



PSI-EUROPE

ANNUAL REPORT

2023

FOREWORD

"We cannot be lulled into a sense of complacency. We are going in the right direction, but we cannot take our eyes off the destination – a destination where financial barriers do not impede progress, where technology can be the catalyst for sustainability, and the ability to affordably access essential equipment is not a stumbling block, but a stepping stone toward a resilient future." These are the words of Barbados' Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley on the climate crisis response at COP28.

Having lived and worked in the Caribbean, I've seen the challenges small island countries like Barbados are facing. Mottley's leadership in the face of climate change has made her an icon, calling attention to the environmental and financial threats faced by small and vulnerable countries like hers and holding rich nations to account to help poor countries recover from disasters and adapt to global warming. Her plans to reform the World Bank and IMF, with their high interest rates for poor countries and austerity measures that compromise these countries' ability to meet the basic needs of their citizens, are an example of her ambition to reshape the entire global economic system, while relying on the solidarity of the rich world.

Solidarity is what the world needs, but it seems scarce right now. 2023 witnessed significant gains for right-wing parties across Europe, and in many countries, corresponding cuts in international cooperation. At the time of writing this report, announcements from European nations, including the Netherlands, Germany and France signal a significant shift in the allocation of development assistance (ODA). This is happening against the background of a mounting backlash on gender equality, LGBTQI+ rights, and sexual and reproductive rights—including the effect and global echoes of repealing Roe vs Wade in 2022—and rising levels of poverty and inequality that leaves us far from reaching the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

While this context is dispiriting, last year was also characterized by determination: our determination to seek and create opportunities for the PSI network and the people it works with. As a result of our multi-year engagement, we managed to solidify our partnership with Agence Française du Développement (AFD), which has been at the forefront of bilateral investments in menstrual health (MH) in the past years. PSI-Europe initiated the creation of a MH consortium with Fòs Feminista (former International Planned Parenthood Federation Western Hemisphere Region), France-based Equipop (former Equilibres & Population) and Nepal-based grassroot network Global South

Coalition for Dignified Menstruation (GSCDM). This consortium was selected to execute AFD's largest MH grant to date and operate as an intermediate fund to support the efforts of feminist civil society organisations and social enterprises in the MH space in nine countries in the African, South (East) Asian and Central American regions. This project does not only give PSI-Europe an opportunity to further share its expertise in MH with the wider community of practice, but also to shift resources directly to local groups who are best placed to close menstrual equity gaps and build experience in small and participatory grant making. More on MH, we also joined the Period Positive Workplace initiative to champion menstrual well-being in workplaces and to get the private sector on board in supporting not just a period-positive workplace but also set an example in fostering menstrual equity globally, in a world in which the role of the private sector cannot be overlooked.

We were also energized by the establishment of the Dutch Global Health hub and, on behalf of the PSI network, joined its three communities of practice, working to seek collaboration and share experience and expertise in health systems strengthening, pandemic preparedness and climate & health. In an uncertain political climate, a determination to collaborate with other organisations and actors is more important than ever to stand united for the values and solidarity we believe in. Last year, we also embarked on the development of a new strategy, looking back at our successes and challenges and at the opportunities and threats ahead of us. We critically examined our history and our role in a changing world and development landscape, including the role of colonialism and neo-colonialism and identified ways in which we have succeeded and failed so far in including, amplifying and leading with the voices, knowledge and experiences of PSI's consumers. Perspectives from programme partners and external and internal stakeholders will help us translate this introspection into a concrete theory of change, which will be launched in 2024. A theory of change that should offer the courage and determination to drive change in uncertain times in the years ahead of us, and which will be grounded in a strong sense of solidarity with the rest of the world. In the words of the honourable Prime Minister Mottley: *"Fairness and togetherness are needed to bring about peace, love and prosperity in this world."*

Odette Hekster

Managing Director, PSI-Europe

Odette Hekster



ABOUT PSI-EUROPE

We build support for under-invested health issues to bridge the health equity gap and make it easier for all people to lead healthier lives and plan the families they desire.

As the European representative of the PSI network, we collaborate with partner organizations, research institutes, companies, and government donors across Europe to transform health together for the pressing health needs of people in countries in 'the Global South'.

We work with and for underrepresented groups to elevate unseen and under-funded health priorities to the global health agenda. We do this through generating and sharing evidence on these priorities, engaging with (advocacy) partners, funders and policymakers; and advising on policy and funding strategies—both within and beyond the PSI network. By leveraging and connecting European stakeholders with PSI's extensive network of 8,000 local PSI staff and partner organisations in over 40 countries, we are the link that can turn those strategies into reality.

A focus on women's health in our advocacy work

As pioneers and leading advocates for Menstrual Health (MH) integration within Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), PSI-Europe has successfully rallied partners and stakeholders to support this cause. Our efforts have generated compelling evidence and attracted donor attention to MH. Building on these successes, we are now expanding our focus to other underserved health issues impacting women.

We believe that no woman should suffer from reproductive health issues due to systemic failures. PSI-Europe is committed to enhancing women's health by amplifying PSI's person-markets-systems approach to addressing neglected areas in women's reproductive health.



Impact of Investment in Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) on Socio-Economic Well-Being
Research Brief - Education Impact
December 2023

Impact of Investment in Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) on Socio-Economic Well-Being
Research Brief - Health Impact
December 2023

Impact of Investment in Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) on Socio-Economic Well-Being
Research Brief - Economic Impact
December 2023

2023 SPOTLIGHT

GENERATING EVIDENCE & SHINING THE LIGHT ON MENSTRUAL HEALTH

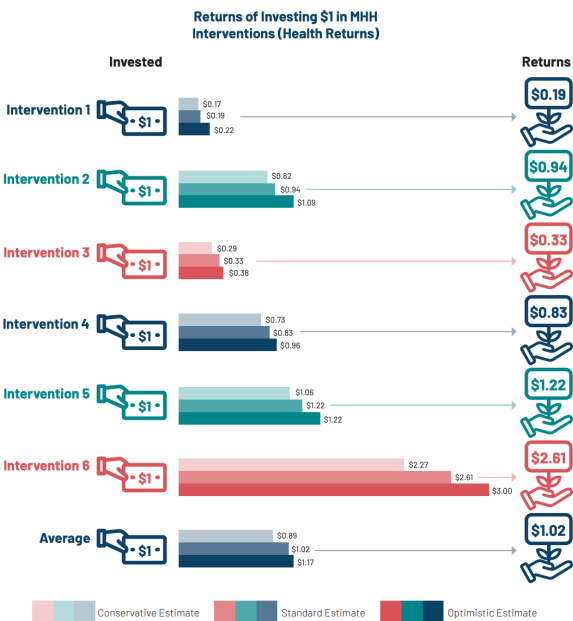
Women's health issues are often sidelined as non-urgent due to a "lack of robust evidence." Despite making up half the population, their needs are seen as niche, leading to under-investment in health, care and research. This creates a vicious cycle, making it impossible to measure and improve what remains overlooked.

Menstrual health often fails to attract the attention of funders and policymakers. Although the menstrual cycle is crucial to women's health—not only affecting fertility but also serving as a predictor of broader health issues—it remains overlooked in philanthropic efforts. Policymakers and funders frequently prioritize innovative (tech) solutions that promise significant and exciting impacts. While investing in innovative research to, for example, develop less invasive and more effective diagnostic technologies for conditions like endometriosis, is important, there is a vast opportunity to enhance women's health conditions now. This is especially true in contexts where women face intersecting vulnerabilities and where the international community aims to leave no one behind in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

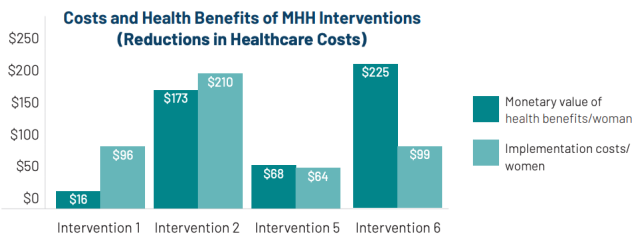
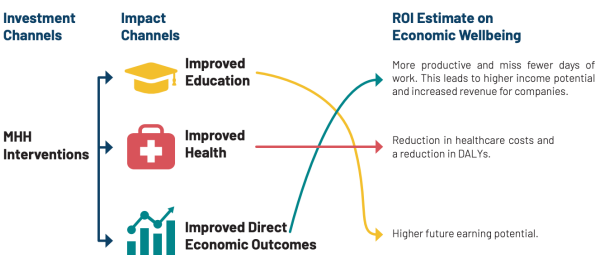
Following five years of concerted efforts and donor engagement, PSI-Europe secured a research grant from the Sanitation Hygiene Fund (SHF) to delve deeper into understanding the impact and potential of Menstrual Health & Hygiene (MHH) interventions. Working alongside esteemed research consultants Lidwien Sol (MSc Economics, PhD candidate) and former colleague Maria Carmen Punzi (MSc Business & Sustainability, PhD candidate), our project built on previous work conducted by PSI-Europe and partners called "Making the Case to Invest in Menstrual Health & Hygiene" and illuminated the needs, gaps, and potential impacts of various MHH initiatives in specific contexts.

GENERATING EVIDENCE AND SHINING THE LIGHT ON MENSTRUAL HEALTH

This research (published September 2023), commissioned by SHF and conducted by PSI-Europe, offers compelling insights into the potential benefits of investing in MHH. Through rigorous analysis of academic studies and grey literature, our research briefs underscore the profound impact of MHH interventions on women's education, health, and economic well-being. In the three research briefs and a technical note in tow, we explore the economic returns of various MHH interventions in educational institutions and workplaces. The findings, though acknowledging research scarcity, underscore the positive returns of investing in MHH, amplifying health, education, and economic benefits for all menstruators and communities at large. The MHH Research Briefs will serve the Sanitation & Hygiene Fund in its collaboration with potential investors, as well as PSI-Europe and the broader community of practice to engage with donors and stakeholders, to make a compelling case for investments in MHH.



Potential Economic Returns on Investment (ROI) in MHH



BLOODY UNITED FOR MENSTRUAL DIGNITY

Fòs Feminista
Karynne Senna - @thekarynne

ENGAGEMENT WITH AFD TO MOVE THE NEEDLE ON MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND THE LAUNCH OF PROJECT SANG POUR SANG

2023 saw the culmination of our multi-year engagement with Agence Française du Développement (AFD), the French development aid agency, which has been at the forefront of bilateral investment and advocacy in MH for the last few years.

In their largest call for proposal dedicated to MH to date and based on their FSOF mechanism (Support Fund for Feminist Organizations), AFD called for multiyear projects to build and implement an intermediate fund to support the efforts of feminist organisations in French development policy partner countries. Through its engagements with AFD, PSI-Europe was well-prepared for this opportunity and at the forefront of the formation of a winning consortium to respond to the call, with leading US-based SRHR advocacy alliance Fòs Feminista (ex-International Planned Parenthood Federation Western Hemisphere Region), France-based long-time prospect Equipop (ex-Equilibres & Population) and Nepal-based grassroot network Global South Coalition for Dignified Menstruation (GSCDM).

Together, we created Sang pour Sang Unies pour la Dignité (Bloody United for Menstrual Dignity), our South-led, evidence-based approach to the promotion of rights-based, inclusive MH. Under the impulse of GSCDM and reflecting the weight of MH-based discriminations in the Global South, the project is elevating menstrual health to menstrual dignity, making a rights-based approach the strategic core of the project and coining the term and acronym Menstrual Health and Dignity / MHD.

In the spirit of shifting power to the Global South and as per AFD's vision, 50% of the funding will be redistributed to local feminist organizations, which for the first time in AFD's history, will include social enterprises in addition to civil society organisations and networks. The project will indeed create its impact by equipping these organisations with 10,000 to 100,000 Euro grants, capacity-building, and by facilitating collaboration between players in the MH ecosystem and market and feminist groups. Using these different mechanisms, for three years, the consortium will carefully craft a coordinated approach to comprehensively address MHD, from knowledge to infrastructures and products, with a strong focus on helping build enabling environments, thanks to strong action-research, knowledge management and advocacy at national, regional and global levels.

Nine countries in three regions were selected, based on their institutional and associative contexts, their potential for mobilization and learning, and on the consortiums members' respective footprints. As per the AFD's requirements, West Africa concentrates 50% of all intermediate funding, for five countries: Benin, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea and Nigeria. Motivated by Fòs Feminista and PSI's strong presence, the Caribbeans were chosen as a second region, with Haiti and the Dominican Republic. In Asia, Pakistan and The Philippines were selected. Two learning countries were added, where learnings from the successes of the MHD movement will be drawn: Nepal and Ethiopia.

PSI-Europe will be responsible for the social enterprise and WASH components of the project, will co-lead the advocacy component, and will manage a €1.4 million budget, of which €400,000 will be granted to social enterprises working on the production, promotion and distribution of menstrual products and solutions.

FINANCING INNOVATION IN HEALTH CARE WITH INVEST INTERNATIONAL BV

At the beginning of 2023, PSI's Social Business Unit, in collaboration with Dutch social enterprise Delft Imaging, kickstarted the BabyChecker/VIYA project with the support of a Development Accelerator Contribution granted by Invest International Development B.V. (former FMO, Dutch Development Bank). PSI-Europe brokered this opportunity with Invest International and is the grant holder of this project, and in that capacity, monitors its implementation and manages the relationship with the donor.

Delft Imaging developed the BabyChecker, a smartphone-powered portable ultrasound that uses artificial intelligence to detect abnormalities in pregnancies. The project focuses on assessing the health impact of using the BabyChecker in private clinics that are linked to PSI Social Business Unit's digital ecosystem called "VIYA" in Uganda. BabyChecker will be included in VIYA's offering of health services that are linked to the digital platform.

In 2023, VIYA completed its business set up and launched VIYA in-country. VIYA Uganda's digital activities reached a total of 5 million users in the first year of operation and over 5,000 followers across its social media pages. Consumers who access VIYA content on social media channels and wish to have one-on-one conversations send direct messages to the VIYA WhatsApp number to chat with a health worker called the Cyber Interpersonal Communication Agent (Cyber IPC). VIYA received an impressive number of direct inquiries, totaling 6,496, with a 98% response rate.

The BabyChecker implementation research study design was completed to assess the potential health impact of the tool and the overall acceptability among providers and clients of the BabyChecker scan. This approach will enable VIYA Health Enterprises Uganda to identify potential implementation roadblocks and propose the best way forward in building the product's financial viability in the market.

PSI's Social Business Unit launched VIYA, a digital lifestyle brand for women who want customized, easy, and on-the-go access to quality sexual health information and services, and that respects their privacy. VIYA's offering starts with content and community – creating a safe space on digital channels for women to engage on the topics of sexual wellness and reproductive health, to receive information about sexuality and pleasure, contraception, menstrual health, pregnancy (where the BabyChecker scan fits); and to exchange with experts to obtain recommendations and referrals for products and services. Over time, the VIYA offering will expand to include connections to e-commerce platforms, telemedicine, or e-prescriptions.



MEMBER & LAUNCH OF THE DUTCH GLOBAL HEALTH HUB

Together with a large group of other Dutch civil society organisations, PSI-Europe became a member of the Dutch Global Health Hub. This Hub was launched on 28th of September 2023 and the launch event included the presence of Dutch Minister of Health, Welfare and Sports, Mr Ernst Kuipers; Director-General International Cooperation, Ms Pascale Grotenhuis; Co-Chair of the steering committee of the Global Health Hub Germany, Christoph Benn; Group CEO, Amref Health Africa, Dr Githinji Gitahi; and Health Policy Commissioner of Nigerian Economic Summit, Ms Ola Brown. PSI-Europe's Managing Director Odette Hekster signed the Dutch Global Health Hub Pact on behalf of the PSI network.

The Dutch Global Health Hub has three communities of practice (CoP):

CoP 1: Strengthening the global health architecture and national health systems

CoP 2: Improving international pandemic preparedness and minimising cross-border health threats

CoP 3: Addressing the impact of climate change on public health, and vice versa

PSI-Europe has joined all CoPs and will leverage the expertise of various PSI colleagues in the areas of the three CoPs while building more capability in the PSI-Europe team on the various relevant topics.

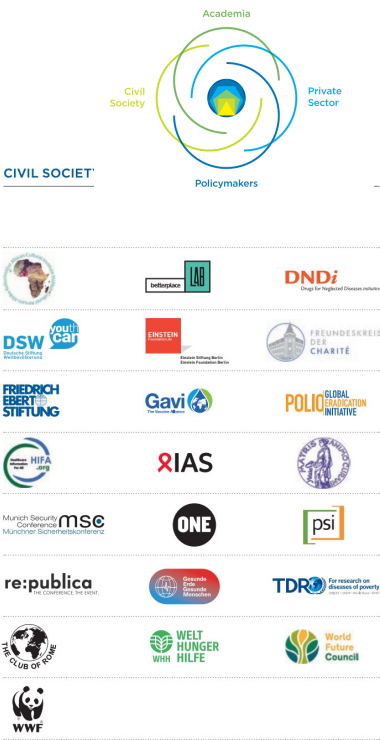


WORLD HEALTH SUMMIT

Because of PSI-Europe’s engagement with the secretariat of the World Health Summit, PSI officially became a civil society partner of the World Health Summit in December 2022. The World Health Summit is a unique international strategic forum for global health. It brings together representatives from politics, science, the private sector, and civil society from around the world to set the agenda for a healthier future by inspiring innovative solutions for better health and wellbeing for all. The World Health Summit stands for a science-driven approach to global health development. The key issues are therefore interdisciplinary, science-based, cross-sectoral, and concerted. They are considered vital to set the global health agenda for the years to come.

The 2023 summit covered critical global health issues, including lessons from COVID-19, universal healthcare access, the link between health and sustainability, G7/G20 policies, digital healthcare potential, WHO's 75th anniversary, TB innovations, and a Global Financing Facility pledging event. The PSI network delegation was represented by five colleagues including PSI-Europe’s Managing Director, Odette Hekster, and Stakeholder and Donor Engagement Director, Davey Groothoff, who both made connections for the preparations of a side event at the upcoming 2024 summit.

WORLD HEALTH SUMMIT PARTNERS 2023



World Health Summit 2023

ENGAGEMENT WITH FRENCH IMPACT TANK

PSI-Europe played a key role in the development of a landmark report, [Lutte contre la précarité menstruelle](#) ('Fighting menstrual poverty') by French 'Think and Do Tank,' IMPACT TANK (an initiative by Groupe SOS, and supported by AFD).

The report was a year in the making and the result of the collaboration of a diversity of MH actors: MH French advocacy organisations Règles Élémentaires, Dons Solidaires and Humanity Diaspora; and MH brands DIM, Procter & Gamble, and FAVA; and received support from the Agence Française de Développement (AFD). PSI-Europe and its team members Odette Hekster and Henriette Ceyrac are cited in numerous places in the report, which delves into systemic challenges in menstrual health, emphasizing social, health, medical, political, economic, and environmental dimensions.

The report also offers a comprehensive landscaping of organisations and initiatives in 12 African and European countries, reflecting learnings and detailing inspiring solutions and practical guidance for project leaders, funders, and anyone looking to advance menstrual health in their country or region. It advocates for increased investment globally and concludes on the need for impact measurement for transparency and improvement, presenting a common framework and indicators for public and private entities to track progress.

Revealed at the Emerging Valley summit in Marseille, France in November, the report was officially handed over to a French government representative. PSI-Europe consultant Henriette Ceyrac represented PSI-Europe at the event and took part in a panel discussion.



PERIOD POSITIVE WORKPLACE INITIATIVE

Menstruation is a normal aspect of life, yet there is still stigma associated with MH and many employees feel they cannot discuss their MH with their employers or request time off when necessary. With approximately half of the world's workforce consisting of menstruating people, it is imperative that they have access to menstrual hygiene products that are affordable and adequate, education on good practices, and a supportive atmosphere so that they may easily manage their periods at work.

At the forefront of our efforts to champion menstrual well-being in workplaces stands the Period Positive Workplace initiative launched on MH Day 2023. The initiative was launched via a webinar featuring PSI-Europe's Board Member Dr. Ekua Yankah and other menstrual health experts under the theme, Investing in Menstrual Health Makes Good Business Sense. Period. Local and media events were organized across multiple countries, including Uganda, the USA, Australia, and Kenya, with relevant stakeholders in attendance.

This initiative operates under a collaborative coalition of seven NGOs, including PSI-Europe, dedicated to getting the private sector on board in supporting not just a period-positive workplace but also to set an example in fostering menstrual equity globally. Notably, workplaces embracing this initiative have reported tangible benefits such as decreased absenteeism, heightened productivity, and enhanced collaboration among menstruating employees. Central to the initiative is a structured certification process that mandates the provision of period products, adherence to specific WASH facility standards, and transparent documentation of menstruation-related product provisions for employees. The coalition also extends support to partner organizations through Period Positive Packages, comprised of digital resources and communication tools designed to bolster awareness within their respective communities. To date, 132 workplaces across 34 countries hold Period Positive Workplace certification, impacting over 144,000+ employees and fostering inclusive, gender-equitable environments.



Period Positive Workplace

WOMEN DELIVER CONFERENCE

PSI-Europe participated in the Women Deliver Conference in Rwanda in July 2023 and played a key role in the side event led by the Global Menstrual Collective.

As a member of this collective, PSI-Europe contributed to preparing a critical conversation on menstrual justice, its linkages to SRHR, and its role in advancing gender equality. Featuring esteemed speakers, including our colleague Ayesha Leghari, Country Director of PSI Pakistan, a renowned expert in the field, this session provided valuable insights and perspectives.

Uniting for Menstrual Justice to Advance Gender Equality:

Local Voices, Feminist Approaches, and Integration with SRHR

Co-hosts:
Global Menstrual Collective (GMC)
Irise International/
Irise Institute East Africa

   Global Menstrual Collective

Wednesday 19 July – 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm
Session code: 17463. Room: MH 2.2, Kigali Convention Centre

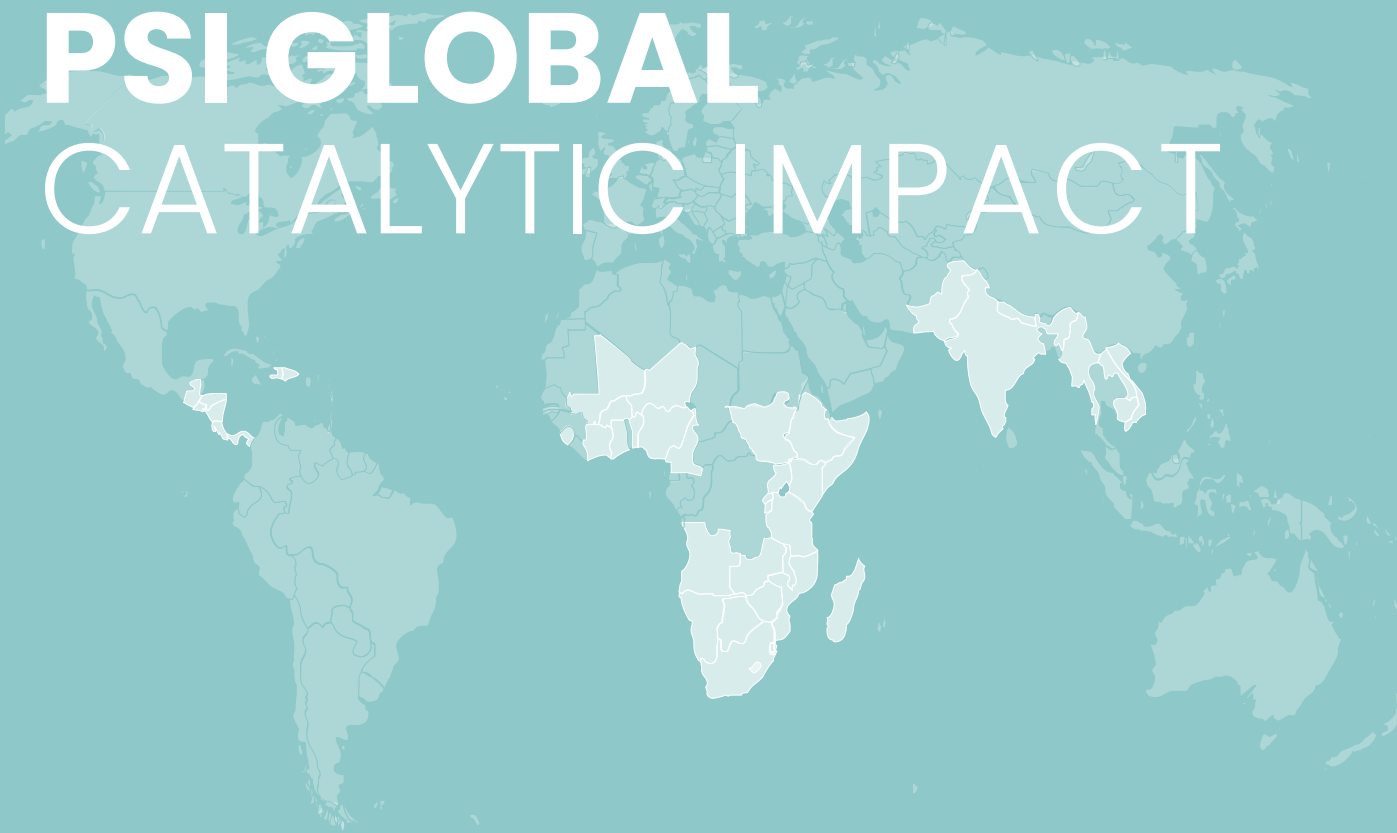
SPEAKERS

 Sholeha PLAN International-Indonesia	 Patricia Humura Irise Institute East Africa, The Period Equality Network (TPEN)	 Esther Wambui Kimani Zamara Foundation	 Kajumba Patricia Tweekonyere Tweekonyere Foundation
 Charles Tumwebaze Together Alive Health Initiative	 Ayesha Leghari PSI-Pakistan	 Lydia Zigomo UNFPA East and Southern Africa	 Noortje Verhart Sticht Oudh Ministry of Foreign Affairs

  In partnership with the project.                                  

2023

PSI GLOBAL CATALYTIC IMPACT



44.1 MILLION

USERS REACHED WITH PRIMARY
HEALTHCARE

23.6 MILLION

USERS REACHED THROUGH ACCELERATED
MARKET GROWTH AND SYSTEMS CHANGE

5.6 MILLION

USERS REACHED THROUGH OUR SOCIAL
BUSINESS

In 2023, the PSI Network captured its health impact in three ways: by measuring what we deliver, what we catalyse others to deliver, and what we deliver through Viya Health, PSI's sustainable social business model. Each person has their own story, and intersectional identities advantage and disadvantage people unevenly. Much of the PSI's Network's work seeks to reach those who are somehow left behind by the dominant systems. The numbers represent only one small piece of the impact that these interventions have on people's lives and the barriers overcome to deliver them.

PSI-Europe is the representative of the PSI Network in Europe.

PSI-EUROPE BOARD



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Dr. Joerg Maas
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Michael Holscher
Board Member



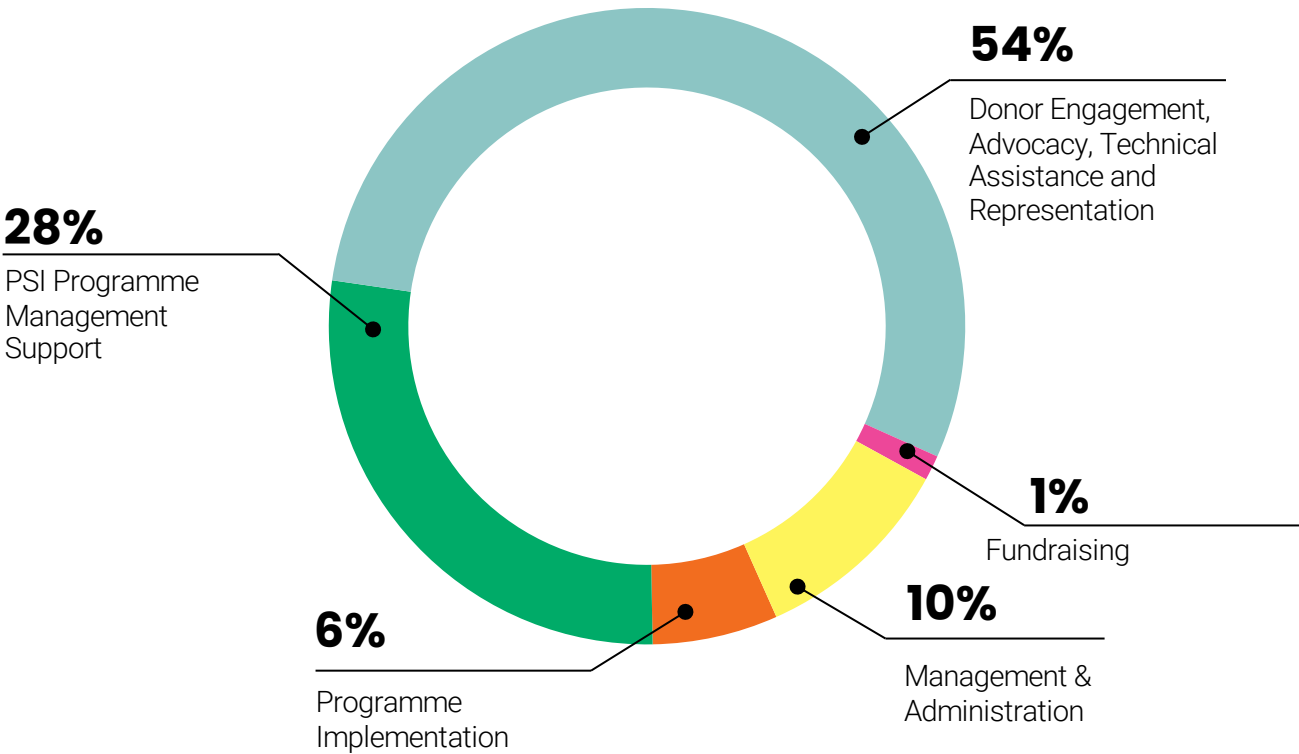
Dr. Christine Fenenga
Board Member



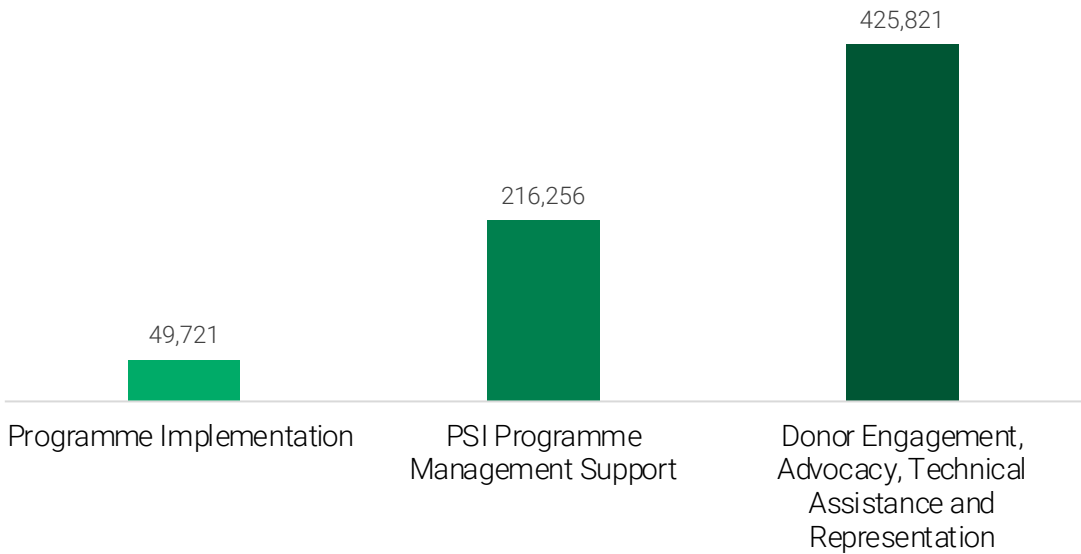
Dr. Ekua Yankah
Board Member

2023 FINANCIALS

Total Expenditures



Expenditures by Objective



PARTNERS & COLLABORATORS



PSI-EUROPE GOVERNANCE

INTEGRITY

PSI-Europe requires the highest level of integrity and professionalism from all its staff, partners and other representatives.

PSI-Europe has adopted PSI's Global Code of Conduct and Ethics. This code of conduct is explicit about inappropriate behavior and describes the procedures to be followed (e.g. reporting and corrective action) in case of such behavior. Violation of PSI's code of conduct can be reported through various channels (management, PSI's General Counsel, Human Resources, Ethics Point or the Global Human Trafficking hotline). PSI-Europe takes all reports of possible misconduct seriously. We will investigate the matter confidentially (in collaboration with PSI), make a determination whether the code or the law has been violated and take appropriate corrective action. In its code of conduct, PSI specifically mentions its Commitment to Non-Retaliation, which means that it does not tolerate retaliation against anyone who makes a good faith report of suspected misconduct or participates in an investigation, whether the report or investigation is internal or involves outside investigators or law enforcement.

PSI-Europe has one integrity advisor who works closely with PSI's Director of Global Security & Safeguarding for all safeguarding issues. PSI-Europe's Managing Director liaises with PSI's General Counsel for other violations of the code of conduct.

PSI-Europe has also adopted PSI's whistleblower policy which protects against retaliation. PSI-Europe reports all allegations and case outcomes to its Board of Directors and to PSI if relevant.

No reports on allegations or breaches of its code of conduct were received by PSI-Europe in 2023. There were also no other integrity issues or cases of fraud detected.

PSI-Europe takes its code of conduct very seriously. Staff are required to complete an annual training on the Code of Conduct and Ethics. Upon completion of the training, staff are required to complete an annual Conflict of Interest form that is reviewed by their managers to mitigate any potential conflicts. At the time of their election, Board Members must also complete a Conflict of Interest form that is reviewed by Senior Management.

REGISTRATION

Established in 2008, Population Services International (PSI) - Europe is a locally registered non-governmental organisation based in Amsterdam and is a member of the PSI network of more than 40 countries throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America.

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ContactPSIEurope@psi.org