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# **Foreword and overview** of the year

MAMA Network is excited to share with you our Annual Report for the year 2022. As a feminist network, MAMA empowers women in its geographical reach through cohesive language free from coercion, stigma, and discrimination. MAMA champions its cause through collaboration with grassroots-level organizations that share our common objectives across Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2022, we supported peer learning and the exchange of expertise among our members through joint capacity-building.

This year we held our physical regional conference in Nairobi, Kenya, after three years of online gatherings due to the ongoing pandemic. Our members received holistic security training in person, connected with each other, and together imagined an Africa where self-managed abortions are guaranteed to anyone who needs them. It was also an opportunity for the MAMA Legal support Network of activists and feminist lawyers to meet and strategize on creating emergency response capacities and train local lawyers on risk mitigation arguments and advocacy strategies.

To ensure that the language designed by MAMA remains cohesive even at grass root levels, we continued to develop and translate materials and training manuals for internal use in MAMA countries' local languages.

2022 also brought opportunities to exchange learnings for MAMA members who participated in the DASAF in Abidjan and International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP) in Thailand. For MAMA, grassroots organizations must have a seat at regional dialogues and international conferences to contribute to regional and global exchanges and highlight their work in their communities.

We hope you will see the depth and breadth of our work in the following pages. Thank you for your continued support.



### Introduction to the Network

MAMA – Mobilizing Activists around Medical Abortion - is a network and a movement that convenes grassroots activists working to harness the potential of self-managed abortion (SMA). Our proposed model for abortion care is built on three key pillars:

- Bringing information to people and communities
- Putting pills on people's hands
- Building the movement for self-managed abortion

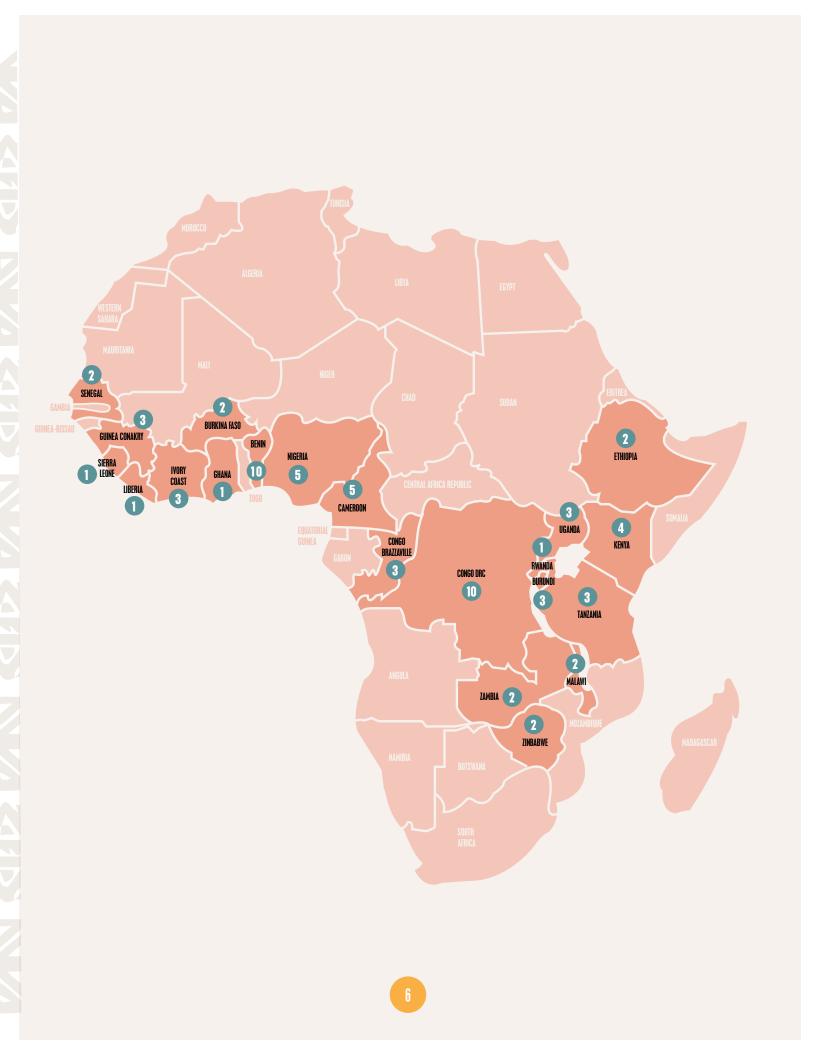
MAMA aims to transform the landscape of reproductive care in Africa by introducing medication abortion as a safe, accessible, and effective procedure to end an unwanted pregnancy outside the clinical setting. We are committed to supporting those who self-manage their abortions with abortion pills in Africa by training activists, disseminating information, facilitating access to abortion pills, and creating the conditions for women and pregnant people to safely selfmanage their abortions. We dream of a world where every person enjoys the right to make informed and supported decisions about their reproductive lives and where abortion is no longer stigmatized, medicalized, or criminalized. A world where people have all the information, access to pills, and community support to self-manage their abortions.



**Currently, MAMA** consists of 67 organizations in 21 countries.

MAMA ORGANIZATIONS

IFRICAN COUNTRIES



# **Summary of our Strategic planning**

In 2021, with the support of an expert consultant, MAMA started developing its Theory of Change and Strategic Plan, including priority-setting and a fundraising strategy for the next five years of the Network. This process ended in March 2022 with a defined theory of change and a strategic plan validated by members.

For the next five years, the following four strategies will guide our work:

STRATEGIC

Innovate and pilot promising practices to improve access to pills

- access strategies.
- share experiences.

SIKATEGI GOAL 2

- Strengthen MAMA University.



• Francophone and anglophone members supported developing

• More linking and learning opportunities among members to

• More experienced members support and mentor others.

### Expand access to information and continue building the capacity of MAMA members to disseminate information

• Development of materials in local languages. • Capacity buildings on SMA & organizational development.



### STRATEGIC **GOAL 3**

Strengthen the African self-managed movement with a focus on building sustainable movements and advocating for change

- Continue to support innovation and cutting-edge strategies to generate new evidence, explore new commodity access and distribution models, and more.
- Build regional and international coalitions with other actors and movements to increase movement solidarity and propose intersectional approaches to global health challenges.
- Monitor opposition to self-care.
- Implement risk mitigation strategies, improving holistic security practices and human rights literacy Network-wide.
- In collaboration with strategic allies, strengthen the Network of activist, feminist lawyers in Africa who provide legal advice to our members, create legal emergency response capacity, and train local lawyers on key human rights and risk mitigation arguments and advocacy strategies.
- Develop partnerships with key research stakeholders to build evidence to measure our impact & enable us to make evidenceinformed programming, advocacy and fundraising decisions across the Network.
- Strengthen local partnerships to build a southern-led research agenda fostering local capacity and engagement with SMA connecting the consortium partners with organizations from across Africa and a robust collaborative partnership with other Global South organizations.
- Increase the visibility of MAMA members by supporting participation in regional and global policy, research, and network platform.

### Strengthen our foundations

- Develop a steering committee of MAMA members
- Strengthen the criteria for membership.
- Transition into a Lead coordinator structure
- Add additional coordinating member
- Build full bilingual capacity



## **Webinars and resources Developed**

In 2022, MAMA translated SMA protocol flyers into Amharic, Kikongo, Lingala, Malinke, Soussou, Kirundi, and Portuguese. We also translated the Self-Managed Abortion – A Practical Guide to French and Portuguese and the Speakers Toolkit into Portuguese. At the end of the year, we updated the protocols flyers in all the different languages to reflect the latest WHO Guidelines. All of these materials can be found on MAMA's.

Throughout the whole year, capacity-building opportunities via webinars were offered to MAMA Network's members, such as:

- practices that led to the new flexible law in Benin
- Advocacy a series of 4 webinars led by an Advocacy Expert, providing clear objectives and outcomes
- A webinar on Holistic consultation
- A webinar on writing and publishing a blog
- A webinar on legal risks and SMA
- through 8 hours of training on holistic security.
- **SMA** online training

- A webinar on MAMA University

• A webinar with an expert in Advocacy in Benin who shared the best

guidelines and hands-on exercises on how to lead effective advocacy with

A webinar on cross-learning exchanges with Asian partners · Holistic security training: With security experts, our members went

 A webinar on Cross-regional dialogues Africa – SMA during COVID Three training sessions of **Qualitative Research and MAE study** 

# **Hotline support**

During 2022, we focused on strengthening the capacity of the existing hotlines within the Network, and expanding it by supporting the launch of three new hotlines on new countries.

As part of our hotline mentoring program, we organized webinars to increase their skills on sustainability, counseling, and SMA protocols. In addition, we had oneon-one sessions with the different hotlines where we discussed how they were doing and assessed the diverse needs in terms of capacity building of each hotline. During those, we also discussed their challenges and brainstormed different possible strategies.

MAMA also sub-granted three member organizations that launched three new hotlines in Guinea, Malawi and Sierra Leone. These organizations also received training on values clarification, SMA protocols, hotline counseling, holistic security, marketing, and data collection.





### Working with Pharmacists

In 2022, the Network continued working towards its objective of supporting organizations to build a functional and sustainable referral system of working with Pharmacists. Mentoring sessions were hosted where members were given assignments to help them build a referral system based on the following:

- Mapping friendly pharmacists
- Training pharmacists
- Security of organizations, clients & pharmacists.
- Data collection & reporting tools

During the regional meeting in Kenya, a peer-to-peer panel session was held where members shared how they started working with pharmacists and how they structured a referral system. By the end of the session, participants understood the importance of pharmacy mapping for their organizations.







# **O7** Research and M&E

MAMA Network's research and Monitoring and Evaluation strategy is implemented in partnership with Ibis Reproductive Health. As a result of this partnership, MAMA members received the following support:

- MAMA subgrantees received M&E training, where they designed their subgranted projects' M&E (plans, outcomes, and tracking tools). Ibis developed a reporting link for MAMA subgrantees to track progress over the program period.
- Ibis developed M&E videos for MAMA University so members can access them and refresh their training.
- Ibis worked with the MAMA app team to identify a local developer and develop a work plan. Together with the local developer, they finalized the beta version and implemented the beta testing of the MAMA Sophia App.
- Ibis trained MAMA members on Qualitative Research. Members were trained on project management support for study design and data collection and how to analyze findings and prepare a research report.



For the Medication Abortion Experiences Study, also known as the MAE study, we were looking at the experiences and outcomes of callers to a safe abortion hotline who receive support for clinic-based and self-managed medication abortion. We designed a prospective observational study, in which we surveyed people who contacted the hotline looking for support and information to terminate their pregnancies via medication abortion either by self-managing or by going to a clinic.



Data collection took place between April and December 2021, where we utilized a baseline survey, which participants filled out at enrollment, as well as a follow-up approximately survey 1-2 weeks after participants had started their medication abortion process. In the case of participants who reported an incomplete abortion at the 1-2 week follow-up, our study coordinators conducted an additional follow-up 1 week later to confirm their abortion outcome.

Out of 103 participants who were enrolled, 57 were referred for medication abortion services, 25 for self-managed medication abortion and 32 opting for clinic-based medication abortion. The results of the study are based on these 57 participants.

Over approximately 3 weeks of follow-up, 56 participants (that is, 98.2%) reported a complete abortion without surgical intervention. 100% of participants from the SMA group reported a complete abortion without surgical intervention, and 96.9% from the Clinic-based MA group reported the same. Only 1 participant, in the Clinic group, reported having a surgical abortion procedure in order to complete her abortion process.

Overall findings were that, for both self-managed and clinic-setting groups **Over 95% reported a complete abortion without surgical intervention** over approximately 3 weeks of follow-up! Also, Only a small number of participants actually sought additional healthcare, and most who had concerns were able to easily clear their concerns by consulting with the doctor or the hotline over the phone.

Overall, these takeaways indicate that safe abortion hotlines can safely and effectively support people's medication abortion experiences, both in the clinic and in self-managed settings.



**95%** COMPLETE ABORTIONS WITHOUT SURGICAL INTERVENTION

**MAMA Networking zone** The MAMA coordination team has co-created with members a space led and curated by member organizations to exchange, network, and build each other's capacity. The space has operated since November 2022 as the Networking Zone

The co-creation happened in the following steps:

- Consultations with members to validate the need for a networking zone
- Two breakout groups meetings for members to design the networking zone by focusing on what (objectives of the networking zone), How (Goals of the networking zone), when (Timelines of the networking zone)
- Production of networking zone guidelines document which answers the networking zone's role and mission.
- Election of two coordinating organizations that are leading the networking zone for a year
- After electing the two coordinating organizations, they have together with the membership – developed a workplan for the activities they plan on leading in this space, including planning advocacy campaigns [...]



# **Subgrants to members**

Since November 2021, 12 organizations received a subgrant to implement SMA related projects. By the end of August, these organizations submitted their secondquarter reports. Below are the milestones reported by 7 organizations:

### In Congo Brazzaville, a MAMA memberimplemented a hotline. They carried out the following activities:

- Republic of Congo with reference to the hotline

The organization facilitated an awareness session on sex education at a private school in Brazzaville. This activity aimed to break down the taboos and stereotypes around sexuality, puberty, and menstrual hygiene. At the end of this education, students could understand the physiological changes due to puberty and the calculation of the menstrual cycle. During the activity, they promoted the hotline, which increased the number of monthly calls

The organization organized training with health providers (midwives and pharmacists) to strengthen their capacities on self-managed abortion and referencing the hotline.

The community relays were deployed in the streets of Brazzaville to raise public awareness of the dangers of unsafe abortions. The target population was young girls and boys ranging in age from 16 to 30 years old; the objective of this activity was to raise awareness and talk about safely managed abortions despite the restricted context of abortion in the



**19** In Ethiopia: a MAMA member implemented a project to work with public health centers to connect women and girls to SMA. In the second quarter, they carried out the following activities:

- Training on SRH and Medical abortion was provided for 25 community SRH Doulas. The objective was to enhance the knowledge of SRH doulas on the issue of medical abortion. As a result, the SRH doulas' knowledge was improved according to the pre-and post-test assessment results.
- Training on SRH and Medical abortion was provided for the 15 Health Professionals. The trainees were from 5 health centers. The objective was to develop the knowledge & capacity of Health Professionals on the issue of medical abortion, SRH, Family Planning, and safe abortion. As a result, the trained Health Professionals' knowledge & capacity were enhanced based on the pre and post-test assessment results.
- The organization disseminated information about medical abortion to 1400 (950 female and 450 male) community members through community outreach events. A total of 4 outreach events were held in a public hall, open market, and open air around the villages. The activities aim to create awareness of medical abortion in the target community. Hence, the knowledge of medical abortion in the community is improved.
- The organization organized two networking and partnership workshops among relevant stakeholders for access to medical abortion. Totally 40 relevant stakeholders participated in two workshops. The objective of the establishment of the technical support group is to advocate for access to medical abortion and to raise the awareness of MA among higher government officials & community.

**19** In Zambia, a MAMA member implemented a project to increase access to medical abortion for adolescent girls and young women. They carried out the following activities:

1500 girls and women receive SRHR counseling services through the hotline and at the Health Center. The organization has three health facilities with trained youth volunteers and enlisted 10 schools where they set safe space clubs with meetings held weekly.



### In Guinea: a MAMA member implemented a project to strengthen community activism for safe abortion.



3 radio spots produced of wide dissemination on the harms of clandestine abortion and the benefits of self-managed abortion.

- safe abortion.

In Nigeria, a MAMA member implemented a project to improve well-being and prevent maternal death and unwanted pregnancy through increased access to medical abortion among 840 young women aged between 19 to 35 years. They carried out the following activities:

Trained 20 indigenous / women living with HIV and 3 Pharmacists on access to reproductive health rights and medical abortion to increase their knowledge on SMA. Before the training, indigenous women shared ways to self-terminate unplanned pregnancies using various herbs and pills. The pre-training test showed 5% awareness of misoprostol for safe abortion, and 95% post-training test showed an increase in knowledge after the training; VCAT was adopted to debulk behavioral change, and participants demonstrated how to use medical abortion pills for SMA accurately

(15) awareness-raising sessions reached 450 beneficiaries with the dynamics of community animators composed the midwives identified in the community health centers and trained, including girls and women in the four rural communes through widespread dissemination of the harms of unsafe abortion and the benefit of medical abortion in appropriate health facilities and self-managed abortion with the correct information. It was a success, with the strong involvement of health workers.

50 community leaders part of community organizations were trained on the risks associated with unsafe abortions and sexual and reproductive health rights, aiming to strengthen technical capacity for the proper orientation of women and girls who are often in need and expand community-based



Safe abortion champions disseminated information SMA to increase access to reproductive health rights and medical abortion in the different communities through peer-to-peer support groups meetings and community women's gatherings. A total of 755 women were reached with information on SMA

**1** In Kenya, a MAMA member implemented a project to improve rural women and girls' access to quality sexual reproductive health care and affordable MA services. They carried out the following activities:

- Mapped up 15 Health care providers for training. The objective is to reduce unsafe abortions by training health providers to increase the uptake of self-managed safe abortion among girls and women and recognition of person-centered self-care.
- Mapped and trained 15 big sisters on SMA. The training was a V-ACT session focused on giving affirming facts and information. Through it, it facilitated big sisters with the capacity to eradicate abortion-related stigma in the community creatively. The training provided a safe platform for big sisters/ change agents to share more information on access to contraceptives. The big sisters could commit to mobilizing adolescent girls and young women for community outreach and sharing information on SMA and access to SHR services.

In Ghana, a MAMA member implemented a project to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality caused by unsafe abortion. They carried out the following activities:

Thirteen midwives were trained for 3-days on SMA. The training adapted portions of the country service training manual on the prevention and management of unsafe abortion and the MAMA Network manual on selfmanaged abortion



2,345 (1, 423 women, and 922 men) community members were reached with information on SMA during the reporting period.



# **10 Regional meeting overview**

In 2022, MAMA held its Regional discussions, small group discussions, Meeting for the first time in three years. members' presentations, games, The meeting occurred between the and guizzes. Additionally, the forum 15th and 24th of June at Machakos. strengthened members' understanding and commitment to collectively build Kenya, gathering sixty-six participants between the MAMA Coordination team, a feminist grassroots-led movement as MAMA Members, and MAMA's Legal stipulated in the new MAMA Strategic Support Network (LSN). plan (2022 – 2027). The meeting was also an opportunity for MAMA members The gathering allowed MAMA members running or interested in running hotlines to learn and share lessons and best to visit Aunty Jane's hotline for a linking practices across MAMA strategies, and learning activity.

The gathering allowed MAMA members to learn and share lessons and best practices across MAMA strategies, including self-managed abortion, advocacy, working with pharmacists, holistic security, research, M&E, and hotlines.

advocacy, working with pharmacists, holistic security, research, M&E, and hotlines. Different and exciting methodologies were used to enhance learning, including member-led panels, plenary











### **Legal Support Network**

LSN consolidated The towards realizing the ultimate goal of offering comprehensive and holistic legal support to the MAMA network by engaging in further strategic interventions in 2022. The LSN trained eight (8) lawyers and social workers from four (4) African countries, namely Kenya, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Tanzania. After the training program, there was an open question-open session where the lawyers were able to seek clarification on any areas of the training that they did not understand, as well as share any learning experiences acquired through the training. There was also a post-training monitoring, evaluation, and learning exercise to evaluate the level of comprehension of the material offered during the training and to determine any areas that may need to be further enhanced after the provision of the training. The Legal Support Network also conducted the Global South Dialogue Regional Forum in June 2022. The Legal Support Network Meeting brought together lawyers from Poland, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Kenya. The purpose of the dialogues was to increase a Global South dialogue between lawyers in Latin America,

efforts Africa, and Europe to develop shared strategies and legal tools, discuss areas for collaboration, identify legal strategies being used by the opposition to criminalizing SMA in the different regions, and create an analysis of intersecting concerns regarding law reform.

> The LSN conducted several activities and had dialogues with the MAMA coordinators as well as the trained cohorts to realize this outcome. The research conducted, the feedback from the MAMA coordinators and network. the MEL feedback from the lawyers who undertook the SMA training, and the outcome of the Global South Dialogue ultimately culminated in developing a first draft of the risk assessment and mitigation toolkit. The toolkit can be utilized as a risk assessment tool and offer mitigation strategies to meet the risk once the assessment has been carried out.

> The LSN also developed a partnership with the University of the Western Cape in South Africa to conduct research and publish two research articles: "Self-managed abortion in Africa: the decriminalization imperative in the



regional human rights standards" theme "Using Technology to improve (submitted to Harvard Health women's access to health" to take and Human Rights Journal) and action and stand up for women's "Understanding the regional human sexual and reproductive rights. They rights standards as the basis for an implemented activities and engaged enabling environment for self-managed in social media campaigns, developed abortion in Africa" (submitted to Global messages for Twitter posts, planned in-Public Health). person activities in their communities and wrote blog posts with pictures for MAMA's blog.

# **Advocacy**

In 2022, MAMA Network finalized and approved its Regional Advocacy Strategy to advance reproductive justice in communities empowered to demand, and access safe, legal, affordable self-managed medical

abortion without clinical supervision. At the end of the year, Advocacy opened a call for applications for members The Regional Advocacy Strategy was to apply for seed grants to start developed with the input of MAMA implementing the Advocacy Strategy in members, who have shared their views their country. As a result, 24 applications through online meetings, and in person were received from anglophone during the Regional MAMA Meeting and francophone MAMA members. Upon evaluating the organizations, 4 in June. During this same event, we also conducted a webinar about using member organizations were selected the Humans Rights Framework for from Congo, Senegal, and Ghana. They Advocacy. Our members had a chance were selected to undertake activities to start developing work plans to toward the realization of the Advocacy objectives and the overall MAMA implement the Advocacy Strategy. strategic objectives.

In 2022, MAMA commemorated May 28th Campaign with members on the

We also joined the International Campaign with worldwide organizations to unite in our voice to promote the theme for the September 28th, 2022 campaign "Abortion in Uncertain times." In addition, 21 MAMA members implemented activities online, developed messages for MAMA's Twitter, wrote blog posts, hosted a Twitter space with 2 MAMA organizations as panelists, shared hope success stories, and planned offline activities.





MAMA University – the Network's E-learning platform – was launched in early 2022, and currently has over twenty different contents for members to engage with, including videos, quizzes, and online resources. There, members can take self-paced courses on relevant themes for Self-Managed Abortion activists. During the year, we have taken the time to hear from

members about their experiences and strengthen the platform accordingly. We have also explored the possibility of producing different animated videos for the platform, keeping the courses interesting and engaging for the learners.





In 2018 Generation Initiative for Women and Youth Network (GIWYN) and Trust for Indigenous Culture and Health (TICAH), collaborated with Ibis Reproductive Health under the MAMA project and designed a digital space called The Mama Sophia App. It is a free, private, and secure mobile app filled with sexual and reproductive health information and resources, which is



current and fashionable. The Mama Sophia app was officially launched in March 2022. The app is available in English for download anywhere in the world from The Google Play store, App store, or www.sophia.mamanetwork. org. Since its launch, it has had over 1,000 downloads on the Google play store. The Mama Sophia app hosted two Twitter spaces in 2022. People





### TRACK PERIOD CYCLE AND LOG SYMPTOMS CALCULATE THE LENGTH OF A PREGNANCY LEARN MORE ABOUT CONTRACEPTION FIND WHICH CONTRACEPTIVE METHODS ARE BEST SPEAK WITH THE MAMA SOPHIA CHATBOT GET THE FACTS ON NATIONAL ABORTION LAWS EXPLORE SAFE ABORTION OPTIONS CONNECT WITH HOTLINES FOR FREE HELP AND COUNSELING

can access the listed features from the Mama Sophia App: track period cycle and log symptoms; calculate the length of a pregnancy; learn more about contraception; find which contraceptive methods are best; speak with the Mama Sophia chatbot; get the facts on national abortion laws; explore safe abortion options; connect with hotlines for free help and counseling.

This Software Application is based on formative research to understand the role and use of technology for seeking information on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), specifically information on safe abortion. The App was formed through a rigorous process of understanding from potential users what information they may like to access in a potential app and the look and feel of a potential digital app. There were focal group discussions with community stakeholders and in-depth interviews with clients who accessed the two hotlines, Aunty Jane Hotline in Kenya and Ms. Rosy Hotline in Nigeria, to seek information and/or support for their abortion.

During the app development process, a Community Advisory Team was set up. They served as consults starting from the review of the app content, beta testing, final app version, Marketing plan, and user final feedback.

The MAMA Network's next steps for Mama Sophia App are to expand its current reach to West and Central Africa and translate its content to French.



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### Participation in regional and Global dialogues

In October, 25 MAMA members participated in the DASAF organized by ODAS in Abidjan. It was also an opportunity for the network members to engage in conversation about selfcare. In November, MAMA hosted a Pre-Conference for the International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP), which took place in the city of Pattaya, in Thailand. MAMA's Pre-Conference focused on Self-Managed Abortion and aimed at exploring the synergies and different experiences on promoting abortion access and information in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. It was organized in collaboration with the Safe Abortion Advocacy Initiate Global South (SAIGE) and ODAS.

Besides the Pre-Conference, MAMA has also presented its recent research on a panel entitled, "The present and future of abortion accompaniment: a model of safe, effective, feminist, and empowering care". On this panel, we presented findings from the Studying Accompaniment model Feasibility and Effectiveness (SAFE) study, which includes data from GIWYN's Ms. Rosy hotline and findings from a recently completed study on medication abortion experiences and effectiveness from callers to TICAH's Aunty Jane hotline.



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# WHAT WE LOOK FORWARD TO IN 2023

In 2023, MAMA is focused on strengthening access to Self-Managed Abortion in all its forms. We have learned that getting good information and pills into the hands of people who need them requires a holistic approach of empowerment, education, support, security, advocacy, and research. In this new year, we will continue to work to successfully increase access and support those who want to manage their own abortions.

We look forward to welcoming our new members, coming from our latest expanding effort in the West-Francophone African Region, and for all the learning and experience sharing they will bring with them.

We are also excited to strengthen MAMA's foundations; we know that to meet the needs of our ever-growing movement network, we will need to focus on strengthening and streamlining our organizational infrastructure. So, we will continue to take steps to become a fully bilingual Network with equally powerful levels of member engagement and a streamlined decision-making process.



MAMA NETWORK ORG

# DREAMS FOR 2023 AND BEYOND

Over the past years, MAMA has experimented, innovated, and learned what strategies and structures have to be built and sustained to get good information and good pills into the hands of people who need them. We have developed a holistic approach of empowerment, education, support, security, advocacy, and research. We have improved and learned, and based on those learnings, in 2022, we have finalized and approved our five-year Strategic Plan (2022-2027).

We have taken the time to look inside and hear from our members, funders, and partners about our work and use these lessons to strengthen ourselves. Having this roadmap for the following years makes us both confident in the future and aware of the challenges ahead, and it is with this knowledge, we dream of a brave, adventurous, and exciting 2023.

We hope to continue to be an active and relevant actor within the global abortion movement, elevating our members' voices and promoting cross-regional learning experiences to showcase the brave and creative work of activists in Sub-Saharan Africa.

**ttt** 1 EMPOWERMENT & SUPPORT









