fundraising Plan

Reflection on 2022 Fundraising Activities and Progress

How much did you raise from each of your individual donor activities? In 2022, we raised \$_____ with _____ individual donors giving to our online campaign.

What were your biggest successes? We hosted a 16-day online Fundraiser which aligned with the 16 days of Activism to Stop Violence Against Women. We tested a donor platform (Flipcause) to reach more donors and use different technology in advertising our fundraisers. However, we were most successful when we appealed to personal contacts about donating and explained why we cared about our organization. We also hosted two Zumba events: one in person in Tulsa Oklahoma and one virtual Zumba event. The campaign was well organized and coordinated. We also requested funds for physical donations to the shelter and multiple requests for funding throughout the year which allowed for additional donations by new and recurring donors.

What were your biggest challenges?

Our Fundraising Resources

- Five enthusiastic board members.
- Good base for online fundraising to build from.
- Previous donors as well as online audience.
- Build a better library of solicitations, we do have templates in place.
- We now have a solid logo and brand.

Activities to find new donors, renew current donors, and upgrade donors.

Attract: Increase visibility, use marketing and advertising, leverage brand across social media platforms, and be consistent. We would also like to host additional Zumba classes, and event in Tulsa OK, Las Cruces, NM and/or San Antonio.

Renew: We need to communicate with donors on a regular basis. (i.e., newsletters). Follow up with donors (email, donation requests) Make Facebook updates. In 2022, we began to use the 2-ask approach within letters as well as ensuring multiple letters for a larger-16 days of activism fundraiser. In 2023-2025, we would like to continue to implement these approaches but also increase the overall number of letters that go out each year to further reach out to our donors and inform them of project updates.

Upgrade: In order to increase our fundraising efforts, ISSF would like to meet with a social media fundraising consultant and or improve institutional learning on social media outreach and fundraising so that we can improve our fundraising results via social media as well as attendance to virtual events. Find a matching donor. (a tank of gas, one night at a hotel, one week in the shelter, a family for a week in the shelter). Sponsor an activity: Activity and cost (designated funds). Diversify funding. (Grant writing, direct solicitation (major and minor donors), t-shirts or other types of fundraising. Streaming and donating (stream labs).

Donor Goals for 2023-2024

Goal for attracting new donors: Double Facebook followers from 176 likes and 192 followers to 352 likes and 384 followers by scheduling regular posts and sharing/boosting them. To increase donors to 50 total donors by December 30, 20215, by engaging in other online fundraising events, and outreach through solicitation.

Goals for renewing donors: Ensure that we thank our donors for previous donations and send updates on how funds were utilized by May 2024 with attachments of our annual report and strategic plan. Send letters multiple times a years to announce, events, funding, and projects.

Goals for Upgrading Donors: Work on finding a matching donors and requesting that donors consider increasing donations or giving recurring donations based on specific project needs. In pasts years, most donors have given annual one-

time gifts. It would be great if we can offer different ways donors can participate with ISSF and more options to help engage and upgrade donor participation.

Fundraising Focus areas for 2023-2024

Project Output 1: Raise sufficient funds to cover all administrative costs for ISSF and for programmatic funds for partner shelters. This includes:

- Raising funds to cover: Website 200, Zoom 160, Transfer fees (5 transactions) 225 = 585 = \$600 per year
- Raising enough funds to cover shelter programs: 3 shelters, 3 projects per year: Mujer a Mujer: \$1000, Legion Honduras: \$1000, Jamaica: \$2000 = \$4000 per year

Project Output 4: Coordinate concerted effort to raise funds: 1 method for all

- October: Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- December: 16 Days
- February: Teen Dating Violence Awareness
- March: Women's History Month
- May: Trauma-Informed Mental Health Awareness

Project Output 5: Coordinate fundraising efforts with partner shelters by hosting goal setting sessions with shelters and renewed needs assessments for each fiscal year. Ensure that fundraising efforts are aligned with shelter partner needs so that we can support advertising for them, and they can better use media content we create.

Project Active 6: Investigate grants and grant eligibility more by applying to at least 4 identified grants by 2025.

- Every 6 months, review current available grants and eligibility and create an excel sheet to follow and track grants.
- Host meetings to mutually decide on which grant proposals best fit our needs and designate grant writing team.
- Continue to actively recruit and pursue a fundraising officer to further support grant and fundraising needs.

Setting ourselves up for Success: How we plan to stay accountable to our fundraising goals

- Being in line with the fundraising needs of the shelter and helping define our needs beyond the needs of the shelters. Translate the Funding request form.
- Better define actionable meetings between each meeting (names, deadline, etc.).
- Have individuals state their actionable items for the week.
- Monthly check in and process to be accountable. Each person individually states what they can do and holds themselves accountable.