



# R E S I L I E N C E

Trust for Indigenous  
Culture and Health

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



## About this Report

This annual report was written to help us to reflect on what happened at TICAH during the twelve months of 2020, and to share the highlights and some of the accomplishments of our efforts during this year with our partners, donors, friends, and others who might be interested. Less than three months into the year, COVID changed our ways of working—but it did not change our commitment to finding ways to create the conditions for health by acknowledging the ways in which our health is shaped by our cultures, our relationships, our rights, our confidence, our values, and our knowledge. We trust this report will feel like a testimony to the resilience of our vision and our communities.



**TICAH**  
Trust for Indigenous  
Culture and Health

# 2020 at a Glance

## HIV MANAGEMENT, NUTRITION AND HERBS

- Healthy Household - WhatsApp and Text Message Nutrition Trainings
- Healthy Seeds Calendar Outreach - Youth take TICAH Calendar into Their Communities

## ART FOR CONNECTION AND HEALING

- Art with Heart - Resilience is Everywhere: The Resilience Installation/Movement

## INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND CULTURE

- Medicine Wheel - Traditional Music Goes Online  
- Samburu Women tackle Community

## SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

- Our Bodies, Our Choices - School SRHR Clubs turn into Community Clubs
- MAMA - Restricted Movement leads to SRHR Hotline Demand
- Aunty Jane Hotline - Expanded Options to Communicate with Aunty Jane  
- Shining an Urgent Light on Teen Pregnancy





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## Message From The Executive Director



2020 was quite a year. Stepping into a pandemic from zero experience of a natural disaster of this magnitude was a challenge to say the least. In many ways, we feel grateful to have been going through these trials with the rest of the world.

The pandemic has shown us the best and the worst of humanity - the coming together to help one another vs. the tearing apart based on race, class, access, gender. We've seen the extremes of support and love and the extremes of injustice and discrimination. The pandemic has held a mirror up to the world like nothing else in recent history has before it, and what we are seeing is that our systems and our consciousness needs to change.

We need gender equality. We need to learn from our past. We need to be able to care for and educate our children. We need access to safe and reliable contraception and reproductive services. We need to be able to recognise that mental health is a critical part of overall health. We need equitable access to the internet. We need to support our arts practises. We need to embrace indigenous plant medicine knowledge. We need to reevaluate our values. We need racial equality. We need to be able to access healthy foods and clean water. We need holistic health care that considers the whole person, environment, mind, emotions, access, and all.

Despite all that “we need,” there is a resilience that we have witnessed over the past year and an opportunity to shift old, out of touch thinking with new, practical, inclusive and just practises. While the first few months of the pandemic seemed to throw the entire world into a holding pattern, families needed to find ways of making things work. Communities were forced to adapt, to change, to experiment, to find ways of moving forward while the world waited.

We saw this in the informal settlements of Nairobi, where TICAH works, as community members set up washing stations and other local protocols to curb the spread of the virus. We saw how quickly kanga and kitenge masks came into the Kenyan market, followed by larger companies shifting to make surgical masks. We saw how quickly people responded with money and food to ease the dire situation within informal communities as jobless families faced starvation. We supported artists to come out of their studios and homes to public spaces to create and share their work and to interact with communities in new ways. We joined fellow activists to demand for comprehensive sexual education when thousands of young girls got pregnant. We opened our herbal medicine discussions and trainings to the public as the interest in herbal medicine and indigenous knowledge grew. We continued to reach out and engage our communities, our families, our friends, our partners to make sure they were ok and to support one another through these times.

The pandemic isn't over and neither are the challenges that have been exacerbated by it, but as an advocate for and practitioner of culture and holistic health, TICAH has been working hard for the health and wellness of communities and we still have a ways to go. We hope you will find this report of the highlights of 2020 useful and interesting. As we are always interested in partnerships, please do reach out to us at the email address below should you wish to partner or support our work.

Stay safe, stay healthy, stay happy.

Thank you,  
Jedidah Maina  
[jmaina@ticahealth.org](mailto:jmaina@ticahealth.org)



## Thoughts From The Founding Director

As the Founding Director and Chair of the Board of Trustees, I have been amazed at the resilience of TICAH and the communities we serve. What a tumultuous time! The Board and myself have watched the creativity of the staff and the community as they listen to and adjust work to address changing needs and experiences, to show up for one another when the world seems to turn the other way, to raise voices together to fight for the rights and values we continue to hold dear, to create in ways that no one expected in order to inspire and motivate.



We are grateful to the foundations, individuals and partner organisations who have continued to support culture and holistic health hand in hand with TICAH throughout 2020 and into the new year. We are hopeful that with this pandemic there is a changing tide towards a greater humanity where we learn from our traditions, our creativity, from one another, and from our challenges and mistakes towards a more just, equitable, peaceful, beautiful, tolerant and sustainable world.

Thank you for being with us on this journey.

With Heart,  
**Mary Ann Burris**  
Founding Director





# Our Team



**Back Row (L to R):** Peter Otieno, Vitalice Ochieng, Gideon Chirchir, Suzanne Wambua, Mickreen Adhiambo, Gloria Anniva, Fanis Inganga, Carol Ngala, Martin Odhiambo, Jeremiah Musyoka, Joseph Kirrinkol

**Front Row (L to R):** Prisca Karachia, Phonsina Archane, Sheilah Warindi, Liz Okumu, Jedidah Maina, Mercy Oongo, Diana Moreka, Mary Elias Akoth

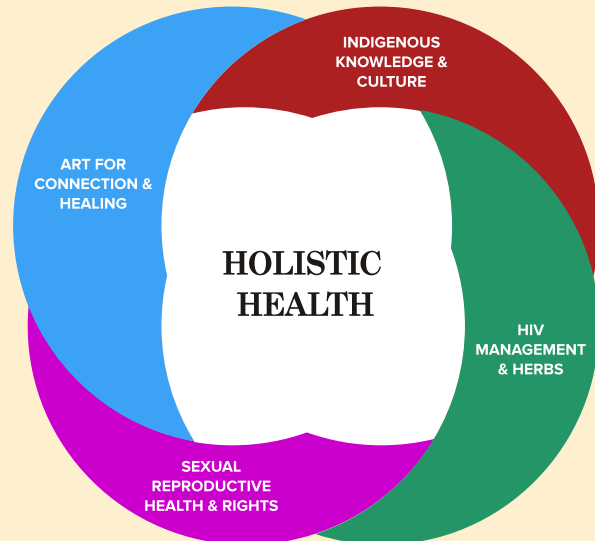


# About TICA H



The Trust for Indigenous Culture and Health (TICA H) believes in holistic health and culture. We believe that culture shapes everything and that it is a marker of a healthy community. We believe we experience good health first in our body, spirit and mind then within our relationships, households and communities. Our definition of health also recognizes the links between health, values and culture, the role of art in communication and healing, access to quality health information & services and the power of herbs and nutrition in overall wellness.

Our work is done through four integrated programs:



# How We Work

The way we work is similar across all our programs:



## 2020 Program Highlights



### HIV MANAGEMENT, NUTRITION AND HERBS

Working with households to prevent illness and stay healthy by teaching practical, affordable and sustainable practices by focusing on food and herbal remedies. This body of work includes the Healthy Households Program working with families in informal settlements and the Healthy Seeds Calendar Outreach that trains teachers, clubs, clinics and others how to use the TICAH calendar as a tool to discuss positive values, history, rights and herbal medicine.



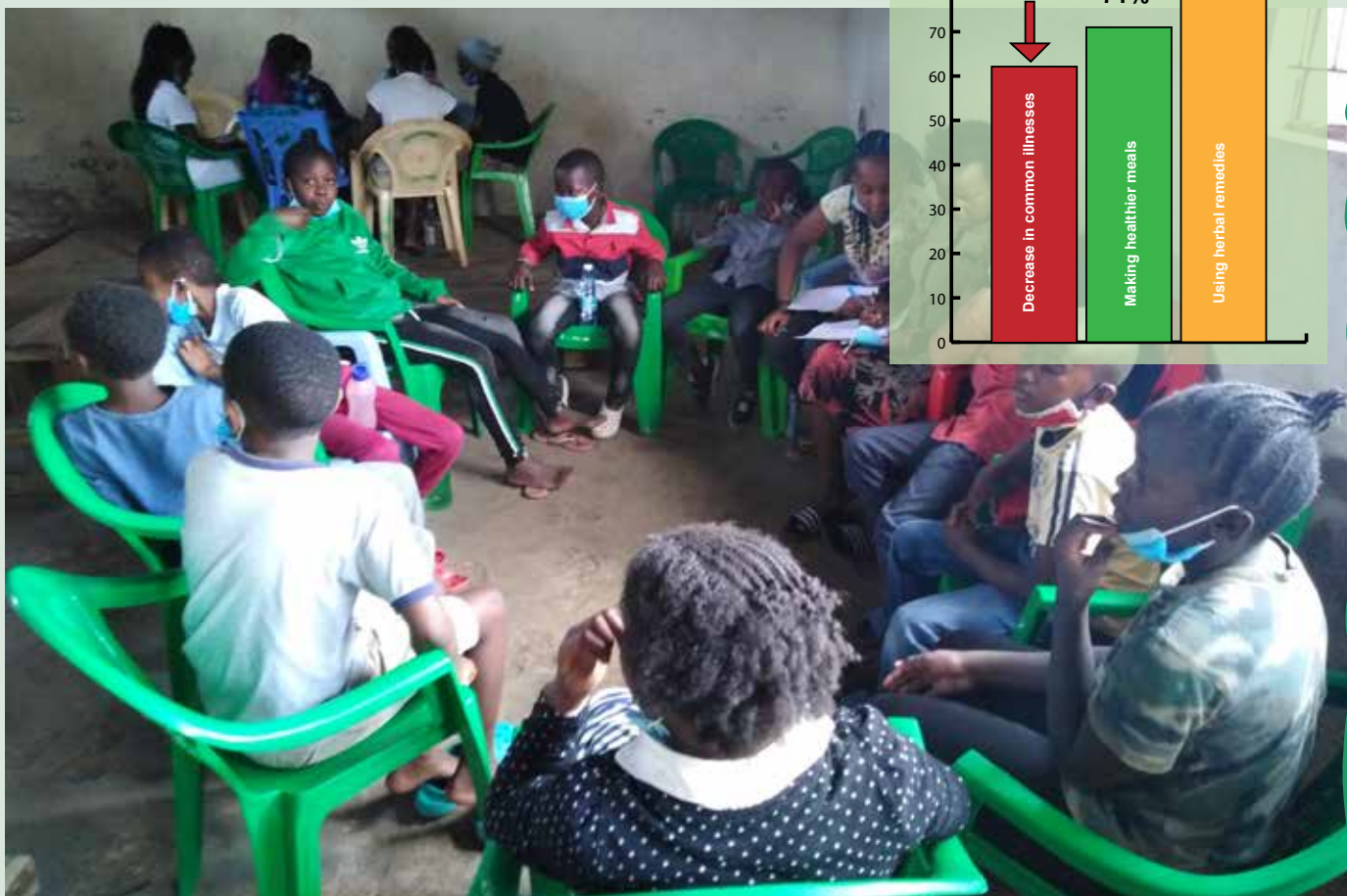
#### REACH

- **3,000** copies of second edition “Using Our Traditions”
- **7,830** Healthy Household beneficiaries
- **55** schools calendar program
- **300** children community calendar program





### HIGHLIGHTS



### Healthy Household

#### WhatsApp and Text Message Trainings

With communities locked down and community meetings barred, Healthy Household took to text message and WhatsApp to continue to train and converse with our communities in the slums of Nairobi. Together we talked about the use of food and herbal remedies to boost our immunity and strengthen our respiratory systems; caring for our mental health through managing stress and anxiety; and how to manage challenging situations like loss of income and the lockdowns. A total of 2,000 community members in four informal settlements actively participated. The groups discussed the different plants that can help during the pandemic, such as artemisia for immune boosting and eucalyptus for coughs. Understanding the importance of staying at home and maintaining hygiene to stop the spread of COVID, we also had discussions about eating healthy. Though times have been difficult for most of the community members we encouraged that everyone try to eat food that prevents and treats common illnesses. Traditional vegetables like kunde, amaranth, black nightshade, pumpkin leaves and wild spinach are some of the foods that we discussed as they have powerful anti-inflammatory and pro health components.

### Healthy Seeds Calendar Outreach

#### Youth take TICA H Calendars into Their Communities

Before the pandemic hit, we were able to work with 55 schools and thousands of young people. When the pandemic arrived and the schools closed, we took the calendar work into the community where young people organised themselves to continue the conversations. We managed to reach 300 children in four communities. Young people have shown how resilient and creative they are as some organised activities to inspire and motivate one another. We also partnered with small libraries where young people took the initiative to host conversations (using the TICA H calendar) on education, relationships, and drug abuse. With the TICA H calendar we've seen a creativity and motivation within the young people that we work with that transcended the work we've done in schools.





## ART FOR CONNECTION AND HEALING

Working with artists to ensure that the arts thrive, can contribute to society and can open communication about difficult topics, heal from trauma and advocate for change. This body of work includes Art with Heart, which works with artists to connect across age sets and practices and connects arts to justice and healing and Childrens Art, working with children in informal settlements to support emotional healing and coping with stress and life challenges.



### REACH

- **130+** artworks created for Resilience Installation
- Mental health workshop with artists
- **70+** involved in #lockdownchallenge
- **256** reach of art research
- **45** participants of Childrens Art





### HIGHLIGHT

#### Resilience is Everywhere

In May 2020, TICAH's Art with Heart program organized a social distance residency with 46 artists. We sent canvas, paints, and other materials to the artists' homes. The theme for the residency was "Resilience is Everywhere." The 135 paintings and sculptures that were created were then assembled together into a 3 X 11 meter installation called the Resilience Installation. The art is a combination of COVID-related work (images of masks, coronaviruses, and social distancing), reflections on community and resilience (families hugging, people working, people praying together) and meditations on beauty (portraits, abstracts, nature).

On 1 June 2020, the Resilience Installation started its Nairobi tour. The installation has been hosted at the National Archives, Waterfront Mall, Thika Road Mall, Galleria, Lunga Lunga and The Hub. The Resilience Installation has evolved from a beautiful piece of art to a beautiful stage and home to performance, mobile art studios and exhibitions and mobile art classes. It's connecting artists to the public and to opportunities for work in ways that TICAH had not anticipated. Nyerere Michael had this reflection, "It was nice going around malls, explaining to people about how we artists are trying to be resilient. Some people I talked to asked about my other work and I was able to sell six paintings and get a client. In town and Lunga Lunga, people thought we were promoting or selling things, but when we told them it wasn't like that they said it was nice work and to keep on doing what we are doing." Its message of resilience and strength continues to connect with audiences.

The partners who TICAH has worked with to host the installation have also found meaningful connections between their work and the Resilience Installation. Humphrey Otieno the Liaison Officer of the Safer Nairobi Initiative who helped bring the work to the CBD said that the installation fit well with the initiatives mandate to work with young people, connect with the public and activate public spaces. "The artists who came, and those that played the drums were fantastic. The combination of the installation and the live art creation... Very powerful." Mr. Otieno enthusiastically shared images and the story of the Resilience Installation with colleagues in government. "The future is bright [for public art]. I shared with the council of governors who also wanted the artists to paint their facilities and create more murals. There's no need for boring walls that say nothing. How do we get speaking walls?"

At the Hub Mall in Karen, Derrick Ngokonyo, Assistant Marketing Manager/Events Manager had this to say, "This year has been tough for everyone, but for us we want to spread the message that even during this time we can pull through and that there is hope for a brighter future. We may be affected during this pandemic but we won't slow down or stop working towards the goals we have."

What began as a tiny attempt to ameliorate the ravages of COVID has taken on a life of its own, clearing the path for more to come.







## INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND CULTURE

The role of indigenous knowledge and culture in holistic health and solving community challenges. This body of work includes the Medicine Wheel Program.

### REACH

- **25** elders discussed the pandemic through a cultural and historical perspective
- **360** participated in plant medicine discussions
- **80+** virtual plant medicine reach
- **29** traditional musicians celebrate their music
- **268** indigenous women addressed community challenges





### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Medicine Wheel

##### Traditional Music Goes Online

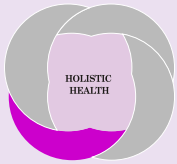
We continued to celebrate music from Siaya, Bungoma, Kwale and Kilifi counties with a focus on three traditional instruments from these areas (the nyatiti, litungu and kayamba). We started the year with a gathering of 29 traditional musicians and instrument makers to deepen our conversation on the three instruments. The group shared knowledge on cultural functions of the three instruments with respect to mourning, praying and celebrating.

When the pandemic arrived many artists turned to social media to continue to connect with their audiences, but many traditional musicians didn't know how to go about this. TICAH carried out a capacity building workshop for traditional musicians to enable them to set up social media accounts and popularize their music online. During the training, they opened YouTube channels. They recorded videos from their phones and uploaded them. They were excited to be able to stay connected during lockdown and to be able to reach a wider audience than before.

#### Samburu Women tackle Community Challenges

Maa speaking indigenous women's groups asked TICAH to help host two women-led community meetings in order to discuss nutrition and HIV. Through values clarification exercises the participants learned about the myths and facts on HIV and nutrition. Together the women discussed many related topics such as community stigma, self-stigma, the importance of good nutrition, medication, early marriages, female genital mutilation (FGM), early pregnancies, unsafe abortion, and the lack of support from family members.

These deep conversations tackled many contemporary issues of living positively while also incorporating positive traditional practices that can be useful to overcome some of these challenges. Within the Maa culture are amazing foods and herbs to help improve health and prevent illnesses such as blood mixed with fermented or fresh milk and many indigenous plants that continue to grow within the Samburu environment. Together, indigenous women are finding a stronger voice to advocate for the health of themselves and the children they raise; together they are finding solutions to challenges through culture and through camaraderie.



## SEXUAL, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

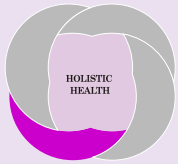
Encouraging more honest, healthy and informed approaches to sexual life for all ages where rights and choices are respected. Within this body of work is our Adolescent and Youth SRHR program, the MAMA Network of SRHR advocates across Africa and Aunty Jane SRHR Toll free Hotline.



### REACH

- **5,000+** “No Glove, No Love” reach
- **1,369** University students reached through WhatsApp
- **70,000+** Social Media and Community Outreach
- **25** Lawmakers advocating for SRHR policies





## SEXUAL, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Our Bodies, Our Choices

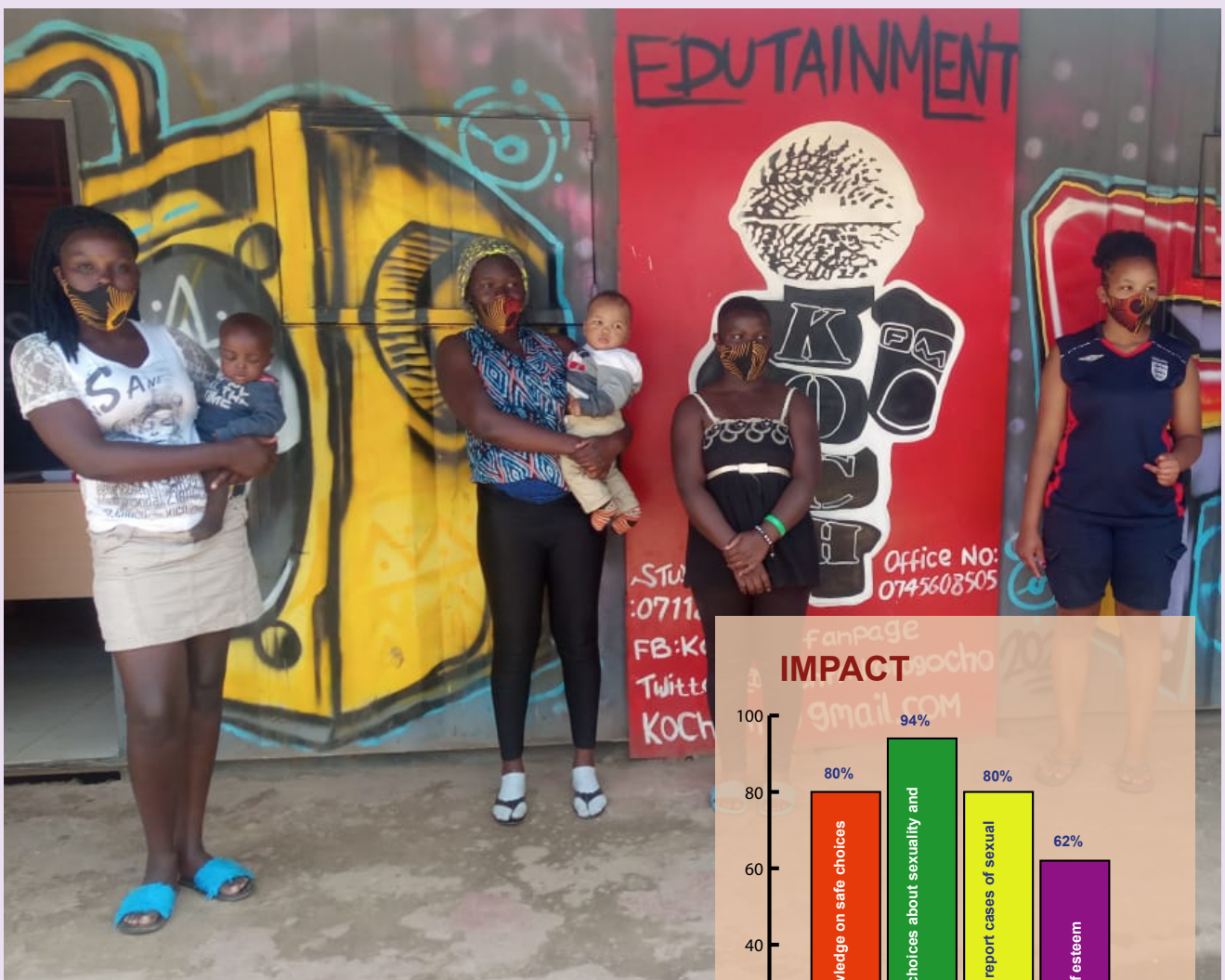
##### School Clubs turn into Community Clubs

40 school club sessions were held, reaching 300 adolescents, before the pandemic closed schools for the rest of the year. We reached an additional 240 adolescents in their communities adhering to safety guidelines. During the sessions, most students shared how difficult it was to make healthy decisions, "It is sometimes difficult to live by those nice values when you live in slums," shared one student. The outreach saw 94% of the club members demonstrating knowledge on the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) topics covered, 42% demonstrating increase in their self-esteem, and 10% of the participants taking up leadership positions in their

communities. One of the girls was appointed as the adolescents' representative in the community's pandemic response committee.



Mercy (19), one of our former club members, joined university in September 2019. She had barely adjusted to university life when the pandemic closed schools and she was forced home. She created a safe space for young girls in her community to talk about SRHR. Mercy said, "It is a girls' empowerment group of 21 young girls. There were things happening in Kibera, like early pregnancy, and I thought I could utilize the skills and information I got from my high school programme to help."





## SEXUAL, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS



### MAMA Network

#### Restricted Movement leads to Hotline Demand

The pandemic reduced access to sexual and reproductive health services. MAMA member countries reported increases in costs while also there were shortages of available commodities and services. This combined with COVID restrictions made things challenging. In DRC, MAMA beneficiaries were forced to travel to Burundi to access services. In Liberia, a young woman was denied post-abortion services because healthcare providers did not see it as a priority. MAMA partners on the ground took action. The lack of access to services bred a great need for reliable and safe information and for hotlines to be established to bridge the gap. We supported the launch of 11 hotlines, with eight launched during the pandemic. All hotline training and mentorship transitioned to be fully online. Participants were from Kenya, Liberia, Congo Brazzaville, DRC Congo, Nigeria, South Africa, and the Gambia. We also supported over 20 organizations across the continent through capacity building, small grants, program grants, and mentorship. To facilitate access to resources, we translated our materials to three additional languages.

### REACH

- **42** organisations in 16 countries
- **8** new hotlines in 8 countries launched
- **34,887** calls across all hotlines
- **\$63,000** disbursed to members
- **Materials translated into 3 languages**





## SEXUAL, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

### AUNTY JANE Hotline

#### Expanded Options to Communicate with Aunty Jane

The Aunty Jane hotline was created in 2012 to provide reliable and safe information about sexual and reproductive health. While the whole world suffered greatly from the pandemic, women and girls suffered double with vulnerability to unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, increased gender based violence and lack of access to sexual reproductive health information and services. On September 28 2020, we launched the revamped auntyjane.org website. We have seen over 2,800 visitors to the new site since its launch. On our new website there is a chat box, a connection to WhatsApp and other functions, giving young women more avenues to ask questions and get accurate information. Have you visited our website yet? Check it out!

[www.auntyjane.org](http://www.auntyjane.org)

#### Shining an Urgent Light on Teen Pregnancy

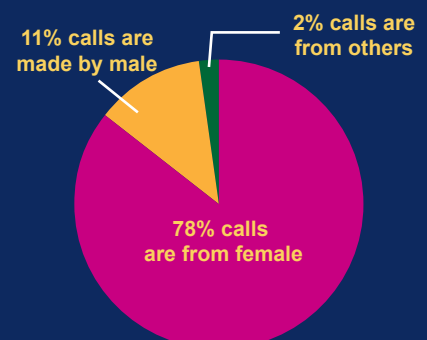
We ran an online campaign to bring attention to the increase in teenage pregnancies during the pandemic.

We engaged Facebook users to share a profile badge dubbed I STAND FOR ENDING TEENAGE PREGNANCIES IN KENYA (#EndTeenPregnanciesKE) to create awareness of the challenges and risks of Kenyan girls. The sad facts were that during the pandemic of 2020 reports came out that one out of five teenage girls were either going to become pregnant or have a child by the age of 18 with one of the counties in Kenya reporting over 4,000 school girls getting pregnant during the first three months into the pandemic. The facebook campaign was to advocate for better SRHR support of and access to services for young women as well as for comprehensive sexual education (CSE) to be implemented in schools.



### REACH

- **1,100** referrals made
- Hotline reached across Africa, Asia and North America
- Extended hours, seven days a week
- Increased calls from outside Nairobi, including 13% of the calls coming from the Rift Valley, 10% from Central, and 6 % from Nyanza.









# 2020 Financial and Administration Report

As with most of the rest of the world, TICAHealth's staff started working remotely from home in 2020. With this change, the team had to reorganise and think creatively about how to best support one another and our communities from afar. We put in place many supportive projects to help with productivity and stress management: mental health counselling sessions, computer purchase program, connection to internet support, and transportation support. We took our regular staff meetings to zoom and incorporated fun energisers and a round robin facilitation tactic. As a team, we built upon our online communities to reach more people and to use different and new online platforms to engage and discuss pressing issues.

2020 was also the year that we took on building our external communications capacity. Working with a communications consultant, we developed our online newsletter, created a new strategy for communications, published op-eds, got our work featured in local and international media outlets, and worked on revamping our website and one-pagers. We are really proud of all the work the whole team has poured into better communicating our work with the world. To sign up for our newsletter, please check out [ticahealth.org](http://ticahealth.org).

## TICAHealth 2020

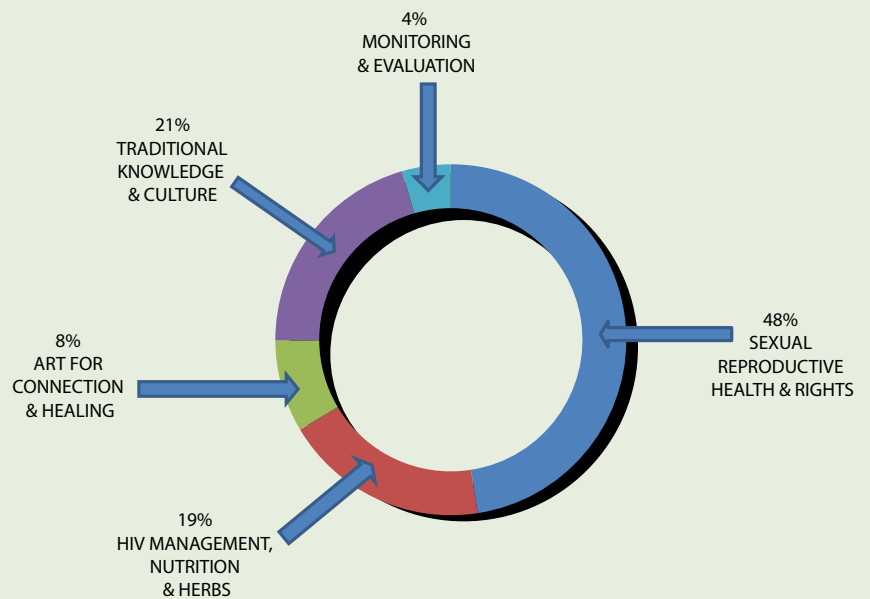
### REVENUE (USD)

1,431,079.93

### EXPENSES (USD)

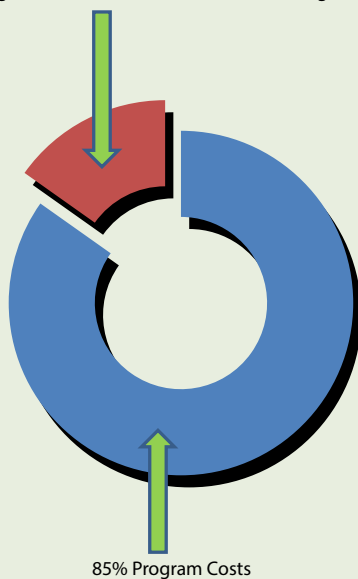
1,016,816.72

### THE PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN BY PROGRAM

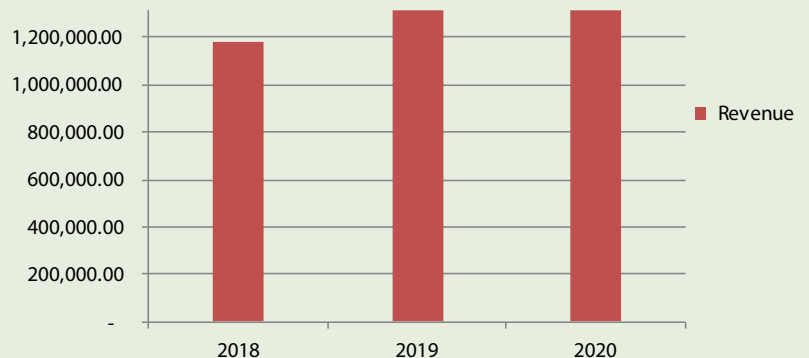


### TICAHealth EXPENSES

15 % Management, Communications & Fundraising



### REVENUE 2018-2020



# Where We're Heading Next

## HIV MANAGEMENT, NUTRITION AND HERBS

**Cascade Support Groups** - Supporting our graduates to take the information and resources from Healthy Households into their communities

**Early Childhood Development and Daycare Centre Support** - Helping child care workers learn how to identify common illnesses, use food and herbs to treat and prevent disease and how to prepare nutritious and age appropriate meals for children at a low cost.

**Online Herbal Medicine Training** - Taking our knowledge of herbal medicine and connections to herbalists to the masses to connect people to natural and safe ways of preventing and treating common illnesses.



## INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND CULTURE

**Women's Indigenous Power** - Bringing women together to discuss how to use indigenous ways of women exerting power to solve contemporary challenges.

**Kenyan Indigenous Medicines** - Supporting plant medicine traditional elders and expert herbalists to connect with younger generations to conserve plants and share knowledge.





# Where We're Heading Next

## ART FOR CONNECTION AND HEALING

**Nairobi as a Public Art Hub** - TICA is on a mission, starting in 2021, to help transform Nairobi into a hub for public art and murals by supporting the creation of 20 large scale public murals or installations over the next 2 years.

**Mental and Emotional Resilience Program** - A new program to support the mental and emotional resilience of all Kenyans through a lens of culture, creativity, story and holistic health.

**Childrens Art Program** - Supporting young children living in informal settlements through art and movement. We are excited to launch the newly revamped program in 2021.



## SEXUAL, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS



**Advocacy** - Engaging policy makers at the county level in an effort to advocate for the implementation of the Standards and Guidelines at the county level.

**Aunty Jane Hotline** - Champions network - two champions in each region across the country who will work to connect the hotline to their community through mapping youth friendly facilities, awareness creation, local media and schools/ universities.

**Adolescent & Schools Program** - Physical and virtual safe spaces – Promote frank and honest conversations sparking both personal and collective action in response to SRHR needs.

**MAMA - MAMA University** - An interactive online platform to strengthen the capacity of MAMA members around the networks' strategies.



**TICAH**  
Trust for Indigenous  
Culture and Health



Like our pages Facebook  
**TICAH**  
**OurBodiesOurChoices**  
**Aunty Jane Hotline**  
**DreamKona**



Stay Social on Twitter pages  
**@TICAH\_KE**  
**@YourAuntyJane**



**TICAH.KE**  
**DreamKona.Ke**  
**YourAuntyJane**

## To Learn More And Get Involved

To learn more about TICAH and our upcoming work, please contact us at [listening@ticahealth.org](mailto:listening@ticahealth.org). We value listening and partnerships and would love to hear from you on your ideas and thoughts for improving the health and culture of Kenya and beyond.

Our website is [www.ticahealth.org](http://www.ticahealth.org).  
Ph 254 (0) 710272175.

Our address is PO Box 667-00502, 136E  
Windy Ridge, Karen, Nairobi, Kenya.

Our work wouldn't be possible without all of you. Thank you for being with us through a difficult year and for continuing to prioritize culture and health. We'll need your help to grow the work and to make the next steps happen to their fullest impact. Please consider making a donation today. Asanteni sana.