



MANY DREAMS. ONE PEOPLE

20

ANNUAL REPORT

20



**Surge for Water**  
invests in communities  
with safe water,  
sanitation, hygiene  
and menstrual health  
solutions to help end  
the cycle of poverty.



## LETTER

## From our Founder and Board Chair

Like many of you, we were excited for 2020. A new decade with bright new possibilities. And when a global pandemic struck, it hurt our collective health and threatened to push over 100 million people into extreme poverty. The communities where Surge works are already amongst the most vulnerable, and with the pandemic their suffering has been amplified.

Atim Grace, a community leader in Kaberamaido, Uganda shared that due to the lockdowns her family struggled to find the seeds they needed for farming putting both their lives and livelihoods at risk. Her children and so many others in their district have had no access to a formal education during the long lockdown period. Through these struggles and so many more, something that brings Atim and her family joy is that she has access to safe water via the Majengo water source that Surge had rehabilitated.

Meanwhile, Apio Mary, a Ugandan student at Opungure Primary School shared – “When school resumed after lockdown, access to water was our biggest nightmare. The dysfunctional school well made life miserable...but now that it is fixed, you have given us a new life.”

Atim and Apio are only a few of the **71,000 people that Surge impacted in 2020.**

Thanks to many of you and our strong infrastructure in the field, Surge was able to respond quickly to prevent the spread of COVID-19 through awareness programs, handwashing stations, soap making classes and much more. Through it all, we also kept our focus on building a resilient future through sustainable, community-led solutions. We continued to fix wells, install filters and water tanks, build toilets and deliver our Menstrual Health education program. We did all this while keeping our teams safe!

There's no doubt this has been a hard year, even in the wealthiest of countries – this is why we are more grateful than ever to our global community who generously supported us when it mattered the most. Because of your incredible support, 2020 ended up being **our year of greatest impact!** Through our collective work entire communities now have a chance at achieving their dreams.

This year the reckoning with racial injustices intensified globally. At Surge, we renewed our commitment to doing our part in decolonizing the aid world – by breaking down the systemic oppression and racism that is inherent in our space.

As we move into 2021 and beyond, you'll continue to hear more about our anti-racism work. As with every year, we also invite you to be a part of our future plans and participate in our ambitious program and country expansions. **Working together, we'll continue to make sustainable change and many dreams possible for generations to come.**

With love and gratitude,



Channa North Hoffstaed  
Board Chair



Shilpa Alva  
Founder & Executive Director

"Water brings  
my family joy"

- ATIM GRACE



2020 PEOPLE IMPACTED

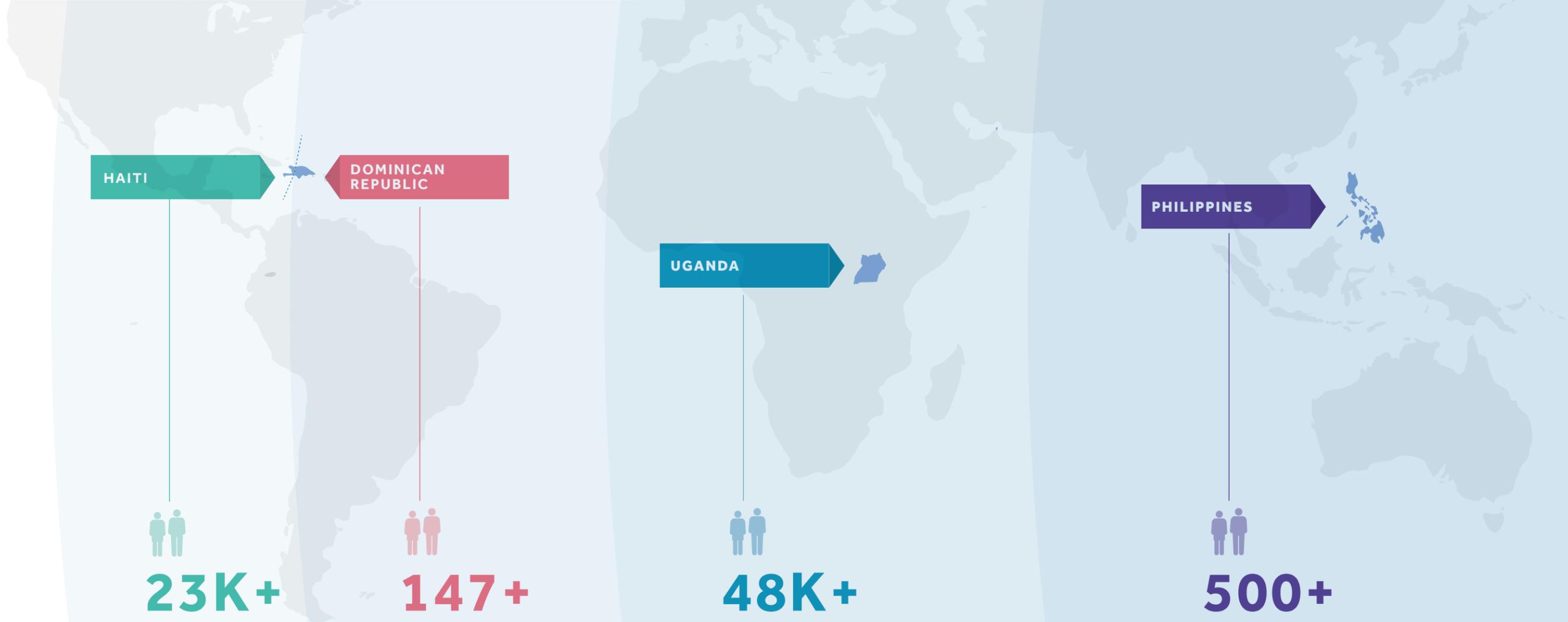
# 71K+

INFRASTRUCTURE

-  23 Wells Fixed
-  96 Filters Installed
-  7 Toilets (latrines) Built
-  48 Household Rainwater Tanks

EDUCATION

-  215 Menstrual Health Classes
-  113 Hygiene Classes
-  70 Soap Making Classes





## THE ISSUE



2.2 billion lack of safe water



4.2 billion lack proper sanitation services



3 billion lack handwashing facilities



1 in 10 girls miss 20% of school every month due to menstruation





**OUR IMPACT**  
SINCE 2008:

1 Million+ people reached

300+ communities, schools,  
and health centers

2000+ field jobs created

Where there is safe water, there is improved education, income, health, dignity, wellbeing and a chance for a better future!



# HOW WE WORK

We work in close collaboration with Community Based Organizations (CBOs). They serve as Surge's Local Implementing Partners to ensure community ownership of all programs. Together with our partners, we strategize, plan and deliver our joint solutions. Surge provides funding, program design, management and oversight, knowledge sharing, technical advice, and content and training for our signature education programs. Our partner CBOs execute locally by mobilizing the local government, civil society organizations, community leaders and community members; involving local businesses; hiring local labor, and implementing, monitoring and evaluating the programs. Working with local organizations and leaders creates jobs and provides continuity, ensuring our programs have lasting, sustained impact.



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: COVID-19 Response



While this pandemic has threatened lives around the world, it presented an even greater risk to countries that have fragile economic, health and political systems – further amplifying the challenges in the communities where Surge works. While proper handwashing was the most effective way to stop the spread, 3 billion people still lack access to handwashing facilities in their homes.

In response, we quickly mobilized our teams in Haiti and Uganda to deliver a wide range of interventions. We ended up reaching over 19,000 people via: awareness programs, soap making classes, installation of hand washing stations; distribution of soap and masks, and so much more.

**Frontline Heroes:** In April, we temporarily increased our field staff to include more Hygiene Promoters in both Haiti and Uganda – going from 8 to 30 strong! As rumors and misinformation propagated throughout the world, our most critical short-term goal was to raise awareness of the pandemic and to give communities the knowledge and tools necessary to stay safe. We achieved this through home visits, megaphone campaigns, and radio shows.

PEOPLE  
IMPACTED

19K+



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: COVID-19 Response



**Radio Shows:** With limited access to electricity in our Haitian and Ugandan communities, radio shows are often the main communication modes to keep people informed. In these pandemic times, they also provided a safe, effective and efficient method to convey critical information to tens of thousands.

Our weekly radio shows covered topics ranging from: water collection from community boreholes, to proper handwashing, to educating women and girls on pandemic-time menstrual management. In Uganda, at the end of every show, listeners could call in and ask questions or leave comments. POPOW, our local Ugandan partner, shared that the shows allowed even the most vulnerable to gain the knowledge they needed to keep a healthy lifestyle and slow the spread of COVID-19.

**Soap Making Classes:** Staying true to Surge's model of building resilient communities, during the pandemic, we delivered 70 intimate soap making classes in Haiti and Uganda, giving almost 400 people an opportunity to make their own soap for use or sale. These classes were held at schools, hospitals, prisons, markets and community centers. Ogoro Jane, a Board Member of the community market shared, "Everyone needs soap and now I can also make it for use and to sell. I sell food and now customers can wash their hands before buying from me. This will keep us safe from corona."

**Handwashing Stations:** We installed over 2,000 handwashing stations in homes and high-traffic community points such as schools, hospitals, prisons, markets and community centers. In homes, community members were taught how to make low cost handwashing stations (tippy-taps) with easy to source local materials.

The communities where we work are home to 300,000 people – and these interventions will help keep them safe and healthy through this pandemic and beyond!





FIELD COUNTRY FOCUS **H A I T I**

PEOPLE  
IMPACTED

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**24K+**



## FIELD COUNTRY FOCUS:

## Haiti



In 2020, in partnership with ANACAONA Community in Cité Soleil and ASSLHA in Cayes Jacmel, our work pivoted to a pandemic response.

In Cité Soleil, we even expanded our reach from Bois Nuef into 2 new neighborhoods Fourgy and Project Drouillard. We also partnered with grassroots Haitian organizations – RAVAGEP and Rajepre to deliver a consolidated COVID-19 response. The program included an intense schedule of household visits that reached several thousand people and was a true testament to an effectively run grassroots, community-led campaign.

As fears of the pandemic subsided, our Hygiene Ambassadors continued to raise awareness and provide the tools needed to practice good hygiene. In preparation for 2021, our teams trained teachers at 4 new schools in Fourgy on our hygiene program bringing the grand total to 12 schools. They also learned how to make liquid soap that will now go on to be a core part of the program.

In the vast mountainous, rural commune of Cayes Jacmel, our team of 4 Hygiene Ambassadors were not sufficient to get the word out during the pandemic. So, we tripled in manpower – and went door to door educating neighbors, handing out soap (made by our local team), and taught over 2000 families how to make low cost hand washing stations (tippy-taps). These contraptions will continue to provide benefits well past the pandemic.

In addition to responding to the pandemic, we also worked closely with our partners to maneuver continued political unrest and a financial crisis. In 2021, we will continue our hygiene and menstrual health interventions, and we will also return our focus to the water and sanitation infrastructure needs of our communities.



FIELD COUNTRY FOCUS  
**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

PEOPLE  
IMPACTED

**147+**



## FIELD COUNTRY FOCUS: Dominican Republic



Since 2013, Surge has been working hand-in-hand with Project Hearts to deliver and install water filters and household water tanks in the municipality of Baitoa. In 2020, via our Program coordinator, Manuela Saviñon, we supported the successful implementation of 48 household water tanks and 6 water filters.

"Adequate access to water is one of the greatest needs of any home, and is vital to the well-being of all people. Thanks to support from Surge, year after year we have been able to help impoverished families in the Dominican Republic take their first step toward building a dignified & healthy life. We offer affordable opportunities to purchase water tanks & filters, and because beneficiaries are investing their own funds, they are more motivated to properly care for these life-changing water technologies."

- MANUELA SAVIÑON



  
 Tel. 809-278-6256  
 829-708-7449  
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FIELD COUNTRY FOCUS PHILIPPINES

PEOPLE IMPACTED  
500+



## FIELD COUNTRY FOCUS: Philippines



In 2020, due to the pandemic and strict lockdown restrictions, we had to significantly scale back our work in the Philippines. Even with these challenges, in partnership with Clean Water International Philippines (CWIP), we successfully managed to deliver 90 biosand filters to rural villages (sitios) in the Barangays of Marilog and Poblacion. We are also proud to have continued our partnership with indigenous people via these interventions.

In Ladi-an (a subcomponent of a sitio) of Barangay Marilog, the Obu-Manuvu tribe makes up 100% of the population. Their livelihood and culture is deeply tied to their ancestor's land – where the produce from farming is their main source of income. The community's water source are springs and wells, which often get contaminated especially during the rains – leading to the need for household water filters.

In response, our local partner CWIP in active collaboration with the Obu-Manuvu Unified Ancestral Domain Tribal Council of Elders/Leaders, Inc and the National Commission on Indigenous People delivered these program steps:

- Courtesy call
- Needs assessment
- Water sampling
- Project orientation with the Barangay officials, key informants and tribal leaders
- Household Biosand Filter training
- Creation of water committees and installers
- Household Biosand Filter delivery
- Project monitoring and evaluation

This strong grassroots partnership is core to Surge's model and essential to the long term sustainability of our initiatives.

"Our water comes from the mountains but by the time it gets here it isn't safe. It's contaminated by the spraying and burning in the nearby farms. Now that I have the biosand filter I feel secure drinking it."

– MARITEZ



**hsf** surge  
Clean Water. For Life.  
Surge invests in communities through safe water and sanitation solutions to help end the cycle of poverty.



FIELD COUNTRY FOCUS U G A N D A

PEOPLE  
IMPACTED

48K+

## FIELD COUNTRY FOCUS:

## Uganda



In 2020, almost 70% of our total program impact was made in Kaberamaido and Kalaki, Uganda – rural, Eastern Districts that are home to 222,000 people. In continued partnership with the Community Based Organization – POPOW, in 2020 we reached more people in these Districts than ever before.

While much of the year was focused on the pandemic response, we also successfully rehabilitated 23 wells and built 7 latrines.

**Well Rehabilitation:** There were countless testimonies of joy from the thousands of beneficiaries who benefited from the 23 wells that we rehabilitated. Ayio Phiona, a water user of Olego Community borehole, that serves 897 people shared: "Water is life. We desperately needed this intervention more so in this time of COVID-19. With this intervention, we hope to stay clean and healthy. With healthy lives, we can prosper in all other areas of life"

**Latrine Build:** Alwa Health Center in Kaberamaido, Uganda serves Alwa sub county and is home to 49 villages and 26,000 people. Being the only government health center within the sub county, this facility is overwhelmed with a huge number of patients. During our 'COVID-19 response' soap making class, the officer in-charge, Oyuru Denis Robert, raised serious concerns about the dilapidated and filled up maternity ward latrine – that exposed staff, expectant and postnatal mothers, and other women to a range of preventable illnesses. While the construction of a new latrine at this Health Center was not in our plan, we worked with our donor ERM Foundation, to adapt to the most urgent needs of the community. This new latrine will now keep the tens of thousands of female patients that visit the center safe. The flexibility exhibited in this example is indicative to how Surge, our donors, and local partners always include the voice of the community in our solutions.

**Our Commitment to Decolonization:** The aid world has inherent power imbalances tied to how money flows and how it's controlled. At Surge, we're on a journey to break down these structures and in 2020, we continued these conversations with our local partners.

Here's what Florence Ringe, the Founder of POPOW shared: "Surge is POPOW meaning ... With Surge we think together, reason together, analyze together, work together, rejoice together and if there will be any regrets, which I really don't hope for, it will be together. Surge consults and listens, they understand our local context very well and that is the reason the communities have adopted and accepted them as daughters and sons of the land which is indicated by giving all Surgers who came to Uganda traditional names which signifies identity and a sense of belonging to our community. Actually personally, I now don't consider POPOW and Surge as just partners but rather one organization with branches in UAE, America and Uganda."



## PROGRAM FOCUS: Menstrual Health



Inadequate Menstrual Health (MH) resources and stigma around menstruation, often force girls in sub-Saharan communities to miss up to 4 days of school every month. According to a recent Ugandan Ministry of Health report of representative secondary schools, almost one quarter of girls of secondary school age will drop out after menarche. In Kaberamaido and Kalaki, it is a widespread societal understanding that once girls menstruate, they should stop attending school and instead focus on building a family. Ugandan women, civil society, and the government are working hard to modernize these ideas and we are helping them.

Our program helps remove barriers to education by creating an enabling environment via our WASH and MH programs. We build toilets at schools and provide education on: hygiene, body and cycle management, products, body agency, reducing stigma, strengthening sisterhood, and reusable pad-making. By increasing school attendance and decreasing or delaying drop-out, these interventions increase the years of education for girls.

In 2020, thanks to The Stone Family Foundation, we hired and trained a new Menstrual Health team in Uganda. This team of 5 strong local women – included social workers and nurses. They had the bold mandate of reaching 5,000 girls. With the onset of the pandemic, schools were shut down, temporarily pausing our global programming and requiring that we pivot. In response, our teams started to work with the local government to mobilize girls in their communities. They also used the weekly radio shows to share critical information to wider audiences. As a result of our adaptability, we successfully reached 5,069 girls via 113 community classes.

### The program saw many positive outcomes:

- 96.5% learned something new in the training
- 90.4% now view taboos differently, as something they could overcome
- 98.3% claimed that they can now better manage their menstrual cycle
- 94.3% reported an increase in self-worth and self confidence
- 92.2% are more comfortable talking about their periods

The sustainability of this program was seen during the pandemic. In many situations where a family's money was directed towards food and other essentials versus period products, girls that received the reusable pad-making training proactively taught their sisters and others in the community how to make pads. This created a ripple effect, reaching thousands more girls than originally intended.

The true measure of our program's success will be seen through school enrollment rates which we plan to measure in the future. Investing in girls has proven, transformational impact for entire communities and countries.

PEOPLE  
IMPACTED

5K+



"I used to miss school because I lacked pads, and every month when I experienced my periods I didn't want to attend school. Now that I can make and use my own pads, I will start to attend school and feel free among my classmates."

AJULO NAUME, 15 YEARS OLD, OYOMAI COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



## FEATURED PARTNERS &amp; DONORS

## Thank You for Making Dreams Possible



**Shereen Mitwalli** is UAE's leading bilingual presenter, motivational speaker and a renowned moderator. Shereen joined our Surge family in 2014, as a Global Ambassador at our inaugural sustainability challenge 'Design, Dine, make a Difference' held annually in Dubai, UAE. For the past 7 years Shereen has gone 'above and beyond' in support of our mission, contributing her voice, time, talent, and funds. In 2020, she directly helped transform the lives of 1,218 people in Omwony A village through a well rehabilitation. She also helped Surge make history, by funding our very first, new well construction in Uganda. The Kacamidako community had waited patiently for help and had lost all hope – and now 1,800 people will have access to safe water for generations to come. Shereen's example has also inspired several others to support the construction of community wells – that will go on to impact thousands more!



**Cathy Long** has been a generous, long-time contributor to Surge's work having provided undesignated funds to strengthen our organization's infrastructure. Cathy and her friends were introduced to Surge during the 2019 Chicago Gala and VIP Dinner. In 2020, she not only attended all of our virtual events but also inspired her broader community to support our mission in a bigger way. Cathy Long & Friends mobilized as a group to fund 3 well rehabilitations impacting over 3,400 people.



**Dianna & Thomas McDonough** have supported Surge since even prior to its official launch in 2008. While our Founder – Shilpa Alva worked in the corporate world, Tom was her Manager. In this supervisory role – Tom became an invaluable mentor and was incredibly supportive with both advice and funds. His wife Dianna joined him in this commitment, and in 2020, they took their love even further – inspiring several family members and ex-colleagues to contribute in new and bigger ways. Through their support and influence, Surge was able to impact several thousands of people in 2020.



**SURFACE ELEVEN's** mission is to enable interior designers and architects in the UAE and GCC to create dream spaces with absolute freedom. One of the company's core values is to give back to communities that are far away. Partnering with Surge meets their goal of changing the lives of people who aren't physically close to home. That is why SURFACE ELEVEN decided to be the headline sponsor of 'Design, Dine and Make a Difference' 2020 gala. With its combination of sustainable design and giving back – this is the one time where competition is put aside and the focus is collaborating for a truly better world for future generations.

## FEATURED PARTNERS &amp; DONORS

## Thank You for Making Dreams Possible



**BOKA** is an oral care business that focuses on overall health and giving back. Their founder, James Hagen, a long-time supporter of our work, is also a Founding Member of Surge. In 2020, Boka directly impacted 1,530 people by funding the rehabilitation of 2 community wells. They also expanded their reach by supporting Surge's COVID-19 response via the installation of 12 hand-washing stations and the partial funding of critical program staff in Haiti and Uganda. With their help, we reached tens of thousands of people with critical information and tools, helping stop the spread of the pandemic. These 2020 interventions, were in addition to Boka's past support of wells fixed and latrines built – impact James has seen firsthand on his visit to Uganda in 2018. Currently, James serves on Surge's Advisory Board and continues to help shape the organization's vision.



**Milliken** believes in designing beautiful spaces that spark innovation, promote wellness, and encourage global connections. Milliken strives to discover new ways to enhance lives and make the world around us easier, safer and more beautiful. Sustainability is at the core of Milliken's philosophy and they set 'planet, people and product' goals that protect and improve our world. Their partnership with Surge, as a repeat 'Design, Dine, make a Difference' gala sponsor and as a co-Headliner in 2020 is a living testament of their strong commitment to creating a better world.



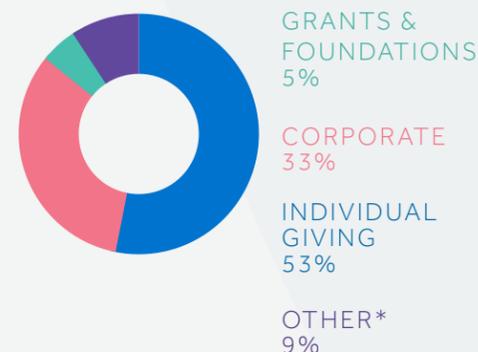
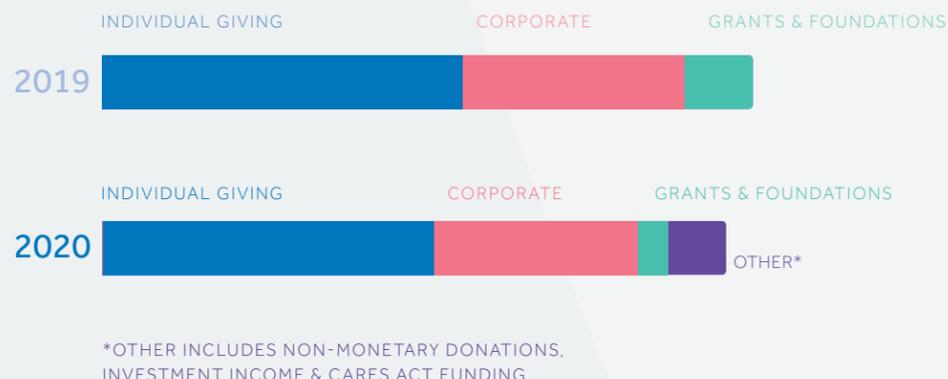
**Acoulite** is the Middle East's leading Lighting and Acoustic supplier and a longtime supporter of Surge. In 2020, through becoming a co-Headline sponsor of our 2020 'Design, Dine, make a Difference' gala – they helped us make the world brighter! Terry Woodley, Acoulite's CEO shared, "Acoulite has a very high level of corporate social responsibility, it is part of our DNA to find and support causes that are worthwhile and so we continue to support Surge with their wonderful mission. The Design, Dine, and Make a Difference Gala is also an opportunity for us to network with our industry peers and have an enjoyable evening. Access to safe water is a basic human right, and we are so grateful to support Surge in creating a world where access to safe water is for all."

# Financials:

2020 was a challenging year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While we had a slight decline in revenue, we still had a record setting year with the number of people impacted via our programs and COVID-19 response.

## REVENUES (USD)

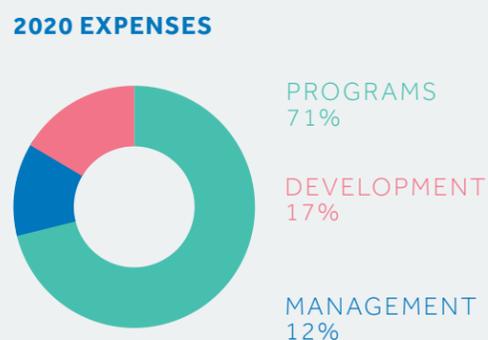
	TOTAL REVENUES
2019	560,263
2020	532,369



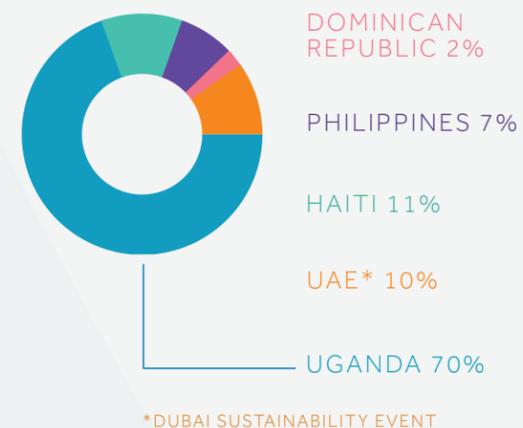
\*OTHER INCLUDES NON-MONETARY DONATIONS, INVESTMENT INCOME & CARES ACT FUNDING

## EXPENSES (USD)

	TOTAL EXPENSES
2019	519,801
2020	472,414



### 2020 PROGRAMS BY COUNTRY



\*DUBAI SUSTAINABILITY EVENT

### NET ASSETS

Beginning	241,830
Ending	301,785

### U.S. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Shilpa Alva
- Trisha Bhagat - *Treasurer*
- Sarah Odde Lynch - *Vice Chair*
- Gregory Holliday
- Marcia Howes
- Scott Minger
- Channa North-Hoffstaed - *Chair*
- Neelam Patel
- Anna Paul - *Secretary*

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- Marita Peters - *Country Executive Director*
- Laila Al Yousuf
- Mriganka Travasso

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- Amal Isa
- Jennifer Leong
- Chris Kayondo
- Saba Khalid
- Megan Ryan
- Elizabeth Settle

### SURGE LEADERSHIP STAFF

- Shilpa Alva, *Founder and Executive Director*
- Jennifer Long, *Associate Executive Director*

### IMPLEMENTING PARTNER LEADERSHIP

- Laure Botinelli, ANACAONA Community, Haiti
- Marissa Dorion, Project Hearts, Dominican Republic
- Dr. Pierre Rene Erol - ASSHA, Haiti
- Florence Ringe, POPOW, Uganda
- Camille Tahura, Clean Water International Philippines



## THE RIPPLE EFFECT: Support Our Work

Your tax-deductible donation helps support communities in need with safe water, sanitation, hygiene and menstrual health solutions – fighting inequality and extreme poverty. Visit our website to make a one-time or recurring gift.

[surgeforwater.org](https://surgeforwater.org)



## Other ways to give:

- Donate Stock
- Peer-to-Peer Campaigns
- Attend Events
- Volunteer

For more information or to speak with a team member about investing in Surge, contact:

[friends@surgeforwater.org](mailto:friends@surgeforwater.org)





THANK YOU FOR MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE

