

South Asia Women's Fund

**10 Years of
Resourcing
Women's Rights**

Annual Report 2014-15



Edited & Designed by: Deepthy Menon/InkScribe, New Delhi

Printed: Sarathi Enterprises, New Delhi,

Copyright: South Asia Women's Fund

Cover Photograph: Anisha Chugh/SAWF



Contents

The Chair's Message	04	Right to Safe and Secure Mobility	16
From the ED's Desk	05	Right to Physical Integrity and	
About SAWF	06	Decision making	18
Why Women's Funds	07	Legal Fellowship Programme	20
SAWF'S Journey - Over the Decade	08	Networking and Advocacy	24
Decoding our Mission	09	Capacity Building	26
Program Strategy	10	Resource Mobilisation	27
SAWF Grant Making at a Glance	11	Governance	28
Small Grants Programme	12	Advisors and SAWF Team	29
Seeding Networks & Collaborations	14	Auditor's Report	30



The Chair's Message

A decade of existence is a major landmark – it offers a point to pause, relive the journey and memories, take stock and plan for the challenges ahead. It's been ten years since South Asia Women's Fund began its journey to support the fight for rights of women in the region. In this last decade, we have stayed true to our commitment, supporting over 136 initiatives through grants and fellowships across 5 countries. Our grant-making has already crossed the \$1million mark! Every year, we have catalysed changes – small and large that have been significant in the struggle towards ensuring rights for all. Today, we can see the 'ripple effect' of the initiatives we have supported. This has strengthened our commitment to support frontline groups, across remote geographies and difficult areas, to amplify their voices nationally and regionally. This journey has been an incredible effort by the SAWF team. Tulika and her team continue to ensure that our vision and mission are strictly adhered to and every goal that is set is not just met but surpassed! The Board of South Asia Women's Fund has always been a vociferously active one – they continue to be our biggest strengths and steadfast guides – Suneeta Dhar, Aisha Gazdar, Tahera Yasmin, Sonaali Wijeratne, Sepali Kottegoda and Gagan Sethi - your contributions continue to enhance the quality of our work year after year.

As I look back, I am grateful to all those who have walked with us- our Founding chairperson, Savitri Goonasekere, directors, T. Someswaran, Sapana Malla Pradhan, Rukshanda Naz, Sara Hossain, Kumudini Samuels, and Rita Thapa; the Phase I team, led by Dr. Hiranthi Wijemanne; and those who have and continue to advise us and be our sounding board: Jael Silliman, Niti Saxena, Jana Rumminger, Kishali Pinto, Geeta Ramaseshan, to name just a few!

Sunila and Sithie, I am sure you are smiling at us even now!

A big round of thanks is also due to Vanita Mukherjee and Kavita Ramdas of Ford Foundation, Florence Holst-Roness, Katharina Samara-Wickrama and Paromita Chowdhury of Oak Foundation, Nicky McIntyre and Annie Hillar from Mama Cash, Rini Banerjee and Zaynab Nawaz from the Foundation for a Just Society, Claudia Bollwinkel of Filia, Jenny Hodgson and Avila Kilmurray of the Global Fund for Community Foundations, ICCO and Human Dignity Foundation – your contribution and support have helped fund courageous initiatives across South Asia. A special word of thanks also to Prospera- the International Network of Women's Funds, led by Emilienne De Leon Aulina and Lucia Carrera; the Asian Network of Women's Funds, and the International Human Rights Funders Group. This journey has been robust and adventurous due to the support and challenges of our guides: Srilatha Batlivala, Sushma Raman, Hameeda Hossain, Khushi Kabir, Kamla Bhasin, Shanthi Dairiam, Vimala Ramachandran, Alejandra Sarda-Chandiramani, Sunita Bhuyan and Presenjit Bhattacharya. Over the years, we have received consistent support from our company secretary, Asanka Abeysekera and Central Corporate and Consultancy Services (CCCS) and our auditors, KPMG.

In this decadal year, we are rejuvenating our philanthropic mission, by launching an initiative to catalyse indigenous resources toward women's rights work. We, the Board of Directors have envisioned an ambitious future to ensure philanthropy for women's rights work at national levels through institutions similar to South Asia Women's Fund. The critical process towards achieving this has commenced with the setting up of an entity in India, which will support local initiatives through local resources. Our efforts to encourage local fundraising and tap into CSR allocations in India will be an exciting testing ground – we hope to replicate this initiative across other countries in South Asia too.

Priya Paul
Chairman



From the ED's Desk

South Asia Women's Fund is ten years old! A decade that has taught us that working in South Asia can be particularly tricky – there are distinct geographical markings around the nature of work one can undertake. Sometimes, it is the politics of the region, often it is physical access, and at other times the prevailing socio-cultural ethos. However, we have stayed unwavering on our mandate to provide access to resources to women and women's groups that have limited access. As a lawyer, and now a donor, I believe one of my main roles is to support the mitigation of risks, and ensure sustainable access to resources to enable women's rights work.

Today, women rights' activism is at critical crossroads – at this moment, there is massive backlash against those championing the rights of marginalized people, and targeted attacks on women's rights activists and advocates. These tough times however reveal a silver lining – in the face of opposition, women are demonstrating greater courage and innovativeness. Not an inch of ground is being frittered away, for each inch gained has been hard fought.

As a result, we have seen some inspiring changes in the last decade. Changes that reflect in the changing trends in women rights activism today. It is no longer confined to what has traditionally been their fighting space – like say campaigns against violence or improved participation in public processes. Today, their voices ring loud on other critical issues too – from climate change to urban planning and use of technology for bringing about change. There are interesting collaborations between a wide range of actors championing global concerns. And the key to this change is an ideology steeped in feminist understanding of rights, cutting across themes and issues. The two-pronged approach of mainstreaming women's rights work across issues while maintaining a specific focus on

women's rights work has been a strategy that has yielded wonderful results, leading to multiplicity of not just voices but leadership too.

When I look back, there is a sense of pride that we have stayed true to not just the vision that moved the founders to create the South Asia Women's Fund but also to the timely advice received when we restructured! There is also a deep sense of humility and realisation that we are unable to bridge the yawning gap between resources and need – nevertheless, we march hand in hand with the women we support, committed to the cause. Our inspiration remain the quiet (and some loud), strong and resilient women of the region - smiling women, with their glittering eyes, committed to themselves, to find a freer, more autonomous world and self. These are women, who despite facing considerable risk, fulfil roles which others opt out of or do not voluntarily choose.

Most institutions in the regions we work in do not favour funding or supporting women working in the informal sectors that are largely ignored, stigmatised and rendered invisible in the mainstream. Sometime, the women- determined to move forward, align their voices to a stronger one, at other times, they link with other smaller voices to build a collective of "cannot be ignored". These women motivate me immensely to seek out resources for their fight so that it does not wither away. This is how we hope to push the envelope of acceptance and the fight for their rights.

In the years to come, we resolve to focus harder on areas that face difficulties in accessing resources. We will strive to ensure that we overcome indifference and foster collective thinking and dialogues with everyone to find solution to their concerns; and help realize their rights!

Tulika Srivastava
Executive Director

About South Asian Women's Fund

South Asia Women's Fund (SAWF), founded in 2004 is a regional women's fund committed to supporting women led interventions to enhance and strengthen access to women's human rights and countering violations thereof. Our core mandate is to support women's rights groups and activists in the South Asia region, across Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and India. We are currently focused on creating a regional mandate, which is located in national realities. The fund was set up to counter the non-availability of resources for women's rights work in the region. SAWF's intervention strategy underscores the following principles: (a) advancing a Rights Based Approach; (b) promoting women's voices and strengthening leadership; and (c) forging new directions with reinforced networks.

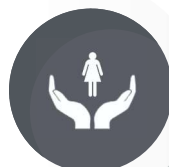
Over the last decade, SAWF has supported over 136 initiatives at the sub-national level in the region, ensuring human rights for a diverse cross-section of women. In addition to making critical fiscal resources available, we have helped make technical resources available for both women's rights groups and donors. This is how we enable fundamental shifts in perspectives and understanding on women's issues. We also foster effective programme designing and process oriented strategies, which nurtures not only the implementers but the constituencies (i.e. women at the community level) as well.

Promote and support leadership of women - at all levels, particularly those who belong to marginalized communities and from rural, disadvantaged backgrounds



Enable a strong understanding of human rights and rights based approaches among women's activists and women's organizations in the region, which will inform programmatic intervention and implementation

Facilitate greater cross learning and exchange between women's organizations and activists in the region.



Influence social justice philanthropy especially focusing on raising resources for women's rights work in the region

Why Women's Funds

Women's Funds understand where resources are required to fund women's rights work to ensure long-term sustainable changes.



SAWF's Journey Over the Decade

South Asia Women's Fund was founded in 2004, out of the realisation that women's rights work in the region has little to no funding. There was a need felt for an institution, rooted in women's rights movement to promote social justice philanthropy for women's rights work. The initial grant of \$1 million to initiate work came from Ford Foundation, made as a part of its celebration of 50 years of philanthropic work in South Asia.



2003

Consultations began to set up a regional Women's fund.



New Board Formed, Sri Lanka's Savitri Goonesekere becomes founding chairperson and Hiranthi Wijemanne appointed as Executive Director



2004

Comes into existence as a women's regional fund



40

Grants disbursed between 2004 - 2007

2007 - 2010



Review undertaken of mandate. A new board takes over with Priya Paul as Chairperson. Tulika Srivastava as Executive Director.

2014

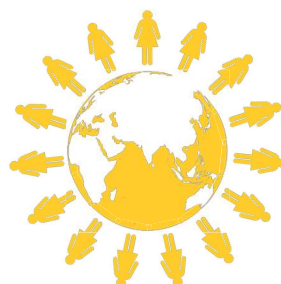


2010

Increase in grant portfolio

96

Initiatives Funded



\$1 Million
Grants Disbursed

Decoding Our Mission - Walking the Talk

Securing basic rights for women requires access to resources. Our work over the decade shows us that changed approaches to delivering aid have had a major impact on the funding available to women's rights organisations. Recent studies like Rights, Shares and Claims (SAWF 2012) and Where is the money for Women's Rights (AWID 2011) reveal that a large number of smaller organizations are struggling to secure funds and sustain their core activities. This would appear ironic as there has been a significant increase in funding, and objectives of gender equality and mainstreaming has risen in priority on the international development agenda.

South Asia Women's Fund hopes to be an important catalyst and actor advocating social justice philanthropy in mobilising resources. We seek to challenge the traditional charity/welfare driven model replacing it with the language of rights.

SAWF's approach to addressing critical and relevant issues that face the women's movement in the region can be represented as a cyclical process that revolves around challenging existing notions that maintain status quo by enabling dialogue and interventions creating an environment of better understanding of women's rights from a rights-based and regional perspective.



Our Programme Strategy

SAWF's programme strategy clearly reflects its mandate of strengthening women's movement and promoting social justice philanthropy in the region. Our goals of staying firmly rooted in the core principles of advancing a rights-based approach, promoting women's voices, forging new directions and reinforcing networks reflect in our strategy – both thematically and in outreach.

1. Grant-Making

Responsive and strategic grant-making enables effective impact and change while addressing the needs of individuals and women's organisations. We try to build a greater understanding of the said needs, opportunities, and resources. We also provide critical financial support to women's rights activists and groups to strengthen social justice work on the ground and enhances the realization of women's rights in the region.

2. Resource Mobilisation

Ensure women's movements in the region have sustainable access to resources to undertake their work. We also help address their priorities through fundraising from both individual and institutional donors, to encourage greater share of resources for women's rights work in the region.

3. Networking Advocacy

Engaging in relevant networking initiatives to make its presence felt in the region. Simultaneously, we also reach out to local groups in different countries to gain an in-depth country-specific understanding of women's rights.

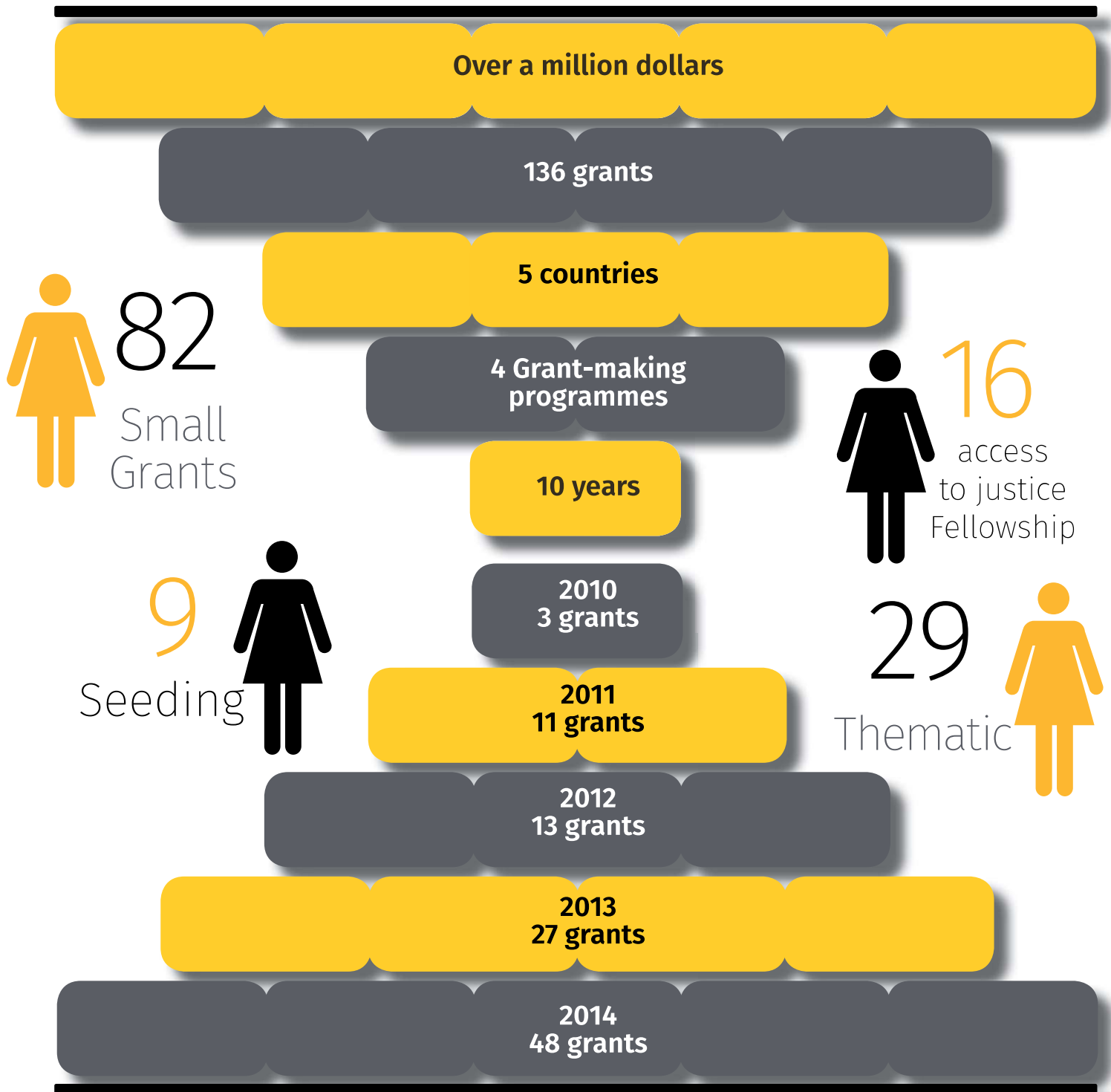
4. Capacity Building and Knowledge tools

Building knowledge and resource tools and providing training and expertise to women's organisations on rights based approaches. This helps us further the objective of strengthening the women's rights movement and their struggle for justice and equality. We also enable them to successfully negotiate with various stakeholders.

5. Learning and Accountability

Monitoring and evaluation of grantees' work at frequent intervals as an effective developmental tool for reporting and ensuring accountability. This helps ensure: i) timely and effective implementation of programmes ii) proper utilisation of funds, iii) much needed technical support for fellows iv) enhancement of learning and accountability for both SAWF and the fellows.

Our Grant Making at a Glance: Over the Decade 2004-2015



Our 5 year growth with new strategic direction

SAWF Grant-making Small Grants Programme

Small Grant programmes is a key theme that SAWF has been trying to address through various interventions - institutional support, collaborations, travel (to conferences, meetings, workshops), and research on a wide cross section of topics that highlight the issue of women's human rights. This programme encapsulates SAWF's vision of providing access to small women's organisation and young women's activists to financial and technical resources for carrying out crucial work at grassroots level.



12

GRANTS GIVEN ACROSS
BANGLADESH, NEPAL,
INDIA, PAKISTAN AND SRI
LANKA

Our Grantees

Shakti Milan Samaj	Nepal
Dabindu Collective	Sri Lanka
Sakhi Women's Resource Centre_Anweshi	India
Voices of Women Media _Women Lead	Nepal
Legal Aid and Consultancy Centre	Nepal
Sahayatri Samaj	Nepal
Ayesha Khan	Pakistan
Asha Abeysekera	Sri Lanka
Kantha Shakti	Sri Lanka
Secchasebi Bohumukhi	
Mohila Samaj Kalyan Samitty	Bangladesh
Leadership Exposure Visit	India
Radio Nari Awaz	Nepal



Foundation for a Just Society affirms the vital role South Asia Women's Fund plays in ensuring resources, research, and collaborations that advance women's human rights in the region. As a key partner for our work in Nepal, SAWF demonstrates a commitment to strengthening young women's leadership and ensuring that global philanthropy adequately meets the needs of the entire women's rights ecosystem in South Asia.

Foundation for a Just Society



In Pakistan, SAWF disbursed a small grant towards the research of a book documenting and analysing 30 years of the history of women's rights movement in Pakistan. This grant aimed to ensure that women's voices find a space to articulate their rights and offer a fillip to women's rights movement at large.

SAWF's Showcase

Ayesha Khan, Small Grants Programme Grantee, (2014)

A senior researcher at the Collective for Social Science Research based in Karachi, Pakistan, Ayesha works on a range of issues - gender and development, social policy and conflict, refugee issues in the region.

Documenting women's activism: Ayesha's project will span over thirty years of women's activism in Pakistan- beginning in 1983 exploring the status of women's struggles during the military dictatorship of Gen. Zia-ul-Haq to the current situation that contextualised Pakistan's struggle to define the role Islam should play in the affairs of the state.

This research could prove to be a seminal work that to push advocacy forward on various fronts: i) Seek the state to renew its pledge to protect the rights of its (female) citizens ii) Contribute to the growing body of literature about women's movement building internationally. Iii) Become a critical resource for students, rights activists, researchers, and general readers to delve deeper into the contemporary history of women's movements and their struggle to achieve their rights under extremely difficult circumstances.



SAWF's contribution: Ayesha says SAWF's support underlines the significance of South Asian partnerships, which offered her intellectual, moral support necessary for this research. She says such support ensures the existence of organisations rooted in local experiences and helps sustain, develop and become visible.

Going ahead: Ayesha evaluates that the risks for championing women's rights work are higher in the present day. "Political participation and democracy are important to reclaim shrinking spaces and magnifying the voices of the movement." The only way to do so, she believes, "is to continue to document histories and narratives, keep those legacies alive and highlight the impact the movement was able to achieve."



This work will provide a broader insight into the history of feminist movement in Pakistan. More importantly, it will highlight the important work of movement building Pakistani women have been doing. At least, that is the hope.



SAWF Grant-making Seeding Networks & Collaborations

The new seeding grants offered by South Asia Women's Fund since 2013 supports three key aspects: i) Core and institutional support for new women-led initiatives, ii) Encourage collaborative programmes, III) Innovative interventions focusing on critical women's rights issues.



9

**SEEDING GRANTS GIVEN
TO AID GRASSROOT LEVEL
ACTIVISM IN BANGLADESH,
NEPAL AND INDIA**

These collaborations, both at the regional and national level, are pursued with an objective of providing space to diverse voices (from grassroots to national to regional) and forging strategies based on shared experiences. On the whole, we offer support and encouragement for increased participation of women's groups and voices across issues, within rights based framework.

Our Grantees

Ahar Aalo Society Aas_ Bangladesh Sex Workers' Network	Bangladesh
SIWP_Supporting People and Rebuilding Communities	Bangladesh
National Network of Sex Workers	India
Srijan Foundationa_JATN	India
Partners for Law in Development	India
Point of View	India
India Foundation for the Arts	India
National Alliance of Women Human Rights Defenders	Nepal
Women and Media Collective	Sri Lanka



In Bangladesh, one of the seeding grants was offered to SPARC (Supporting people and Rebuilding Communities), an organisation working in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). It is one of the most backward and marginalised regions in the country.

SAWF's Showcase

Muktashree Chakma, Founder, Supporting People and Rebuilding Communities

A key member of the women's rights movement of Bangladesh, Muktashree is an award winning journalist and gender activist, who works towards securing the rights of indigenous communities in the CHT region.

Building SPARC: SPARC is a women-led organisation focusing on women's issues in the geographically challenging CHT region of Bangladesh. Muktashree began SPARC with a few activists, lawyers and journalists, to support and aid women's based initiatives that are strongly grounded in rights-based and feminist principles. They focus on women and girls, who are survivors of sexual and/or physical violence and are currently raising awareness and providing physical and psychological support to survivors.

SAWF's contribution: Muktashree says the SAWF grant helped set up an office and make budgetary allocations towards supporting women survivors. Currently, 10 women survivors of sexual violence are being supported to access justice and fight the stigma they face within the community. Using additional grants received, SPARC conducts seminars with other women's rights organisations working in CHT to strengthen indigenous identities. They are also rehabilitating four women by offering them medical assistance, counselling services and training them in sewing and handicrafts and learning how to use vocational instruments.

Going Forward: SPARC hopes to increase the reporting of cases of violence against women that go unreported amid conflicts between various tribes. Women majorly end up in the crossfire of conflict, which affects their basic rights like the right to freedom and choice severely. SPARC hopes to integrate into a global network working towards securing the rights of women in remote, far-flung areas. They are hoping to attract international experts who are willing to work with the women from CHT.



SAWF Grant-making

Right to Safe and Secure Mobility

It is a key thematic grant that aims to ensure every woman has the right to move free and safe and has access to better livelihood opportunities without stigma, violence and exploitation. South Asia Women's Fund supports challenging existing notions centred on treating women as powerless victims, and enables an understanding of this issue from a rights-based perspective. This grant portfolio supports initiatives that challenge the traditional rescue-rehabilitation-repatriation model of the anti-trafficking discourse through positive interventions that amplify the voices and choices of women. The complex issue of trafficking cannot be studied separately without viewing it also from the prism of a woman's right to mobility, safety and livelihood. There is a need for a regional discourse that also accounts for the choices and experiences of women, and upholds and recognises their right to safe and secure movement.



12

GRANTS GIVEN TO AMPLIFY
VOICES AND CHOICES OF
WOMEN

Our Grantees

Bangladeshi Ovhibashi Mohila Sramik Association	Bangladesh
Partners in Population Development	Bangladesh
Parichiti	India
Action Group of Young Women with Disabilities	India
Chotanagpur Sanskritik Sangh	India
Pwescr_Kranti	India
Women's Rehabilitation Centre	Nepal
Women Forum for Women in Nepal	Nepal
Right to Mobility Network	Nepal
Media and Advocacy Group	Nepal
Nepal Disabled Women's Association	Nepal
Pourakhi	Nepal



Oak Foundation supports the South Asia Women's Fund because we believe its work is critical to growing and sustaining collective action for women and girls in the region. It is investing financial resources, assets and skills in local women's organizations to do to do specific work on safe migration in the region. We are convinced that with SAWF's strategic support to the women's organisations it partners with, together their actions will be transformative in the individual lives of the women it reaches and more broadly across communities.

The Oak Foundation



SAWF's Showcase

Gomawati (Srijana) Pun, Founding Chairperson, Women Forum for Women in Nepal (WOFOWON)

A Nepali human right activist, trade union leader, Srijana has been working with women working in informal and entertainment sectors since 2006. She is also the treasurer of Women Human Right Defenders, a network spread across all 75 districts of Nepal.



Building WOFOWON: WOFOWON helps women working in largely invisibilised environments like dance restaurants, massage parlours, open and cabin restaurants, to unite to raise and address the issues they face in the course of their work. WOFOWON was a result of Srijana's own experiences as a singer in a duet restaurant. The stigma, humiliation and lack of access to basic rights that they face inspired Srijana to turn activist. Since inception, WOFOWON has led several unprecedented organized movements of women working in the entertainment sector. With a current member strength of 344, they help women realise their inner power to understand their rights and raise voice against injustice committed. They also inspire women to live with dignity and respect.

SAWF's contribution: The grant under right to safe and secure mobility contributed to strengthening WOFOWON institutionally and offered programmatic guidance. Capacity building initiatives that were undertaken helped to strengthen survivors' voices. Over a period of three years, WOFOWON has seen a change in the attitudes of its members, especially in demanding their right to equal pay. Significant progress has also been made towards addressing violations faced by women and advocating for rights at institutional level for those working in these sectors. Through this intervention, SAWF has been strengthening the discourse on women's right to mobility and livelihood, while simultaneously also challenging the negative, patriarchal narrative of 'good woman' versus the 'bad' woman.

Going forward: As a rights activist, Srijana believes that the movement for women's human rights need to be more unified, scattered issues need to be brought under a synchronous umbrella. The invisible issues of sexuality needs to be highlighted in an effective manner.



Struggle is a very important teacher, some of the attitudes have been changing, and it makes me feel rather satisfied that some transformation is taking place. Creating an identity for the organization is an ongoing challenge. Support of organisations like South Asia Women's Fund is critical to this process.



SAWF Grant-making

Right to Physical Integrity and Decision Making: Building Young Women's Leadership

This is a critical thematic that seeks to address the issue of control over and violation of young women's bodies and voices in the region. Through grant-making, we support interventions that aim to create an enabling environment where women, especially young women, exercise and enjoy their rights, such as choosing and denying sexual relations, including marriage; as well as feel free to fulfil their aspirations free from coercions. SAWF works directly with activists, groups and organisations which are either lead by young women or work directly with young women and adolescent girls. Through this theme, SAWF aspires to contribute to the building of a rich and diverse young feminist leadership in South Asia.



9

GRANTS GIVEN TO AMPLIFY
VOICES AND CHOICES OF
WOMEN

Our Grantees

Nepal Indigenous Women's Forum	Nepal
Diya Welfare Society	India
Feminist Approach to Technology	India
Nazariya_Rituparna Borah	India
Samerth Trust	India
Swadhikar_All India Dalit Adhikar Mahila Manch	India
MITNI	Nepal
MWDRF_Vasuki and Cayathri	Sri Lanka
WRC_Radio Udaypur	Nepal



SAWF'S Showcase

Renu Arya, Fellow at Feminist Approach to Technology (FAT)

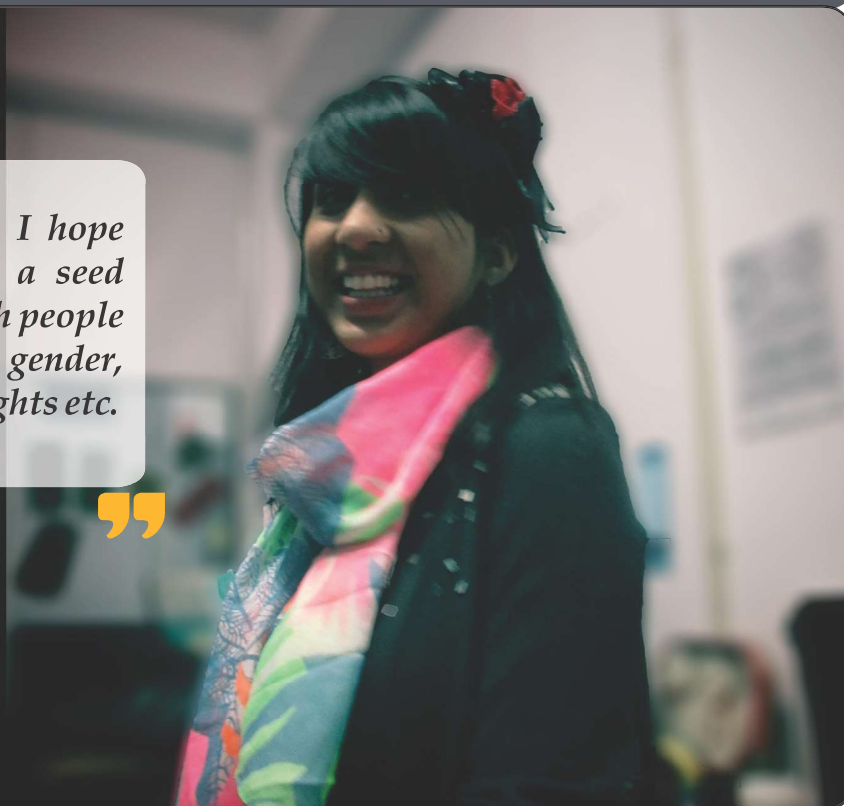
A young feminist, Renu is working on using theatre as a medium of expression to help young girls like herself rise above extreme vulnerability and violent family environments to make a niche of their own. She works on issues like gender inequality and the impact of gender and discrimination on girls.

The Feminists of FAT: FAT is a grantee partner of SAWF that advocates gender-neutral access to use of technology and other social media tools, and encourages awareness, interest and participation of women. The grant, which includes the fellowship awarded to Renu aims to strengthen capacities and build leadership within the young team at FAT. At FAT, Renu not only learnt computer skills but it also became her 'safe space', a zone that offered her different choices of learning and afforded her growth opportunities denied at home. Today, Renu uses street theatre across four communities in Delhi to raise awareness among young girls about impact of gender and various forms of discrimination against girls.

Going Ahead: Once the fellowship is concluded, Renu hopes to remain associated with FAT and its work among vulnerable girls. She dreams of forming an active theatre group, which becomes a critical space to push the agenda of gender-sensitisation forward. She wants to continue using the media skills learned at FAT for connecting with the larger society.



Through my work, I hope to, at least, plant a seed and provoke enough people to think around gender, patriarchy, girls' rights etc.



Legal Fellowship Programme

It is a key thematic grant that aims to ensure every woman has the right to move free and safe and has access to better livelihood opportunities without stigma, violence and exploitation. South Asia Women's Fund supports challenging existing notions centred on treating women as powerless victims, and enables an understanding of this issue from a rights-based perspective. This grant portfolio supports initiatives that challenge the traditional rescue-rehabilitation-repatriation model of the anti-trafficking discourse through positive interventions that amplify the voices and choices of women. The complex issue of trafficking cannot be studied separately without viewing it also from the prism of a woman's right to mobility, safety and livelihood. There is a need for a regional discourse that also accounts for the choices and experiences of women, and upholds and recognises their right to safe and secure movement.

1

Facilitate access to justice for women across South Asia

2

Offer regional networking opportunities to women lawyers working at the primary courts in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

3

The Programme provide financial and technical support

The Fellowship Programme helps legal fellows provide pro-bono legal services to women in some of the region's most challenging districts. Apart from ensuring access to services, it is also a platform for regional action to advance women's rights and for conducting cutting-edge action research on barriers to accessing justice for women at the primary court level.



6

GRANTS GIVEN TO AMPLIFY VOICES AND CHOICES OF WOMEN

SAWF'S Showcase

Urmila, Lawyer practising at the primary court in Karvi (Uttar Pradesh) for 9 years

A self-made woman, Urmila completed her education and training as a lawyer while supporting her child as a divorced single mother. She is currently the only woman Dalit lawyer practising law in Chitrakoot. She offers pro bono legal services to women on a wide range of issues—domestic violence, divorce, property related issues, criminal cases and sexual violence cases.

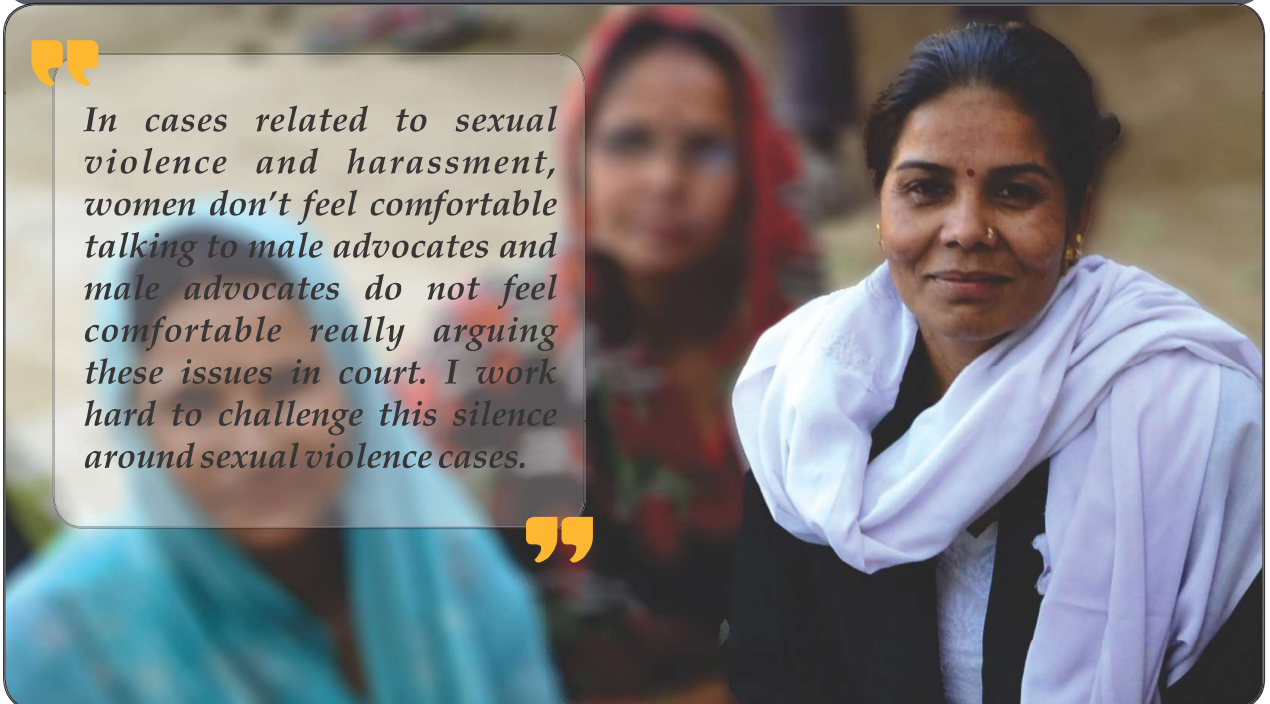
Urmila's struggle: Urmila credits her personal struggle as the critical influence that turned her into a lawyer specialising in women's rights cases. Married off as a child, she became a mother when she was barely in her teenage years. She fled an abusive husband and family to raise her daughter as a single mother. She completed her abandoned schooling and took up legal studies while working with women's organisations like Mahila Samakhya and Vananagana. Urmila today champions the need for women lawyers, who can challenge patriarchal court environments that are hostile to women, and ensure that women's rights are upheld.

Issues around accessing justice: Urmila says there are several barriers to women in accessing justice. Apart from little or no support from the families or shelter homes to seek refuge during court proceedings, they also have to fight to register cases with law enforcement authorities and brave long periods of court proceedings. Few find access to free legal aid and are often harassed by court officials. Urmila recounts how a judge once asked her client, 'Why don't you serve your husband like you are supposed to instead of trying to take maintenance.' She says there is a severe paucity of women judges, who are more empathetic to the complainant's predicament.

SAWF's contribution: The SAWF fellowship helped me free my mind. Today, I have the financial freedom to take women's cases that come to me—even if they cannot afford to pay me. The SAWF Legal Fellowship Programme broadened my knowledge and perspective and has supported me to take up pro-bono cases on behalf of women survivors of violence.



In cases related to sexual violence and harassment, women don't feel comfortable talking to male advocates and male advocates do not feel comfortable really arguing these issues in court. I work hard to challenge this silence around sexual violence cases.



Our Grantees

Bhuneshwari Devi	India
Romita Reang	India
Shah Farha	India
Deorani Kumari	India
Urmila	India
Priti Murmu	India
Indira Shreesh	Nepal
Prem Kumari	Nepal
Sandhya Sitoula	Nepal
Binita Nepali	Nepal
Kaushila Yogi	Nepal
Zara Tajwar	Pakistan
Kaldeen Rimziya	Sri Lanka
Safana Begum	Sri Lanka
Diana Florington	Sri Lanka



SAWF has done an amazing work supporting women and girls, especially in their program on gender violence. We need to continue supporting the existence and sustainability of women's funds since they are many times the unique or first source of funding for many women's organizations. The collaboration that SAWF brings in the Asia region is critical to work together in joint initiatives with the other women's funds of the Asia region.



Emilienne de León,
INWF Executive Director





Networking and Advocacy: Critical Spaces

SAWF constantly engages with relevant networking initiatives to reach out to groups, activists, practitioners, donors, and other women's funds in different countries. We strive to improve our understanding of the needs of women's rights movement, identify gaps, and collectively find solutions and resources to strengthen voices to push the women's rights agenda forward. The core objective is to forge new relationships, build on existing ones and construct a discourse that allows for a greater share of resources and accountability for securing women's rights.

Some highlights from the year gone by:

May 2014

The International Human Rights Funders Group (IHRFG's) visit to Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), between May 20- 22. Grantmakers were from 'emerging' countries like India, South Africa, Turkey, Mexico, and Brazil. SAWF presented at the session "The Culture of Giving, Human Rights Philanthropy, and Emerging Powers".



May-June 2014

The 2nd Asia Pacific Feminist Forum organised in Chiang Mai brought together around 350 feminists and women's rights advocates from across the Asia Pacific region. SAWF, along with AWID, Mama Cash, Global Fund for Women and Frieda discussed funding women's rights work at the session "Current Funding Trends and their Impact on the Future of Feminist "Movement Building".



July 2014

The Asian Network of Women's Funds (ANWF) regional meeting in Zanzibar, Tanzania created a proposal for funding for the collaboration, and to map potential funders. An Op-ed training conducted by the Op-ed Project helped participants draft opinion editorials to influence audiences.



August 2014

Global Greengrants, INWF, and Greengrants Alliance of Funds hosted a summit on 'Women and Climate Change' in Bali to bring together women's and environmental rights leaders from around the world to reflect on how to effectively support grassroots women's responses to climate change.



25

November 2014

SAWF led a panel on 'Women's Rights, Women's Voices: Building regional collaborations on the foundations of local realities' at People's SAARC Regional Convergence on 23rd November, in Nepal. The session focused on challenges faced by women's rights groups and the strategies to address them.



November 2014

A review meeting with grantee partners on sidelines of PSAARC Nepal, focused on strategies and discussing issues around sexuality and young feminist leadership. The review brought 18 young feminist partners from across the region to foster solidarity, reflection and collaboration.



November 2014

The Ford Foundation's "Ending Child Marriage conclave for partners at the Africa Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia helped gain insights on the work and building of a field of work on child marriage across different countries and regions.



February 2015

Urgent Action Fund's second South Asia Advisory meeting in Kathmandu brought together 30 women and trans-human rights activists from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan.



Capacity Building: At Sub-National, National and Regional level

SAWF actively works towards facilitating and providing training and expertise for our partners. We organised workshops on legal processes, perspective building, human rights based programming, documentation, and capacity building exercises. These workshops aims to create and support spaces for discussions and learning at the local, regional and national levels. These processes also encourage reflection on existing practices within different contexts and helps trigger change in the form of new shared values – a key step towards illuminating a new way forward.

Community Leadership Exposure Visit

Mamta Soni, an activist with Diya Welfare Society from Bundelkhand led a team of activists on an exposure visit to Lucknow on 30th and 31 October 2014. SAWF interacted with the group and organised two sharing and reflection sessions. The women activists spoke about how they worked on addressing violence against women and other violations faced by women in their villages. This visit was partly supported by SAWF as part of the leadership programme, which completes three years with SAWF's funding.

Legal fellows coming together in Kathmandu

A 5-day residential workshop, held for SAWF's legal fellows from 11-15th March at TEWA in Nepal, reviewed the work undertaken, and planned for building the programme for the coming year. The workshop was facilitated Geeta Ramaseshan, Niti Saxena and Shikha Bhattacharjee, along with SAWF ED Tulika Srivastava. The workshop reflected on the successes and challenges of the inaugural year of the programme, and charting new directions and the additional support that would be necessary to upscale the program. Discussions around learnings in the first year focussed on barriers to accessing justice through primary courts for women in the region.



Resource Mobilisation: Influencing Philanthropy

Fundraising is critical to ensure that women's movement in the region has sustainable access to resources to undertake work. We believe that philanthropic giving towards social justice could play a critical role in changing the global aid landscape. Committed financial resources and support to women's rights work remains a complex, uphill task. Potential individual and institutional donors need to be evangelised, informed and moved to action to ensure a true culture of rights can be nurtured and strengthened.

Since revamping our programme strategy, we have showcased several innovative resource mobilisation initiatives:



2011 - 12

Our first fundraiser in Colombo had performances by violinist Sunita Bhuyan and Elephant Foot, a percussion band from Sri Lanka. Women's rights activists, academicians mingled with the corporate sector creating new conversations and synergies.



2012 - 13

The annual fundraiser event 'Voices: Blurring the Boundaries' celebrated the spirit of womanhood with performances by Sunita Bhuyan and Sri Lankan tabla player, Peshala Manoj.



2013 - 14

The annual fundraiser evening showcased talks by Radhika Coomaraswamy (Fmr Under-Secretary General of United Nations & Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict) and women's rights activist, Prof. Sitralega Maunagaru.



2014 - 15

SAWF organised the first meeting of its Working Group on Resource Mobilization (WGRM), to review mobilisation work, draft strategy and articulate clear programmatic steps to ensure effective resource mobilisation over the next couple of years.



Governance

South Asia Women's Fund is governed by a regional board, 90% of which are women. The Board 2014-15 comprises of:

Priya Paul (Chairperson, Founding Director), India: the Chairperson of Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels, Ms. Paul is a recipient of the India Today Woman in Business Award for 2009-2010 and the FHRAI Hall of Fame 2010. In 2012, she was awarded the Padma Shri for her services to Trade & Industry by the President of India. More recently, she has been conferred with the prestigious Insignia of the Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Merite by the President of France in 2014.

Sepali Kottegoda (Member-Director) Sri Lanka: the Executive Director of the Women and Media Collective and Chair of Asia Pacific Women's Watch, Ms. Kottegoda has worked as an expert on the Sri Lanka National Committee on Women; National Plan of Action on Human Rights; National Plan of Action for Women, National Plan for Overseas Labour Migration; the ILO publication on Strengthening Grievance & Complaint Handling Mechanisms to Address Migrant Worker Grievances.

Gagan Sethi (Member-Director) India: is a renowned development practitioner, organisation development expert and a gender trainer. He has been instrumental in setting up several strategic organisations in the country, such as, Janvikas, Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan, Sahjeevan, Drishti, HID forum and Dalit Foundation among others.

Suneeta Dhar (Member, Founding Director) India: is a feminist activist, trainer and facilitator of change processes and currently heads JAGORI, a leading women's organisation in New Delhi. Active in the women's movement, Ms. Dhar has supported several grassroots initiatives and leadership development on women's rights, building bridges and alliances across diverse sectors.

Aisha Gazdar (Member-Director) Pakistan: is a celebrated documentary filmmaker. Her company Films d'Art has produced numerous films on social issues, including Another World is Possible, which references the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), in South Asia.

Sonaali Wijeratne (Member-Director) Sri Lanka: a Director with The Regent Group, an investment company based in Sri Lanka. She was also the founder of a Knowledge Process Outsourcing firm. She is also a member of many business chambers in Sri Lanka.

Tahera Yasmin (Member-Director) Bangladesh: has extensive experience in the field of development as a researcher and practitioner. She was Executive Director of Saptagram Nari Swanirvar Parishad, an NGO that worked for women's empowerment in rural Bangladesh, and has worked with Oxfam, (UK). Currently, Ms. Yasmin is working with GIZ as Senior Programme Advisor on programmes related to prison reform, justice reform and anti-corruption.

Legal Compliance

1. The Board of Directors do not receive any remuneration from South Asia Women's Fund. The directors are only reimbursed for travel, boarding and lodging during the board meetings.
2. The board had two physical meetings in the year 2014-15
3. All required submissions were made to the Registrar of Companies in Colombo, Sri Lanka
4. The AGM met and complied with all legal requirements including the required election of Board of Directors.

Advisors

Jael Silliman: Known for her work and commitment to human rights, Jael is currently supporting South Asia Women's Fund on grant-making and developing its strategic profile that would enhance its role in fulfilling its mandate more effectively.

Jana Rumminger: a human rights lawyer who is long-standing supported of SAWF. Her work with various regional and international institutions and movements such as IRAW Asia Pacific and Musawah, have built her expertise in supporting the implementation of universal standards at the domestic level for realisation of women's rights. Her affinity for and expertise in strategic documentation and implementing the rights based approach is of part of the architecture of SAWF as an institution.

Kishali Pinto-Jayawardene: a well-known human rights lawyer from Sri Lanka who has worked closely with the Asian Human Rights Commission on many issues relating to the protection and promotion of human rights in Sri Lanka as well as in Asia.

Sara Hossain: a lawyer practicing in the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, in the areas of constitutional, public interest and family law. She heads Bangladesh Legal Aid and Service Trust (BLAST) and is also a member of Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK).

SAWF Team

Tulika Srivastava, the Executive Director, is a human rights lawyer with extensive experience building and working with organizations and institutions dedicated to the realization of women's human rights. She is the founding member of AALI (Lucknow) and former executive director of IRAW AP.

Anisha Chugh, the Director of Programmes, has a MA in History from the University of Delhi and in Governance and Development from the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex (UK).

Prior to joining SAWF, Anisha worked with the Dalit Foundation, a philanthropic organization based in India.

Tehani Ariyaratne, Programme Officer, (Grant Making), has a BA in Psychology and Anthropology from Stonybrook University. Prior to joining SAWF, she worked as researcher at the Centre for Poverty Analysis in Sri Lanka.

Surbhi Mahajan, Consultant, (Communications and Impact Assessment), has a MA in History from JNU and in Development Studies from the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex (UK). Prior to joining SAWF, she worked with Make Every Woman Count (UK) and was a research consultant on a UNDP funded assessment study on Right to Information in India.

Vineeta Tewari, Administrator – Liaison Office, has a PGDBA in HR from SCDL, Pune, India and undertakes comprehensive management of the SAWF Liaison office in Lucknow, India, including legal and other compliances; and support to the Executive Director.

Dishani Malliyawadu, Finance and Accounts Manager, has a BSc. in Applied Accounting. She is a qualified Chartered Accountant and a finance professional with experience in corporate and non-profit finance management in both corporate and non-profit sector.

Ruvi Perera, Programme Administrator, has a BA in Business Administration and is currently pursuing her MA in Sociology at the University of Kelaniya (Sri Lanka). She has experience in a range of sectors including banking, media and research.

Priyanka Thiyagarajah: Finance and Administrative Officer, has a BA in Business Management from Buckinghamshire New University, with AAT qualification. She has experience in administration, accounts and HR management.

Auditor's Report



KPMG
(Chartered Accountants)
32A, Sir Mohamed Macan Markar Mawatha,
P. O. Box 186,
Colombo 00300,
Sri Lanka.

Tel : +94 - 11 542 6426
Fax : +94 - 11 244 5872
+94 - 11 244 6058
+94 - 11 254 1249
+94 - 11 230 7345
Internet : www.lk.kpmg.com

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

TO THE SHAREHOLDERS OF SOUTH ASIA WOMEN'S FUND

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of South Asia Women's Fund ("the Company"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 March 2015, and the statement of profit and loss, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flow for the year ended, and notes, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Board of Directors Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Board of Directors is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial that give a true and fair view in accordance with Sri Lanka Accounting Standards for Small and Medium Sized Entities ("SLFRS for SMEs"), and for such internal control as Management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Sri Lanka Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial statements that give a true and fair view in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Company as at March 31, 2015, and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Sri Lanka Accounting Standard for Small and Medium-Sized entities ("SLFRS for SMEs").



Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

As required by section 163 (2) of the Companies Act No. 07 of 2007, we state the following:

- a) The basis of opinion and scope and limitations of the audit are as stated above.
- b) In our opinion except as discussed in the opinion paragraph we have obtained all the information and explanations that were required for the audit and, as far as appears from our examination, proper accounting records have been kept by the Company and the financial statements of the Company, comply with the requirements of section 151 of the Companies Act.

A handwritten signature of 'KPMG' in black ink, written in a cursive style.

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
30 September 2015
Colombo

**SOUTH ASIA WOMEN'S FUND
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

As at 31 March,

		2015	2014
	Note	<u>Rs.</u>	<u>Rs.</u> (Restated)
Non current assets			
Property plant and equipment	2	328,596	279,044
Total non current assets		<u>328,596</u>	<u>279,044</u>
Current assets			
Investment in short term deposits	3	-	10,212,942
Other receivables	4	245,352	189,994
Cash and cash equivalents	5	65,465,016	60,228,163
Total current assets		<u>65,710,368</u>	<u>70,631,099</u>
Total assets		<u>66,038,964</u>	<u>70,910,143</u>
Funds and liabilities			
Funds			
Accumulated fund		10,831,236	18,959,480
Mama Cash	6	986,823	8,892,801
Ford foundation	7	8,130,300	7,132,507
Oak foundation	8	24,740,531	15,392,644
Foundation for just society	9	20,157,828	19,739,342
Global fund for women	10	650,950	-
		<u>65,497,668</u>	<u>70,116,774</u>
Current liabilities			
Accounts payable	11	421,070	175,095
Income tax payable	12	120,226	618,274
Total current liabilities		<u>541,296</u>	<u>793,369</u>
Total funds and liabilities		<u>66,038,964</u>	<u>70,910,143</u>

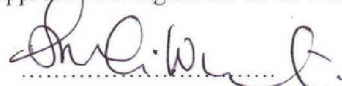
The financial statements are to be read in conjunction with the related notes, which form as an integral part of these financial statements of the Company.

I certify that these financial statements are prepared in compliance with the requirements of the Companies Act No. 07 of 2007.


.....
Finance and Accounts Manager

The Board of Directors is responsible for the preparation and presentation of these financial statements in accordance with SLFRS for SMEs.

Approved and signed for an on behalf of the Board of Directors.


.....
Director


.....
Director

Colombo
30 September 2015

	Note	Rs.	(Restated) Rs.
Income			
Utilization of funds			
-Mama Cash		8,704,774	-
-Foundation for a Just Society		27,160,175	-
-Ford Foundation		10,941,678	4,132,703
-Oak Foundation		16,141,497	13,124,739
-Human Dignity Foundation		779,177	-
-TEWA		-	293,410
Global fund		-	2,498,907
Institute of International Education		652,600	-
CCO		-	740,778
MONES		-	1,375,614
Willa		1,288,736	-
Donations		377,986	126,126
Fund raising events		-	154,500
Exchange gain		648,902	883,979
Interest income		640,583	39,447
Total income		67,336,108	23,370,203
Less: Expenditure			
Staff expenses	13	15,956,974	15,632,257
Utilization of funds	14	39,499,856	8,083,572
Exchange loss		73,143	-
Global fund refund		31,794	-
Cost of transport and foreign travel		5,056,689	3,726,718
Rent expenses		1,398,489	749,996
Secretarial fee		296,307	204,362
Office maintenance		107,046	123,728
Office expenses		844,862	332,590
Staff per-diem		279,395	307,406
Accommodation		1,166,118	1,758,578
Bank charges		625,740	690,629
Stationery		66,901	112,864
Depreciation		170,448	190,983
Telephone and e-mail charges		41,372	74,702
Meeting and conference		6,415,279	5,034,973
Postage and courier charges		-	7,156
Membership charges		78,504	78,450
Audit fee under provision		98,189	19,293
Audit fee		187,007	-
Expenses on fund raising event		-	683,014
Consultancy fee		1,794,588	2,417,586
Fees for NGO tax consultants		24,160	21,962
Professional fee - India		-	152,646
Publications		99,755	322,583

**SOUTH ASIA WOMEN'S FUND
STATEMENT OF PROFIT AND LOSS**

For the year ended 31 March,

		2015	2014
			(Restated)
	Note	<u>Rs.</u>	<u>Rs.</u>
Total expenses brought forward		75,344,126	41,825,074
Deficit before taxation		(8,008,018)	(18,454,871)
Income tax expense	15	120,226	618,274
Deficit for the year		<u>(8,128,244)</u>	<u>(19,073,145)</u>

The financial statements are to be read in conjunction with the related notes, which form as an integral part of these financial statements of the Company.



South Asia Women's Fund is grateful to the Ford Foundation, Oak Foundation, Mama Cash and Foundation for A Just Society for their support and solidarity.

HEAD OFFICE

16/6 A, Mohideen Terrace,
Ward Place,
Colombo 07, Sri Lanka

LIAISON OFFICE

No. 904, Empereur Building,
Dr . Baijnath Road, New
Hyderabad Colony,
Lucknow - 226006,
Uttar Pradesh, India