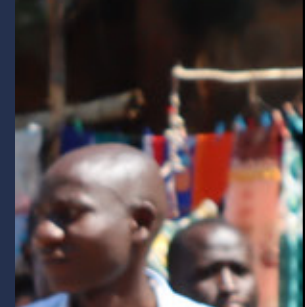
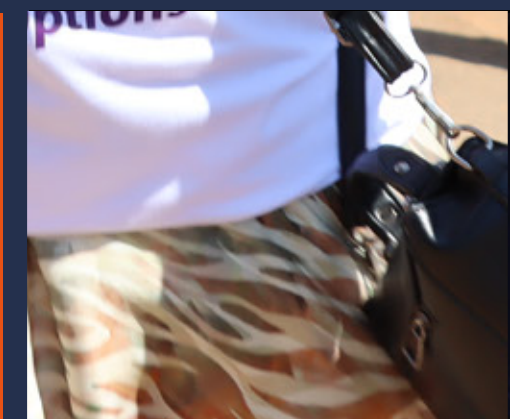


IPAS AFRICA ALLIANCE
IMPACT REPORT
2022 – 2023



Partners for
Reproductive Justice





Ipas

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ACRONYMS

ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights
ACSA	African Coalition on Safe Abortion
ASAL	Arid & Semi-Arid Lands
CAC	Comprehensive Abortion Care
CBO	Community Based Organization
CRR	Center for Reproductive Rights
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	East African Community
EOR	Eye on the Rights
EQA	Equity Afya
FIGO	International Federation of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists
FY	Financial Year
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
MA	Medical Abortion
MASU	Medical Abortion Self-use
MOH	Ministry of Health
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RRT	Rapid Response Team
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UE	Uterine Evacuation
VCAT	Values Clarification and Attitudes Transformation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ipas Africa Alliance, based in Nairobi, Kenya, is dedicated to advancing reproductive justice across Africa. Operating in Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, and over 20 counties in Kenya, the organization focuses on reducing deaths from unsafe abortion, transforming social norms, and enhancing legal and policy environments for safe abortion. This executive summary outlines the achievements and impact of Ipas Africa Alliance's programs during the fiscal year 2022-2023.

We leveraged our 20-year experience to strengthen private sector capacity for Comprehensive Abortion Care (CAC) through Equity Afya Clinics (EQA) in Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Training 294 providers, Ipas supported the expansion of CAC services, including telemedicine initiatives in Rwanda. Notably, Ipas played a key role in developing Kenya's National SRH Self-care Guidelines, enhancing abortion self-use in nine counties, with 2,454 women benefiting.



IPAS OPERATING IN UGANDA, RWANDA, TANZANIA AND KENYA

The Nurse Nisa chatbot, meant to enhance digital pathways to abortion and post abortion contraception, reached 842 users, providing accurate information on the two critical topics, marking a significant increase from the previous year. The Nimechanuka platform engaged approximately 10,000 new youth, receiving a prestigious award for Best Youth-run Sexual Health Platform from Global Health and Pharma. Ipas emphasized the growing reliance on digital information for SRH and actively involved young people in health interventions.

In the policy landscape, Ipas Africa Alliance played a vital role in the development of Kenya's National Reproductive Health policy, addressing opposition challenges. Strategic litigation efforts in Kenya delivered a progressive judgment, affirming healthcare workers' right to provide abortion care, even to minors. At the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, Ipas championed access to reproductive health services, leading to a study on human rights defenders working on SRHR.

Furthermore, community dialogues, peer education sessions, and inter-generational forums led by Ipas Africa Alliance in 13 Kenyan counties aimed to shift social norms around safe abortion. Mother-to-mother support groups were established to provide psychological support to adolescent mothers and unsafe abortion survivors, contributing to community resilience.

In research, Ipas conducted a groundbreaking study on SRHR health system resilience in Northern Kenya during extreme climate conditions. A peer-reviewed paper on pathways to medical abortion self-use in Kenya and Uganda added valuable insights to the global body of knowledge. Partnerships with the Centre for Reproductive Rights and the formation of the CATALYSTS Consortium exemplify Ipas Africa Alliance's commitment to protecting and promoting abortion rights in Africa. Active participation in the NGO Forum showcased Ipas's work on climate justice, earning recognition and a certificate of appreciation.

Ipas Africa Alliance's diverse and impactful programs during FY 23 have contributed significantly to advancing reproductive justice across Africa. From strengthening health systems to influencing policy, mitigating opposition, and building movements, Ipas remains committed to its mission of empowering women and girls in their reproductive health choices.

INTRODUCTION

Ipas Africa Alliance works with governments and partners across Africa to advance reproductive justice. Based in Nairobi, Kenya, Ipas Africa Alliance has programs in Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania and more than 20 Counties in Kenya where we work towards reducing deaths from unsafe abortion, facilitating social norms transformation, and improving legal and policy environments for safe abortion. Ipas Africa Alliance conducts abortion policy engagement across Africa.

Ipas Africa Alliance Advocacy and Policy team works to ensure that the safe abortion and contraceptive options women and girls prefer are fully accessible, without discrimination. We work with lawmakers to draft and implement good abortion laws and policies, and monitoring opposition groups.

The Quality-of-Care unit supports improved health outcomes with an emphasis on the quality of comprehensive abortion service delivery. To achieve this, Ipas Africa Alliance supports Ministries of Health at national and sub-national levels to provide consistent high-quality care, defined as evidence-based care that improves health outcomes and respects the rights, needs and preferences of women and girls.

Cultural and legal restrictions on abortion have greatly hindered access to information that provides accompaniment support to women seeking abortion and

have hindered access to providers willing to meet the abortion and post-abortion contraception needs of women. In a bid to respond to the evolving needs of women and girls, Ipas has developed a digital platform for abortion self-care that provides step by step guidance to women who have obtained medical abortion drugs for self-use. Nurse Nisa operates through WhatsApp platform and targets women and girls with general information, accompaniment support as well as connecting pharmacists to clients for medical abortion drugs.

Ipas has seen the transformative power of community-led interventions in shifting social norms that perpetuate stigma and discrimination among survivors of unsafe abortion and has employed various strategies to strengthen the capacity of community stakeholders, CBOs, peers, and champions to facilitate processes to sustain SRHR knowledge at the community level. Through provision of sub-grants and technical support to community-based organisation, Ipas Africa Alliance works towards the normalization of social and religious norms on termination of pregnancies.

This report outlines the results of Ipas Africa Alliance's programs in FY 23, drawing on outcomes achieved for Quality of Care, Community Access, and Advocacy and Policy in the period between July 2022 – June 2023.



1. COMPREHENSIVE ABORTION CARE HEALTH SYSTEMS STRENGTHENED

Private Sector Capacity for CAC strengthened through Equity Afya Clinics (EQA)

We leveraged our 20-year experience in supporting the Ministry of Health (MOH) in Kenya to initiate, expand and improve the quality of comprehensive abortion care (CAC) at all levels of the health system to provide technical assistance to Equity Afya (EQA) Clinics in Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). EQA is a private network of franchised medical outpatient centres run by qualified and experienced doctors, providing high quality, affordable and accessible primary healthcare services. The network currently comprises 72 clinics in Kenya with plans to expand to additional clinics in Kenya and establish the network in additional countries in Eastern Africa.

Ipas conducted training for 294 out of a projected 368 providers aimed at developing the capacity of EQA clinical staff in the provision of abortion care services to the full extent of the law. The training covered all the six components of RH, blended with Value Clarification and Attitudes Transformation (VCAT) sessions. Service delivery results indicate an emerging CAC client base across the franchise.

Telemedicine increases Comprehensive Abortion Care (CAC) availability in Rwanda

In collaboration with Rwanda Health Initiative for Youth and Women (RHIYW) and Rwanda Society for Obstetrics and Gynaecology (RSOG), Ipas AA trained 20 providers from all health facilities in Kirehe district of Rwanda and provided them with equipment to support CAC services. This was part of a MOH pilot initiative to test the feasibility of using a telemedicine approach to share tasks among nurses and midwives for CAC services. Currently, CAC service guidelines permit only doctors to provide CAC services. Preliminary findings indicate that nurses and midwives can safely and effectively provide quality CAC, using telemedicine consultation with a doctor at a remote location. The Rwanda

MOH is contemplating using the results of this pilot to expand CAC service provision guidelines to include mid-level providers provide CAC, and eventually to progress to CAC provision without instructions from a doctor.

“IPAS CONDUCTED TRAINING FOR 294 OUT OF A PROJECTED 368 PROVIDERS AIMED AT DEVELOPING THE CAPACITY OF EQA CLINICAL STAFF IN THE PROVISION OF ABORTION CARE SERVICES TO THE FULL EXTENT OF THE LAW”.

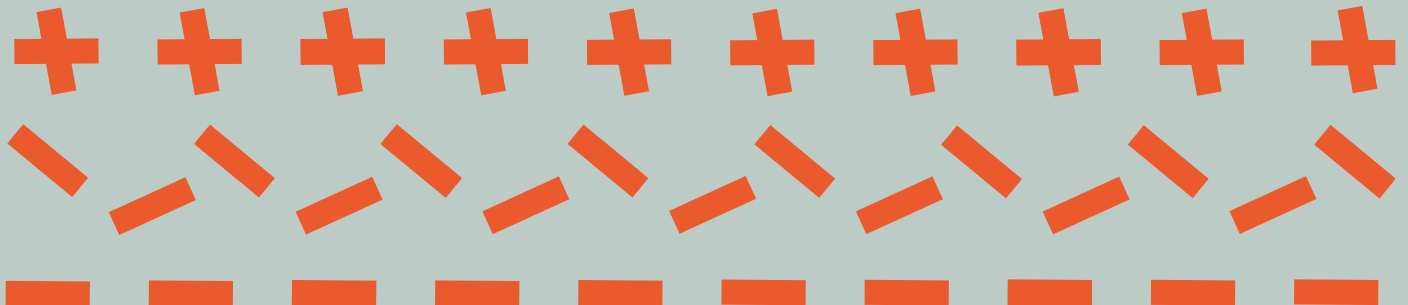
Kenya National SRH Self-care Guidelines developed

In January 2023, the Kenya MOH launched the National SRH Self-care guidelines, which were developed by a technical committee comprised of the MOH and 24 partner organizations with technical leadership and logistical support from Ipas AA. Through these guidelines, healthcare providers across Kenya are equipped with the right skills and knowledge to manage RH self-care and are guided on the regulation of healthcare interventions.

Ipas further lent our technical expertise to support the development of the Big5 and the combi-pack guidelines, also led by the MOH and technical partners. Once implemented together, these guidelines complete the service delivery guidance for CAC in Kenya. The next steps involve their launch and dissemination.



Stakeholders taking part in telemedicine training in Rwanda



Kenya National SRH Self-care Guidelines developed

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Abortion self-use strengthened in Kenya

In 9 counties of Kenya, 2,454 women and girls received support to self-manage their abortions through Africa Alliance programs and cumulatively, 2,130 women and girls accessed contraception services from pharmacy outlets after self-managed abortion. This built on results from the previous year in which abortion self-use programs were initiated in 5 counties.

Ipas collaborated with pharmacists, pharmaceutical technologists, and community SRH Champions through trainings, VCAT, quality assurance visits to strengthen pathways to self-care delivery for medical abortion and post abortion contraception services. Community SHR champions and digital pathways such as Nurse Nisa and ask Nivi were also established as a significant alternative to access pathways for medical abortion drugs. This has greatly improved linkages across health facilities for expanded access to post abortion contraception options.

Ipas Africa Alliance technical staff published the results from our self-managed abortion programs in peer reviewed literature, cementing our contribution to abortion care knowledge markets.



2,454

WOMEN AND GIRLS RECEIVE SUPPORT TO SELF-MANAGE THEIR ABORTIONS



2,130

WOMEN AND GIRLS ACCESSED CONTRACEPTION SERVICES FROM PHARMACY OUTLETS



One of the Combi pack brands available for the clients for medical abortion self use.

2. DIGITAL PATHWAYS TO ABORTION AND POST ABORTION CONTRACEPTION ENHANCED

We reached 842 users in FY 23 cumulatively, with accurate information on abortion and post abortion contraception through the Nurse Nisa chatbot, compared to 218 users in FY 22. Of these, 444 accessed education content aimed at improving their general knowledge on abortion and post abortion contraception services, while 217 users received point of care content aimed at providing accompaniment support during a self-managed abortion. Another 181 users received both informational and point of care content.



Youths interacting with nurse nisa chatbot

Nimechanuka

Individuals are increasingly relying on digital information on highly sensitive topics like sexual and reproductive health (SRH) especially contraception and safe abortion. Nimechanuka, Ipas Africa Alliance's digital and social media platform, actively involves young people in health interventions to help bridge the gap in knowledge, self-efficacy and SRHR decision-making.

In FY 23, the Nimechanuka website reached approximately 10,000 new youth with information on reproductive health rights issues. The total number of returning visitors to the website was 19,557. Additionally, 334,355 Twitter(X) impressions were registered within the year.

The discussions held covered abortion, contraceptives, climate change, and international laws e.g., Maputo Protocol, and how they affect national policies. As a result of engagement on this platform, Ipas Africa Alliance's Nimechanuka digital platform received the 2022 award for Best Youth-run Sexual Health Platform from Global Health and Pharma as an online information-sharing platform for those in the healthcare and pharmaceutical industries.



842

**USERS
IN FY 23**

218

**USERS
IN FY 22**



19,557

WEBSITE IMPRESSIONS



334,355

TWITTER IMPRESSIONS

**“10,000 NEW YOUTH REACHED
WITH INFORMATION ON
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
RIGHTS ISSUES”**



Youth champions discussing the Nimechanuka platform and how best it can reach a wider network of people.



3. ABORTION AND SRH POLICY ENHANCED AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS

National RH Policy

In FY 23, Ipas Africa Alliance contributed its technical expertise to the development of the National Reproductive Health policy, led by the Ministry of Health. The policy development process was heavily influenced by opposition actors who rejected policy provisions for young people accessing reproductive health services without parental or guardian consent.

Subsequently, Ipas Africa Alliance collaborated with like-minded partners to hold the MOH accountable to the population and prevent the launching of the very restrictive policy. The policy is undergoing court review and will be invalidated if found inconsistent with the principles of the Kenyan Constitution.

Strategic Litigation

Ipas Africa Alliance has increased its presence in strategic litigation initiatives by directly supporting partners to undertake such strategic litigation. This support is offered through legal writing and drafting of the materials to be used in court. In FY 23, a progressive judgement was delivered in Malindi, Kenya, that reaffirmed the right of healthcare workers to provide abortion care as part of the reproductive health package, including to minors. This case is widely reported as the PAK case as it involved a minor, and its full citation is Constitutional Petition No. E009 OF 2020. The judgement resulted in expanded interpretation of existing reproductive health policy provisions. Ipas Africa Alliance also collaborated with other Ipas Nigeria and Ipas Malawi to initiate strategic litigation in those countries to advance access to reproductive health services.

African Commission on Human and People's Rights and the Campaign to Decriminalize Abortion

As a result of the relentless efforts of anti-rights actors to restrict access to sexual and reproductive health rights and services, many advocates and providers continue to face unprecedented levels of harassment and intimidation in their service delivery and advocacy interventions. In contrast, the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR) was undergoing a period of transition as new Commissioners were appointed and its budget was greatly reduced. Thus, the impact of the Commission was greatly hampered and there was a need to act.



Ipas Africa Alliance during the roundtable meeting with all the Commissioners at the sidelines of the 73rd Ordinary session.

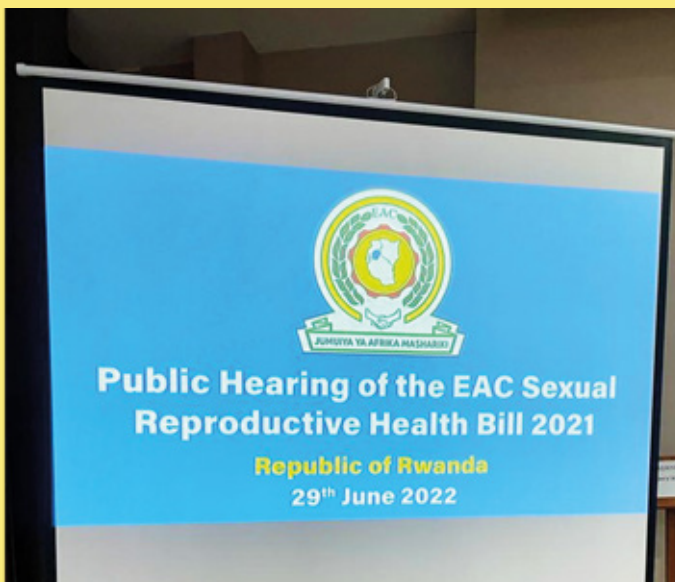
Once it was confirmed that the 73rd ordinary session of the ACHPR would be held physically, Ipas Africa Alliance's focus shifted to a session with all the commissioners at which we conducted values clarification sessions, which served to orient new commissioners and to solidify our support with the existing commissioners. These sessions resulted in several statements by the commissioners in support of access to reproductive health services including safe abortion and provided the foundation for revitalizing the Africa Coalition on Safe Abortion (ACSA) to support the Campaign to Decriminalize Abortion.

Ipas Africa Alliance also delivered statements at the two ordinary sessions of the ACHPR, as part of our role as an observer to the Commission. The statements highlighted the progress that is being made in the implementation of Article 14 of the Maputo Protocol which provides for reproductive health and access to safe and legal abortion care. The statements further highlighted the need to tackle the rise of opposition actors in the continent who are spreading misinformation and fear.

Ultimately, the Commission resolved to conduct a study on the situation of human rights defenders working on SRHR.

East African Sexual Reproductive Health Bill (EAC SRH Bill)

Ipas Africa Alliance supported national consultative dialogues in all the 6 EAC member states as part of our role as a member of the steering committee of CSOs that advocate for the successful passage of the EAC SRH Bill. During these dialogues, the 2021 Bill was subjected to public participation by diverse stakeholders and feedback was received on possible amendments. The Bill received overwhelming support from all the member states except in Uganda and Burundi where it met with resistance from opposition actors. Objections from the opposition were given a hearing and scrutinised by the General-Purpose Committee which is the main committee overseeing the bill. All the allegations were deemed unfounded, and the bill was subsequently tabled and approved for its first reading.



EAC workshop Reproductive Health Bill, June 2022

4. OPPOSITION MONITORING AND MITIGATION

Opposition monitoring and intelligence gathering

Through online research and monitoring, Ipas Africa Alliance gathered information on opposition strategies, activities, tactics, and events and contributed to content in Ipas's global Eye on the Rights (EOR) newsletter. As a direct consequence of these efforts, Ipas Africa Alliance jointly with youth champions and rapid response teams (RRTs) halted the launch of the Kenya National RH Bill and held joint press releases to mitigate opposition efforts.

Africa regional convening on challenging opposition on reproductive justice and human rights held 1st – 2nd Dec in Kigali, Rwanda

“FY 23 IPAS AFRICA ALLIANCE PROVIDED TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO RRTS IN KENYA AND UGANDA”



A panel discussion on challenging opposition on reproductive justice and human rights held 1st – 2nd Dec in Kigali, Rwanda

Strengthening Rapid Response Teams (RRTs)

A Rapid Response Team (RRT) is a team of individuals and civil society organizations (CSOs) that have joined efforts to provide a fast and effective response to threats emerging out of their day-to-day work in SRHR. In FY 23 Ipas Africa Alliance provided technical support to RRTs in Kenya and Uganda and supported the establishment of an RRT in Tanzania.

In Uganda, Ipas Africa Alliance mobilized the RRT to respond to an anti-rights meeting that brought together regional parliamentarians and international anti-rights activists. In Kenya, Ipas Africa Alliance worked to ensure that the RRT has a strategy to monitor and mitigate any attacks towards the RH Bill. Strategies included recruiting champions, articulating a work plan resource mobilization.

Youths as Champions in Opposition monitoring

Ipas Africa Alliance trained youth champions in the East Africa region on opposition monitoring and social listening skills. These youth have subsequently supported the Alliance's opposition monitoring work. For example, one of the trained youth champions attended and compiled intelligence on the “Chastity Conference on Responsible Human Relationships” held in Nairobi. During the same period another youth champion participated in an opposition meeting by the platform Mzazi (“parent” in Swahili) on “Emerging Threats against God’s Family” convened against the (African, Caribbean and Pacific -European Union (ACP-EU) economic partnership agreement while focusing on SRHR. The participation of the youth champions at these events provided deep insight into Opposition tactics and informed mitigation efforts.

5. MOVEMENTS BUILT TO SHIFT SOCIAL NORMS AND NARRATIVES

Ipas Africa Alliance continued to offer technical support to networks of key community stakeholders and CBOs in 13 Counties in Kenya to conduct community dialogues, one-on-one peer education sessions, and inter-generational forums that disseminated key abortion messages and debunked myths that have shrouded abortion for generations. These movements of stakeholders, led by high-ranking Sub-county level government officials, brought together the police, national administration, education officials, and religious leaders for community dialogues around SRHR and safe abortion. The dialogues were reported on the local radio and television stations, contributing to an enabling environment in communities for safe abortion conversations, service delivery and care seeking. This work has created abortion advocates out of community leaders who provide education, referrals, and space for abortion conversations for their constituents and congregants.

Complementarily, Ipas Africa Alliance introduced new social protection approaches by establishing three mother-to-mother support groups supporting 50 adolescent mothers and unsafe abortion survivors. In collaboration with local CBOs, the groups provide mentorship, psychological and psychosocial support to facilitate resilience at individual, family, and community level. This is aimed at reducing community backlash, community condemnation of women and girls seeking abortion services and to provide social support for allies. Learnings from the three groups will inform expansion efforts in subsequent program years.



Meeting with the local CSOs supporting SRHR work in Western part of Kenya.

6. RESEARCH AND LEARNING

Climate Justice: Preliminary Results and Recommendations, Next Steps

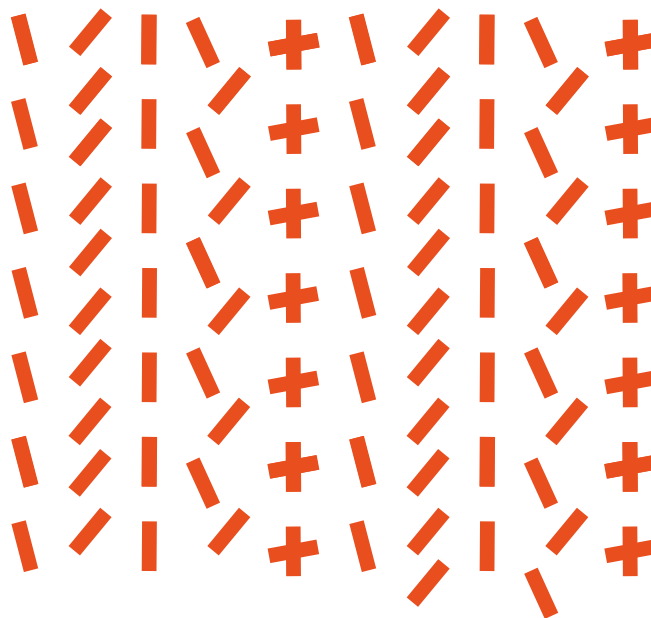
Ipas Africa Alliance staff led a study to understand the SRHR health system resilience during extreme climate conditions in arid- and semi-arid lands (ASAL) in Northern Kenya. The research fills an evidence gap concerning the impact of climate change on SRHR in ASAL communities. Study findings highlight the rigors imposed on traditional pastoralist livelihoods by environmental degradation, resulting in conflict with neighbouring ethnic groups over limited pastureland and dwindling livestock. The resultant migration increases distances from health facilities, interrupting contraceptive use, increasing the incidence of unplanned pregnancies, and unsafe abortions. Pregnant and postpartum women are vulnerable to miscarriage, unskilled delivery, and difficulty producing breastmilk during drought. Further, climate-induced economic instability is transforming gender roles. As SRHR is scantily addressed in climate action in Kenya and globally, findings concerning local adaptation strategies and health system risks will inform SRHR-integrated climate action to bolster the resilience of ASAL communities and health systems.

Pathways to Medical Abortion Self-Use

In August 2023 Ipas Africa Alliance staff published a peer-reviewed paper in BMC Women's Health, entitled "Pathways to medical abortion self-use (MASU): results from a cross-sectional survey of women's experiences in Kenya and Uganda." This study added to the global body of knowledge on women's experiences with MA. It highlighted the critical role played by community members as a valuable information resource for MA. The study also centered the importance of pharmacies and clinicians collaborating to support clients' abortion needs and contraceptive use after medical abortion (MA) within the context of weak health systems. Finally, the study recommended stronger and reliable supply chains for MA products to eliminate cost barriers to access.



Pharmacies as access points to MA products.



7. GRANT MAKING & PARTNERSHIPS

Stronger Partnerships - Nakuru Strategy

In June 2022, Ipas Africa Alliance collaborated with the Centre for Reproductive Rights (CRR) to bring together several SRHR actors in Nakuru, Kenya. The convening deliberated on an action plan to ensure the full implementation of the provisions of the Constitution of Kenya on safe and legal abortion and progressive court decisions issued so far. The outcome of the convening led to the development of a Strategy, named the Nakuru Strategy. The unanimous adoption of the Nakuru Strategy as a living document for the implementation of the constitutional provisions on safe and legal abortion in Kenya is a milestone that provides a legislative advocacy backbone for the safe abortion movement in Kenya.

CATALYSTS Consortium

In June 2022, following the landmark ruling on Roe v. Wade by the US Supreme Court, a group of Africa-focused abortion rights organizations (Ipas Africa Alliance, CRR Africa Regional Office, FIGO Africa Regional Office, Population Council and IPPF Africa Regional Office) recognized the need for an effective platform to protect and promote abortion rights in Africa. To address this critical gap, the organizations convened a workshop in Nairobi, involving a wider network of partners, to develop a Theory of Change and establish an abortion consortium. This consortium, named CATALYSTS, embraces a comprehensive vision of universal abortion rights and access to high-quality care, regardless of context or individual seeking care. CATALYSTS takes a bold, progressive, and African-led approach, aiming to champion a holistic and inclusive model of abortion care for all in Africa.

Alliances with the NGO Forum

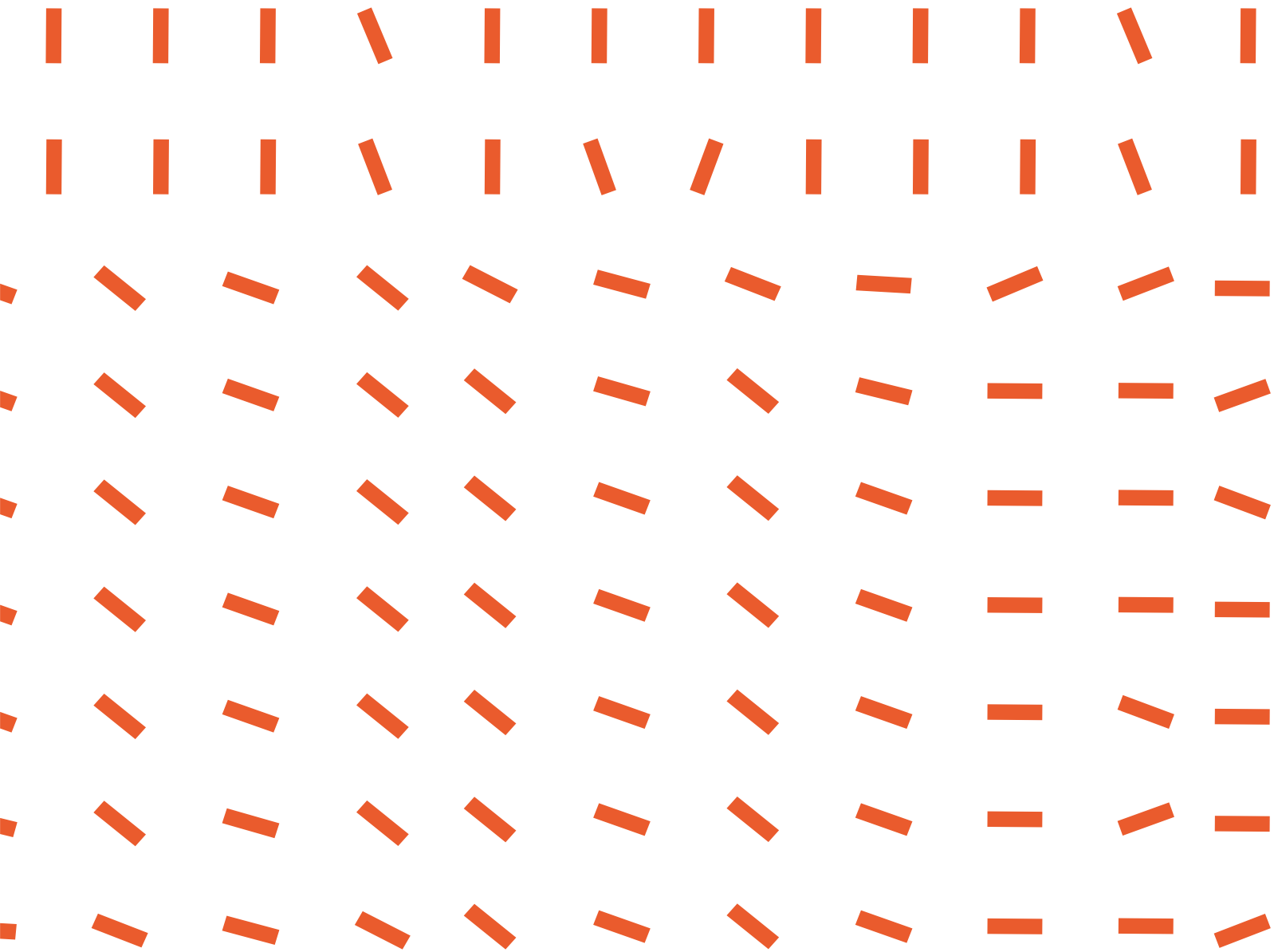
Ipas Africa Alliance is an active member and sponsor of the NGO Forum. The forum presents an opportunity for the alliance to show case our work and grow our network of partners across the region.

In the last NGO Forum in Arusha Tanzania, the alliance showcased its work on climate justice and how the adverse effects of climate change are affecting the reproductive health choices of many women and girls and how it is disproportionately affecting the rural and poor women and girls. Further, we highlighted our work on movement building and how we are growing strong grassroots movements in support of reproductive health rights.

The Alliance was recognised for its efforts and support with a certificate of recognition which was handed during the closing ceremony of the NGO forum session by the Chairperson of the ACHPR Hon. Commissioner Roy Lumbu. Lastly, our panel statements were incorporated in the final report of CSOs statement, and this was read at the opening session of the Commission.



Ipas staff receiving certificate of recognition at the NGO forum



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