



BIANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

International Safe Shelter Foundation, Inc.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Patricia Gross, President

Nevin Kohler, Secretary

Katharine Perez-Lockett, Treasurer

Ana Pineda Reyes, Bilingual Cultural Liaison and social media Officer

Karen Rodriguez, Bilingual Cultural Liaison and social media Officer

Associate:

- Angelica Granados, Volunteer Website Administrator

SHELTER PARTNER

Centro de Protección Mujer a Mujer

Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, México

MISSION AND VISION

Our Mission

International Safe Shelter Foundation (ISSF) was founded in 2012 as a tax-exempt organization. We empower Latin American shelters that serve abused women and end domestic violence and link them with United States based resources.

Our Vision

Shelters will be fully sustainable and linked with organizations in the United States.

PROGRESS TO STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2021, we created a one-year strategic plan. As a part of the bi-annual review, ISSF wanted to share progress in the first year of the Strategic Plan. The overall goal of the strategic plan is to increase the organizational visibility, presence, outreach, and follow-up by April 2022.

Project Output 1: Improve quarterly communications with partner shelters and potential shelter partners through regular email, phone calls, and solicitation. This output addresses the need to improve our overall shelter outreach as well as communication. Our main objective is to support domestic violence shelters in Latin America. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, our organization has increased its virtual presence and refocused on how we need to reach current and potential shelter partners. Our activities for 2021-2022 include:

- Designating a point of contact (POC) for shelter engagement with current shelter partners and ensure monthly follow-up with new shelters.
- Identifying our process for identifying new shelters and partnering with them.
- Checking in quarterly with new shelters to discuss shelter needs and goals.
- Establishing a formal check-in schedule with current shelter partners to gather updates, obtain updated documentation (forms, receipts, project updates, and needs assessments).
- Reviewing Donor Financial Request Fund, implementing funding plan, and following up with the director of Centro de Protección Mujer a Mujer Domestic Violence Shelter (Mujer a Mujer) to ensure all project documentation is complete.

Project Output 2: Increase donors by engaging in online fundraising events, and outreach through solicitation. This output focuses on our public profile and further engagement with donors. As virtual presence is more relevant in 2021, ISSF has developed specific output activities to further engage donors to improve their overall connection with the shelters we serve and opportunities for engagement. Our activities for 2021-2022 include:

- Identifying social media analytic tools and using them quarterly to analyze our progress.
- Identifying at least one post per week each quarter and scheduling (4-5 posts).
- Appoint a social media Officer.
- Update website and social media to inform interested donors/parties.
- Sending donors a copy of our updated strategic plan and annual report by December 2021.
- Set a planning meeting for the annual fundraiser and other outreach events.
- Following-up to inform donors about shelter projects, progress and spending via social media or email.

Project Output 3: Develop and implement an outreach plan for recruitment and increased visibility. This output focuses on recruiting of additional board members to better support the above objectives. The ISSF team has always maintained a small group of board members and a small organization overhead. However, ISSF has reevaluated our strategic objectives, and the board needs to increase 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 social media/digital marketing officer, IT manager, 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.).

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 will focus on developing a strategy for identifying and engaging new shelter partners.
- 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.

OUR PROJECTS AND IMPACT

The last two years have been focused on organizational capacity building and developing a stronger relationship with Mujer a Mujer. Like most organizations, the COVID-19 pandemic was challenging for us as it put a strain on our Board members and further inhibited the ability of the Board to use in-person fundraising platforms. However, our Board embraced this transition and has worked to expand our virtual resources in working with our shelter partner and donors.

Due to the increase of immigration at the US-México border, Mujer a Mujer, our primary partner, has been serving an ever more diverse population experiencing domestic violence. Victims are not only from Chihuahua and other regions of México, but also from other countries including Nicaragua, Honduras, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haití, and Cuba. The shelter is in the city of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, México which is on the US-Mexico border near El Paso Texas. The shelter has seen an increase in violence and has been serving at maximum capacity. The women at the shelter stay for approximately 3 months and then must transition out of the shelter. Our recent fundraising efforts centered on supporting women and families transitioning out of the shelter in hopes of living a violence-free life. Women leaving the shelter need to find secure housing, employment, and school/daycare for their children. They often leave the shelter with few resources and lack funding to launch their new lives. The possibility of women returning to their abusers is high, as they face financial and emotional challenges, and are often alone and unprepared. Our goal is to support domestic violence survivors during this critical transitional period to allow a smoother and more sustainable transition out of the shelter with the resources and support they need.

ISSF is “*Creating a support system that the women can trust and rely on during the transition from their old life to the new one. This economic aid reduces the women’s need to return to their aggressors out of necessity.*”

Angela Fierro Sandoval, Centro de Protección Mujer a Mujer

Highlights from 2020-2021:

- The Transitional Support Project started in October 2021 and provided the funds for a small two-burner stove, a gas tank for the stove, the first month’s rent, food, cleaning products, hygiene products, and school supplies for 5 women living in the shelter, costing a total of \$1,500. The awarded amount was split into two distributions: the first amount was administered on November 8, 2021 and the second amount on February 2, 2022.
- We actively participated in the 16 Days Against Violence Campaign, sharing daily about the fight against domestic violence globally and in Latin America through virtual media including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
- We hosted two larger virtual fundraisers in 2020 and 2021. The first raised a total of \$1263.02 (128.00 was donated by our board Treasurer and paid for our new Zoom account, \$970 was donated on PayPal, and \$165 was donated on Facebook. The second raised a total of \$745, to include a \$160 operational donation.
- In December 2020, we donated \$100 dollars towards the Mujer a Mujer Holiday activity to provide gifts and food for the families living at the shelter.

- We hosted a virtual outreach and candlelight vigil to honor domestic violence victims in 2020. Angela Fierro Sandoval, the director of Mujer a Mujer, spoke at the event and we had a question-and-answer session with attendees.
- In December 2021, we engaged donors by developing four video vignettes shared on YouTube, LinkedIn, and Facebook, where we interviewed Angela about our current shelter project, the current needs of the shelter, and their challenges.

Organizational changes that have occurred in 2021-2022:

- We realized that previous fundraising efforts had focused on giving 100% of all donations directly to the shelter with extraordinarily little held back for administrative expenses (all being paid by donations from board members). In 2021, we developed a new policy to allow our organization to be more sustainable and take account for some of the actual costs of our services. Future general donations will go in a 30/70 ratio. Therefore, for a \$100, \$30 will go in the operational cost fund and \$70 will go in the shelter grant fund donation.
- We increased fundraising platforms to include PayPal Giving and Amazon Smile. When donors make a purchase on either platform, they will now have an option to donate to the shelter. For Amazon Smile, donors need to specifically select International Safe Shelter Foundation.
- We revamped our website to make it more user friendly and speak to the services we provide.
- We developed a strategic plan to guide our actions as a board and organization which focuses on shelter outreach, donor engagement, fundraising, and recruitment of new board members.
- Shelter partners (current and future) now have a accountability system to receive funding. This includes developing a memorandum of understanding, request for funding forms (grant application), and technical and financial reporting requirements.

The Transitional Support Project serves to protect the most vulnerable women leaving the shelter. In January 2021, the Shelter transitioned an indigenous adolescent from the Chihuahua Mountains, age 13, and her family. Her father raped her at the ages of 10-11 and as a result, she now has a child of her own. Due to her age, the severity of violence, and the charges against her father, her life remains at risk. The Transitional Support Project helped provide her with secure housing, hygiene supplies, and psychosocial support to help her live a violence free life for her family. She can continue to feel safe so that she may reach her goals.

Looking Ahead

- In 2022, we hope to continue expanding our work with the Centro de Protección Mujer a Mujer in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico and reach other shelters in Latin America as well.

- ISSF is still actively recruiting board members with the goal of hiring 1 more volunteer board officers, and four additional associate members.
- We are continuing to diversify our financial resources, including new giving platforms such as Tiltify, and grants.
- The Centro de Protección Mujer a Mujer still needs of several commodities to help women and families in the shelter including food, and cleaning and hygiene supplies. Additionally, COVID-19 Prevention supplies such as antibacterial wipes, soap, gloves, and facemasks are all needed.
- Mujer a Mujer serves over 50 women at any one time. The Transitional Support Project was only able to support 5 women currently transitioning out of the shelter in 2021. In addition to the supplies ISSF provided, these women also needed household items like beds, tables, and chairs for their new home. We hope to raise funds to support other women in the future and increase the funds provided.

Our work would not be possible without the generous support of our donors. We hope to continue supporting women and children affected by domestic violence in Latin America in 2022 and beyond.

Sincerely,

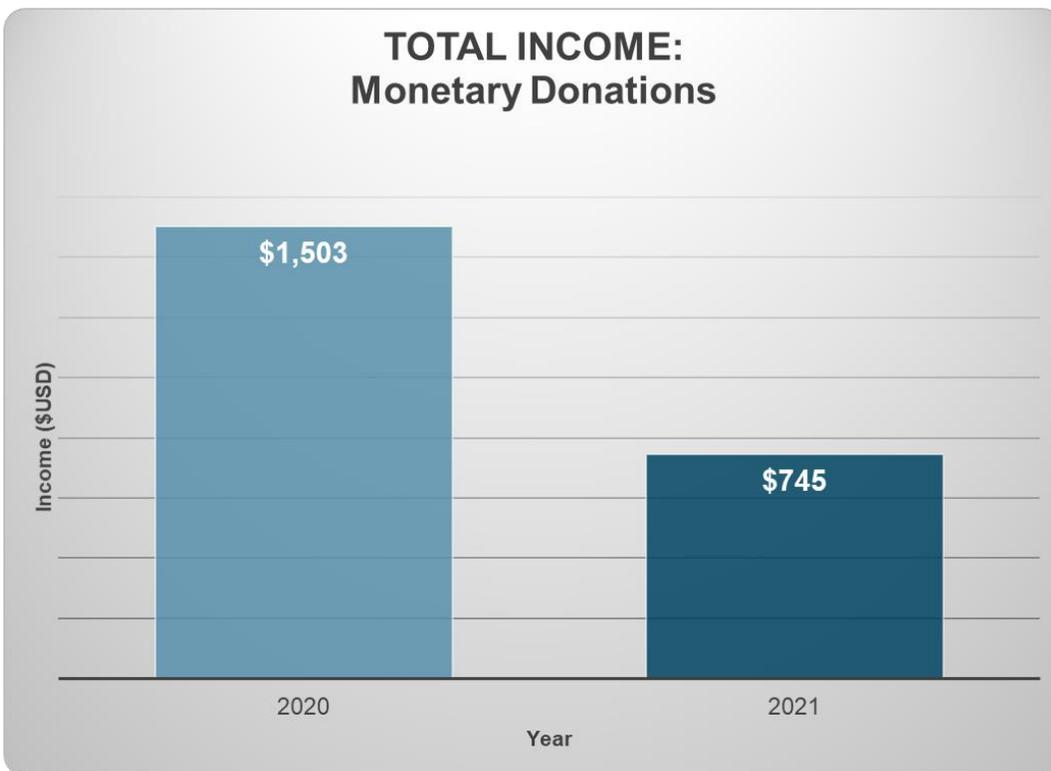


Patricia Gross, MPH, MSW
President of International Safe Shelter Foundation

ISSF FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2020-2021: INCOME AND EXPENDITURES

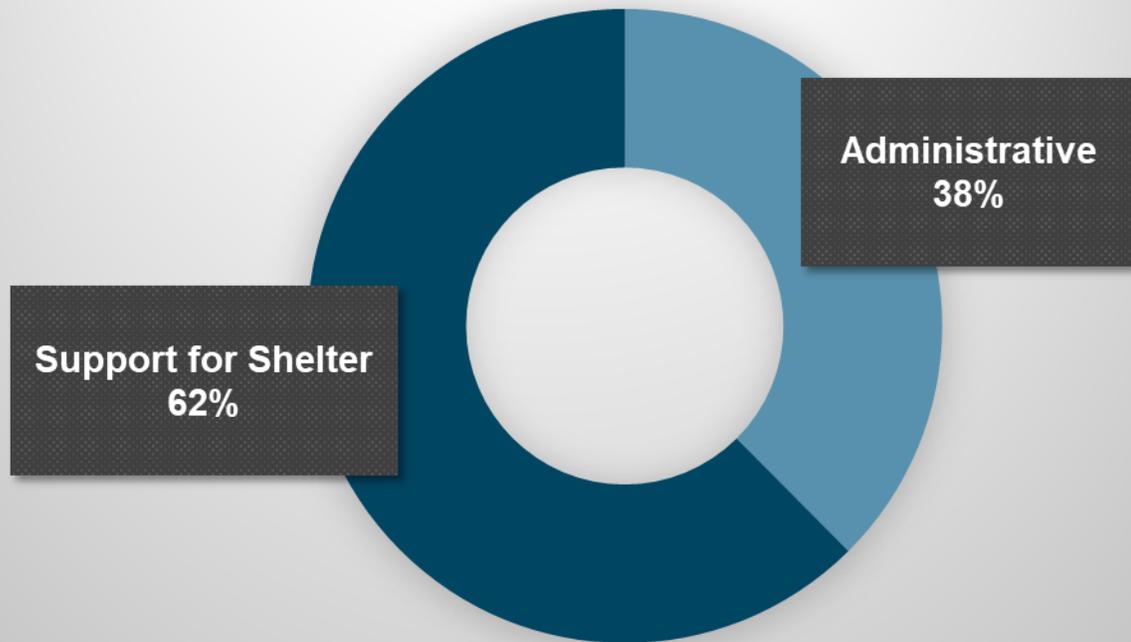
	2020	2021
INCOME		
Donations-Total*	\$ 1503	\$ 745
EXPENDITURES		
Administrative: Website, email, technology services	528	438
Shelter Support: Holiday Activity	102	
Transitional Support Project		1502
Expenditures-Total	\$ 630	\$ 1942

*Does not include in-kind donation values



	2020	2021
Total Income- Monetary	\$1,503	\$745

TOTAL EXPENDITURES 2020-2021



Total Expenditures	2020	2021	2020-2021
Administrative	528	438	\$966.00
Support for Shelter	102	1504	\$1,606.00
			\$2,572.00

Financial Summary Notes

- Administrative costs, overall, have exceeded the 70/30 rule that was implemented to guide spending for the organization. Costs have not remained constant as prices increased between 2020 and 2021 for website and Zoom services.
- Income expenditures do not include in-kind donations that were provided during the 2020-2021 period. For this reporting period, ISSF is not valuing in-kind donations to officially include in income reports. The importance of in-kind donations is relevant and contributes to the success and longevity of the organization.
- In-kind donations received during the 2020-2021 period included:
 - Spanish/English translation and interpretation services, to include reading, writing, and speaking
 - Website design and administration
 - Graphic design
 - Writing and editing services
 - Zoom services prior to creation of ISSF account in December 2020
 - Social media account maintenance
 - Financial accounting services
- Other minor monetary donations that could not be adequately accounted for were not included.
- Other minor expenses, such as monetary transfer fees, could not be adequately accounted for and were not included in expenditures.