Serving Humanity Across The Globe

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Legal Aid Disaster Relief Education United Nations Affiliated NGO



Letter from Our CEO



Dear donors and supporters,

To all those of you who have stood with UNITED SIKHS, who have – through your blood, sweat, and tears – given your dasvandh, a tenth of your earnings, for community service, who have entrusted us with your hard-earned money, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

It is only because of YOUR trust, belief, and generosity that we have been able to make such an impact on a global level.

In the wounded nation of Afghanistan, Sikhs and other suffering minorities were provided emergency relief in terms of food and medical assistance as well as legal aid for securing asylum elsewhere.

Our Pakistan team set out with missionary zeal, offering medical aid and emergency relief supplies to people across flood-affected regions. Additionally, our teams took special care to ensure the safe evacuation of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji, wherever it was enshrined and faced danger.

Powered by compassion and your generous contributions, our teams in Kenya donated food packets, distributed medical aid and educational materials, and helped set up specialized eye and maternity camps across abjectly poor neighborhoods.

In the U.S., our teams spearheaded diverse and laudable efforts, be it the relief activities carried out in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian in Florida, or the distribution of free meals on Skid Row in LA, California. What's more, the launch of the anonymous helpline number Umeed marks a step towards offering our daughters, sisters, and youth a chance to share and resolve their issues, and to make sure they do not have to suffer alone.

In India, we offered rock-solid support to men who had newly embraced Sikhism, helping them overcome legal hurdles with regard to their names on identity cards. Likewise, our legal team stood up for Sikh youths who faced fabricated charges in Nanded, assisting them in securing bail. In north-eastern Shillong, where our community members have long since faced persecution and cultural obfuscation, we helped deepen Sikh identity awareness by providing Punjabi and Gurmat classes to children. In Punjab, the glorious land of the Gurus, we organized the Gatka competition, fostering awareness and adoption of the Sikh martial arts. Through our participation in the Mattewara civil society protests, we exhibited our faith in the Sangat and their rightful refusal to watch the thoughtless destruction of their environment in silence. Our special ambulance sewa is continuing to provide emergency medical transport and save the lives of the needy in urban and remote, far-flung areas.

In Ukraine, at the outset of the war, we safely evacuated thousands of Sikh and Punjabi students, youth, and families, helping them reach safer grounds. As the war progressed, our teams served a million individuals, offering all kinds of assistance from warm meals to legal aid and medical training.

What is common to all these projects, activities, and efforts? Every single one of these was set in motion and carried forward by you, our precious donors.

A gesture of your trust and support, a donation from you – however small or large – means the world to us! At the end of the day, it is you who breathes life into our global works, elevating the lives of thousands of fellow human beings! UNITED SIKHS is your organization! No effort on our part is independent of you or our volunteers; every feat is collective and united!

We salute your kindness and magnanimity! We therefore beseech you to continue reposing your faith in UNITED SIKHS, enabling us to abide by and implement the teachings of our beloved Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji – to serve all of mankind, recognizing the whole human race as one!

Gurpreet Singh

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Who We Are?

UNITED SIKHS is a U.N.-affiliated, international non-profit, nongovernmental, humanitarian relief, and human rights advocacy organization. Established in 1999, UNITED SIKHS aims at and works towards empowering those in need, especially disadvantaged and minority communities all over the world.



Our Mission

To alleviate, educate, and protect the lives of underprivileged individuals and minority communities impacted by disasters - natural or manmade - suffering from hunger, illiteracy, disease, or from violation of civil and human-rights. We aim at transforming them into informed and vibrant members of society, fostering sustainable programs regardless of color, race, religion or creed.



What We Do

While UNITED SIKHS has chapters across the globe in North America, Asia, Africa, Australia and Europe, our activities are primarily based on three pillars – Humanitarian Aid (Sikh Aid), International Civil & Human Rights Advocacy (ICHRA), and Community Education and Empowerment Development (CEED).



INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY (ICHRA)



ICHRA helps advance the economic, social, and spiritual empowerment of minorities and other marginalized groups and individuals in need, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, social status, age, or ability. We achieve this by protecting and enforcing their fundamental civil and human rights.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT DEVELOPMENT (CEED)









UNITED SIKHS believes in empowering individuals and groups to help them attain their full potential and become active participants in society. Empowerment occurs largely through education, training, and community development projects. UNITED SIKHS aims at encouraging people to participate in the decisionmaking process in their respective local community as well as to take their place in the international arena.





Humanitarian action is intended to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity during and after man-made crises and natural disasters, as well as to prevent and strengthen emergency preparedness for such situations. The Sikh Aid team provides non-partisan global humanitarian disaster relief services that not only provide immediate aid, but also long-term rehabilitation for communities and individuals in need. Additionally, our teams run year-round projects to help eradicate poverty and work toward creating a healthier, happier world.





International Civil and Human Rights Advocacy (ICHRA)





UNITED SIKHS condemned the gang rape and torture of a 20-year-old Sikligar the daughter, writing to Indian National Human Rights Commission. We wrote a letter addressed to Justice Arun Kumar Mishra, chairman of the Indian Human Rights Commission, urging the commission to prosecute the perpetrators for the heinous crime committed against the 20-year old in Delhi, India. In addition, we worked to safety of the secure the victim and her family, according them police protection. Furthermore, we offered them free legal assistance and complete support, including counseling for the traumatized victim.





HELPING AFGHAN REFUGEES REACH SAFE GROUNDS





After many months of intense legal advocacy by the UNITED SIKHS International Civil and Human Rights Advocacy Team, we were able to secure asylum for 141 pre-selected Afghan minority refugees displaced by the conflict in Afghanistan.

The government of Mexico agreed to offer asylum to the Afghan minority refugees (Sikhs & Hindus) on humanitarian grounds.

3 local leaders availed this opportunity and migrated to Mexico, many families went to India and others in the pipeline. We set up a food bank for those that remained in Afghanistan. The food bank serves minority communities including Hindus, Sikhs and Hazaras. These humongous efforts involving government representatives, local community partners and other humanitarian agencies would never have been possible without the kindhearted support of donors like you.



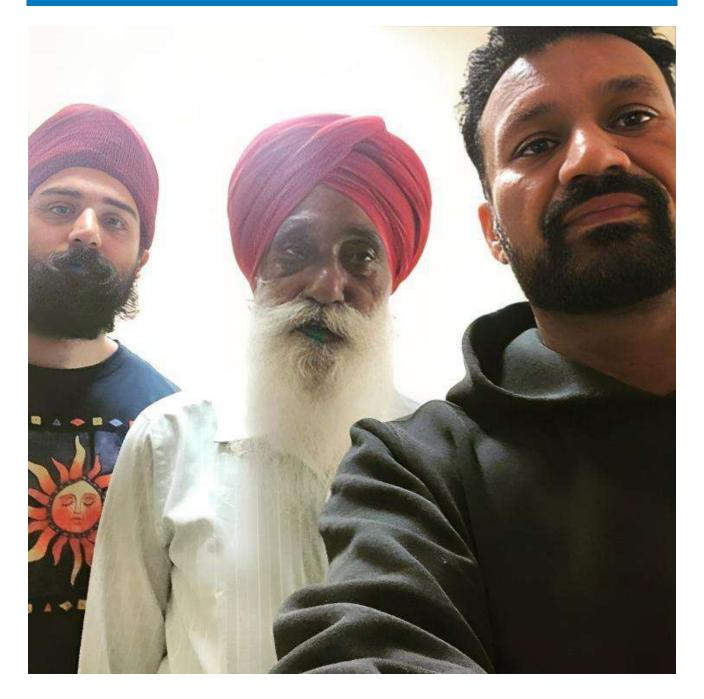
WALKING THE TALK: ACTING AGAINST HATE CRIMES



Sardar Nirmal Singh was strolling around 7am on Sunday, April 3, 2022, at 95th Avenue and Lefferts Boulevard in Richmond Hill, NYC when a stranger punched the elderly man in the nose. This blow to the face left the 70-year-old bleeding uncontrollably, even as he was rushed to the hospital. The police investigated the incident as a possible hate crime. The UNITED SIKHS legal team immediately stepped forward to represent Nirmal Singh Ji Pro-Bono in both the Immigration and Criminal Cases, reaching out to him and signing him up at 9:30 am EST (on April 4th). Our advocacy team was in communication with the United States Department of Justice and filed a complaint with the New York State Hate Crimes Task Force.



NO MORE TARGETED HATE CRIMES!



UNITED SIKHS joined the civil rights communities to call on U.S. Congress Members to sign on to a letter urging President Biden to ensure that black immigrants are not treated inhumanely. The Bicameral Letter to End Disparate Treatment of Black Migrants was circulated by various Congress Members who have shown solidarity with black immigrant families who for decades have been treated differently by the immigration authorities in the U.S.



BECOMING THE VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY: EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ON SIKH RELIGIOUS RIGHTS!





A Sikh student on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte was subjected to harassment, handcuffed, and detained merely for wearing a kirpan - a Sikh article of faith. On learning of the incident, UNITED SIKHS shared with them a Sikhism Fact Sheet. Later, we offered to provide sensitivity training about Sikhism and Sikh articles of faith to the university staff and security. UNITED SIKHS subsequently applauded the prompt response from the University, as Chancellor Dr. Sharon L. Gaber issued a public apology on the university website.



RIGHT AGAINST MIGHT





UNITED SIKHS stood with wrongfully arrested men during a peaceful annual rally for the 1984 Genocide Remembrance, giving them all the support they needed. We, along with other civil rights NGOs, not only wrote to Canadian MPs, but spoke out publicly to ensure that the Canadian government conducted a thorough investigation.

Likewise, indiscriminate charges were leveled against Sikh youths by the police in Nanded Sahib, India, after some of them crossed the barricades and scuffled with the police during the Hola Mahalla celebrations last year. The UNITED SIKHS legal team sought bail orders for many of them, obtaining anticipatory bails for 35 Sikhs.



THE 2023 CIVIL RIGHTS SURVEY



Since 2008, UNITED SIKHS has been conducting a survey to understand the challenges Sikhs face internationally. Through this, issues of discrimination have been brought to light, revealing varying degrees of severity across countries.

Like every year, UNITED SIKHS is conducting this anonymous survey in 2023 to find out how many Sikhs in our community are experiencing hate crimes or bullying and how much of their victimization is being reported – whether a hate crime, bullying in schools, profiling (by airport TSA officials or otherwise), or any form of employment discrimination. This survey helps us focus on our vision, create priorities, and provide direction to our overall ICHRA projects!







UNITED SIKHS joined civil rights communities to call on U.S. Congress Members to sign on a letter urging President Biden to ensure that black immigrants are not treated unfairly. The Bicameral Letter to End Disparate Treatment of Black Migrants was circulated by various Congress Members who have shown solidarity with black immigrant families who, for decades, have been treated differently by immigration authorities in the U.S.





Community Education and Empowerment Development (CEED)



CREATING HAPPY FEET FOR CHILDREN!



As a part of the winter distribution drive powered by our donors, the UNITED SIKHS team distributed shoes to the students of Bunga Mastuana Mahavidyalaya, Sabo ki Talwandi, India. Apart from regular subjects, the students here learn Gurbani vichar, santhiya, and kirtan. They were so moved by our gesture, they chanted simran, expressing their gratitude at the store.



FOSTERING SIKH CULTURE IN PAKISTAN, LUCKNOW & SHILLONG!



UNITED SIKHS has been continually Working toward instilling Sikh cultural awareness in children

Our team at UNITED SIKHS has been extending support to children who are eager to learn Gurmukhi but are only taught Hindi at their local school. Thanks to the grace of God and generous contributions from our donors, we have succeeded in acquainting a large number of such children with core aspects of Sikh culture. Many can now speak and read Punjabi with fluency and have even recited the Sehaj Path and Akhand Path Sahib.





Recent years have seen an alarming rise in targeted attacks against Sikhs

We have been working to offer resources for schools, colleges, and businesses with regard to counseling, hate crimes, and training on account of the growing number of hate crimes against the Sikh community. We are determined to continue advocating for dedicated resources and personnel from the Department of Justice to address hate crimes, to raise community awareness, and to educate the general public about these issues.



JOHAR-E-SHAMSHEER: NURTURING OUR ROOTS



Learning Sikh martial arts helps young people take pride in the rich martial heritage of the community

UNITED SIKHS allied with the International Fateh Academy, Sri Amritsar Sahib to organize Johar-e-Shamsheer, which translates to "the Skills with the Sword". The event saw teams from various countries compete and display their prowess in Gatka (Sikh martial arts). Prizes were awarded to the top teams. The goal was to inspire Sikh youth to celebrate the martial arts tradition, paying homage to the glorious Sikh armies throughout history.





The UNITED SIKHS team lent their support to the popular campaign to save the lungs of Punjab — the Mattewara forest reserve. The Punjab government had planned to set up an industrial park around Mattewara Forest near the Sutlej River, which would have led to mass destruction of trees, air pollution, and water pollution. Already suffering from scant forest cover, the environment would have suffered irreparable damage as a result of the destruction of this forest. Our teams joined the protest campaigns, setting up water kiosks in the sweltering weather for the activists who eventually succeeded in pressuring the government to overturn its decision.

GIVING BIRTH TO HOPE – UMEED!



FAMILY HELP CENTER UMEED (HOPE) HELPLINE

CONFIDENTIAL | 24/7

You are not alone, we're here to help find you the resources you need

1-855-US-UMEED OR 1-855-878-6333

Our Mission

To provide social support, prevention strategies and coordinated services information in order to build a safe, strong and caring community.



We can help you find professionals & resources for :

- 👹 Senior Care Services
- S Domestic Violence Counseling
- Substance Abuse Counseling
- Distress Counseling after a Disaster
- 🔮 Social Support Services
- Mental Health Support & Counseling

At times, it is stigma that stops people from speaking out. At other times, it is a feeling of hopelessness arising out of not knowing whom to reach out to. This is exactly what inspired the creation of Umeed (meaning hope), the latest community-driven initiative from UNITED SIKHS.

Umeed is a 24/7 helpline number in principle but could be a potential lifeline to those in real need. Launched to provide social support, prevention strategies, and coordinated services information with regard to stigma-inducing issues such as domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental health, Umeed aims at helping the most vulnerable find the resources they need, at a time they need it the most with 100% confidentiality intact.





SIKH AID: GLOBAL DISASTER RELIEF





UNITED SIKHS ambulances are available 24*7 and 100% free, so as to keep serving the poorest of poor everywhere.

The year 2022 saw UNITED SIKHS ambulances continue serving the ailing and injured, rushing for critical medical assistance all through the year, remaining available round the clock and free of cost in Ludhiana, Delhi, Bengaluru. Thousands of patients needing emergency medical transport reached out to the UNITED SIKHS ambulance service to get urgent medical treatment.



A UNITED SIKHS ambulance at work during COVID-19

Commemorating the birth and death anniversary of Bhai Ghanaiya Ji on September 20 – "Marham-Patti Divas" – UNITED SIKHS launched 3 more ambulances, extending the medical assistance. To meet the rising demand for more ambulances in North India, the ambulances were flagged for Sri Amritsar, Jammu and, western Ludhiana. A blood donation camp was also organized to mark the occasion.

The cost to operate a fully-equipped ambulance with a 3-person medical staff team is roughly 1000 USD or 90,000 INR per month.

We are confident our donors will not only give us support to keep the existing ambulance sewa up and running, but help us expand it to other towns and cities!



BLANKETING THE NEEDY IN WARMTH & LOVE!



A UNITED SIKHS blanket distribution drive in progress in Delhi, India.

Winter can be ruthless for the less privileged. The UNITED SIKHS team in Delhi, India organized a Blanket Distribution Drive, giving out blankets for free to help the underprivileged brave the chill.



...So No-One Could Say 'I can't Breathe'!



Amidst the rapid spread of the COVID Omicron variant and alarming news of rising cases being recorded in Indian government hospitals, a UNITED SIKHS team visited the B.K. Civil Hospital in Faridabad, Delhi NCR, India, providing oxygen concentrators and medicines to help combat the deadly disease. Our team also distributed N95 masks and spread awareness about the importance of precautionary measures to break the chain of COVID.







A UNITED SIKHS team visited a slum cluster in Greater Faridabad in Delhi NCR, India. Living in mice-infested hovels, the slum dwellers lacked even basic amenities. With tarpaulin sheets for a roof, their shack homes were grossly inadequate for the chilly winters. UNITED SIKHS distributed warm clothes and blankets at this slum. The residents paid us in full with their gracious smiles!



A FLOOD OF SUPPORT DURING THE ASSAM FLOODS!



Our teams helped hundreds of Assam flood victims with food & other essentials

Unprecedented floods in the North-Eastern Indian state of Assam wreaked havoc across the region, throwing thousands of lives into disarray. We started a langar sewa (hot meal distribution) for 71 Sikh families in Chaparmukh and 300 families in Barkhola while distributing basic necessities such as medicines, clothes, sleeping bags, toothpaste, soaps, biscuits, socks, mosquito coils, and ration supplies including milk, oil, spices, and lentils.



FLOODS IN PUNJAB! UNITED SIKHS TO THE RESCUE!



A few hours of rain led to severe waterlogging in several villages of Sri Muktsar Sahib in Punjab, India. UNITED SIKHS relief teams sprang into action, setting up medical camps in the area to prevent an outbreak of disease.

UNITED SIKHS teams set up medical camps Across several inundated villages of Sri Muktsar Sahib, Punjab, India.





UNITED SIKHS teams of volunteers provided critical emergency relief and medical aid to the flood-affected in Pakistan.

The Pakistan floods led to immeasurable damage, causing human and livestock casualties, and destroying homes and public infrastructure. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) reported that over 218,000 houses had been destroyed and 452,000 partially damaged. Nearly 2 million acres of crops and orchards had also been impacted.

Over 800,000 livestock deaths by flooding caused the carcasses to float in stagnant water, resulting in an eruption of diseases including skin infections and diarrhea. There was an urgent need for medical aid to contain the outbreak.

Undaunted by the situation, the UNITED SIKHS Pakistan Chapter responded swiftly to the flood crisis, deploying teams and mobilizing resources for emergency relief in several affected areas. Our teams distributed free cooked rice, biscuits, bread, mineral water, clothes, and infant milk at the rescue camps of Charsadda district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

Additionally, our teams of volunteers extended assistance, including hundreds of hot meals, water bottles, and mosquito kits, to people in Bagan Wah in Kashmore district, Sindh where the floods had displaced more than 200 families. The UNITED SIKHS medical aid team led by our volunteer Dr. Sagarjeet Singh set up medical camps to assist the ailing, providing free treatment to over 400 flood victims suffering from malaria, gastroenteritis, skin disease, and other medical conditions.



OFFERING REFUGEE FAMILIES A SANCTUARY OF HOPE



A UNITED SIKHS team visited a group of Sikh families who had recently migrated from Pakistan and were living in an unorganized refugee colony in Faridabad in Delhi NCR, India. Apart from their squalid living conditions, these families were faced with the double whammy of an ongoing third wave of COVID-19 and a severe winter. The UNITED SIKHS team distributed tarpaulins, blankets, masks, vitamin C tablets and, sanitary pads to the families.



EXPANDING EFFORTS ON A WAR FOOTING DURING THE UKRAINE WAR!



At the very outset of the war, a virtual desk was set up to promptly respond to the needs of students and residents from Punjab and South Asia displaced by the war.



COMMITTED TO HELPING COMMUNITIES IN HUMANITARIAN CRISES

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A UNITED SIKHS food truck served over 2000 refugees every day. A dozen volunteers from the United States, Germany, and United Kingdom were on the ground, providing hot cooked meals, water, and sanitation kits.





A group of UNITED SIKHS volunteers traveled to Lviv, the largest city in western Ukraine, to offer assistance to an orphanage in urgent need of relief supplies.



A group of UNITED SIKHS volunteers traveled to Lviv, the largest city in western Ukraine to serve a children's hospital.



The sewa of bringing ਸੈਂਚੀਆਂ ('Sainchian/religious scriptures') and ਗੁਟਕੇ ('Gutke/sacred prayer tablets') from the port city of Odessa in Ukraine was made successful by the joint efforts of Sikh Defense Network-UK, Sikh Dharma International and the UNITED SIKHS. The holy scriptures are being respectfully brought into the United Kingdom, where they will be received by the Sangat and then taken to the National Sikh Museum in Derby, UK. In a nutshell, the generous contributions of our donors and unceasing efforts of our volunteers enabled us to serve over 1 million in Ukraine since the outbreak of the war.



PROJECT BRAVEHEART

Additionally, we launched a first-ever 'train-the-trainer' program in which 50 civilians were given tactical medical training. Deriving inspiration from Bhai Ghanaiya ji's legacy of providing humanitarian assistance in conflict zones, this UNITED SIKHS-designed tactical medical program is intended to equip civilians with emergency medical training, so as to enable them to offer military-level assistance and basic medical treatment to victims in conflict zones.



The tactical medical program is designed to equip civilians with emergency medical training and help them save maximum lives.

https://unitedsikhs.org/join-us/



BAILING OUT THE BELEAGUERED IN KENYA!



A UNITED SIKHS volunteer carrying out sewa in Nairobi, Kenya

Steeped in abject poverty, the shanty towns of Nairobi, Kenya tell a sad story of generational economic stagnation, disease, and crime. UNITED SIKHS Kenya organized a food donation program at the Mathare Hospital Ward Area of Nairobi on Sunday, the 3rd of April, 2022. The team also met a self-help group for the severely disabled and some of their caregivers to understand the challenges they faced.

In addition, our team arranged a free medical camp for residents of North Embakasi in partnership with former Prime Minister Raila Odinga. We helped set up special maternity clinics in North Imenti with a view to prevent widespread infant and maternal mortality. We also provided food, clothing, and medical supplies to residents of Githogoro slum soon after a devastating fire consumed several shanties. Last but not least, our teams of volunteers cleaned up the enormous open sewers that lined the warren of shack homes.



HURRICANE IAN RELIEF, FLORIDA



Hurricane Ian ravaged Florida, causing deaths, devastation, and displacement.



Our volunteers in Florida extended doorstep assistance to hundreds of Hurricane victims

Hurricane Ian caused colossal devastation across swathes of Florida, damaging homes and infrastructure. As part of our Hurricane Ian Relief work in Florida, UNITED SIKHS volunteers reached out to the distressed victims, lending hope and support, and providing door-to-door assistance including essentials such as non-perishable food items, water, fruit, and vegetables. Our volunteers from Fort Myers, Gurdwara Sahib Tampa Bay, Fort Lauderdale and Miami graciously joined us in the sewa to serve families in need.



SERVING THE HOMELESS IN CALIFORNIA



Volunteers preparing meals on a Saturday morning for the homeless encampment in Skid Row, downtown Los Angeles

UNITED SIKHS volunteers have long been serving the hungry and homeless in California

For the past 6 years, volunteers from Los Angeles gather every Saturday to deliver freshly-cooked meals to one of the largest homeless encampments in the country. About 300 meals are distributed each week along with other relief supplies like blankets, sleeping bags and warm clothing in the winter months.





In Vancouver, Canada, UNITED SIKHS provided winter essentials such as blankets, gloves, socks, hats, and shoes to the indigent and homeless, helping them get through the bitterly cold winter months. A special mention goes to our kind supporters Rajveer Singh and his son, Tejveer Singh who graciously donated blankets to UNITED SIKHS in Toronto.



SERVING FOOD THAT NOURISHES THE SOUL & STOMACH!



UNITED SIKHS volunteers in London in Ontario, Canada have been lovingly preparing and serving hot meals to people on Richmond Street in the downtown area. Close to 250 people are fed every month as part of this free langar sewa. The meals served are filling and wholesome, consisting typically of rice, chickpea curry, fruit, a small bag of chips, a dessert, and a juice box. Occasionally, the service also includes donating clothes and blankets to the needy.



UNITED SIKHS: THE FIRST SIKH-LED, UNITED NATIONS-AFFILIATED ORGANIZATION

In 2007, UNITED SIKHS became a United Nations-affiliated, Department of Public Information-associated non-governmental organization. Being able to retain this title is no less of an honor given the stringent requirements of maintaining this designation. These include undertaking the responsibility of raising awareness with regard to issues on the UN agenda in local communities, and actively promoting issues of international concern.

In a nutshell, through our work as an advocacy, community empowerment, and humanitarian aid organization, we strive to carry out the UN's mission of viewing residents of all nations as equal citizens of the world. Consequently, accredited representatives of UNITED SIKHS have had access as observers to all UN facilities and open meetings of the UN bodies. Representatives are also invited to attend the Thursday NGO briefings organized by the Department, featuring UN officials, Government delegates and other experts, including NGOs. Every major relief project initiated by UNITED SIKHS works with a UN cluster, and all our humanitarian development works are carried out to advance the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. UNITED SIKHS looks forward to deepening the relationship with the world's only true international governmental, judicial, and peacekeeping institution so as to better serve humanity.

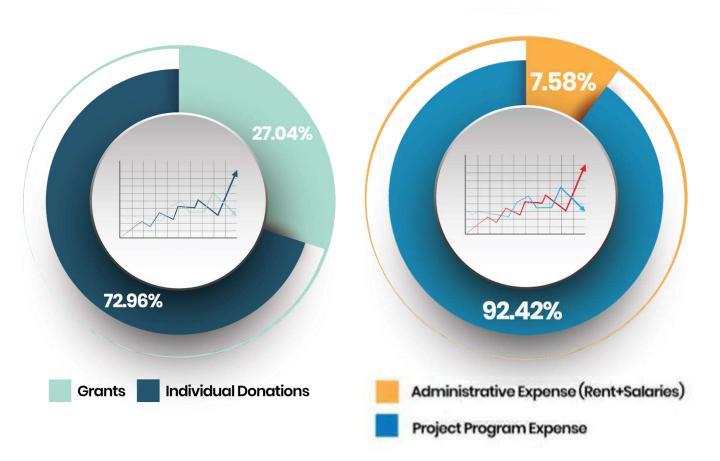
Finances

Ever since the inception of UNITED SIKHS, we have maintained meticulous transparency in all aspects of operations, particularly finances.

In 2022, 92.52 percent of the donations and grants we received reached those in need around the world, while only 7.52 percent was used to pay for administrative expenses and salaries to those effectively running these programs across the globe. Thanks to our stringent audits and sound financial practices, we have been receiving a 4/4 rating on Charity Navigator and a Gold rating on Guidestar.

The trust and credibility we have earned over the years has led even wellknown organizations such as New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, CACF, INDIA HOME, RADxUP, Hepatitis B Foundation, and NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs to count on us to deliver results.

Our biggest strength lies in support from individual donors like you!



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