

# GUN FREE SOUTH AFRICA ANNUAL REPORT 2016/2017

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### Introduction/ Strategic Framework

Gun Free South Africa (GFSA) is a national NGO committed to reducing gun violence through public policy advocacy, education and awareness raising, and community mobilisation.

This annual report covers the work undertaken by GFSA in the period 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2017.

The report is structured according to GFSA's key strategic objectives namely:

- Strengthening the Law
- Engaging Youth
- Key Campaigns
- Media Advocacy
- Organisational Development



### **ACRONYMS**

List of acronyms used in this report:

**CFR: Central Firearms Registry** 

**CPF: Community Policing Forum** 

CRF: Children's Radio Foundation

CSP: Civilian Secretariat for Police Service

DPCI: Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation

**DVA: Domestic Violence Act** 

EU: European Union

FCA: Firearms Control Act

GFSA: Gun Free South Africa

IPID: Independent Police Investigative Directorate

PCOP: Portfolio Committee on Police

PSIRA: Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority

SALGA: South African Local Government Association

**UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund** 



### Chairperson's Report 2016/17

With each passing year the work of Gun Free South Africa becomes more urgent and more important. I wish it were not so. But each year we witness terrifying gun violence within our country and across the world. Besides the actual survivors of gun violence and the families of gun violence victims, GFSA knows just how terrifying and pervasive gun violence is because we track it in all its ugly forms.

It is one of the sad and perplexing ironies that a gun is often present in a huge variety of violences but it goes undetected and almost unnoticed. A gun is often one of the obvious common denominators in: political killings; suicide; femicide; family killings; crime and robbery; car hi-jacking; cash-in-transit heists; taxi violence; and gang violence. It is so obviously present but few seem to see it – and therefore it stubbornly remains. It is GFSA's role to point it out. GFSA shines a spotlight on the gun because it is the gun, when present, that escalates all forms of violence:

It is the gun that narrows the options for any chance of reducing or resolving the violence.

It is the gun that speeds up the pace of violence.

It is the gun that extends the range of the violence.

It is the gun that lengthens the lethality of the violence.

One of the reasons why the gun stubbornly remains is because of the strong myth: "a gun keeps you safe". Challenging the lie of this myth will always be the work of GFSA. Sadly enough people may only realise it to be a lie through the uncompromising evidence of more violence and death.

Another reason – especially in South Africa – why the gun may remain invisible is because there are so many other contributing reasons for the violence: Our violent colonial and racist apartheid history; our present perverse inequality; our hyper-patriarchy to name a few. By focusing on the gun GFSA will always run the risk of being misunderstood as being simplistic in our attempt to make SA safer for all. However, GFSA is not being simplistic.

We understand the inter-sectional and complex nature of the violence in SA and support all who work in these important fields, yet what we offer is something unique, namely, a practical, evidence-based approach to reducing violence and the lethality of violence by removing the gun. As in the past GFSA has over the last two years ensured that peer-reviewed research to this fact receives broader coverage.

### Chairperson's Report 2016/17

One of the continuing frustrations for GFSA is that much of our advocacy work revolves around the Firearms Control Act Amendment Bill. The frustration lies in the fact that GFSA has no control over the timing of when this Bill will come before Parliament. It demands the difficulty of balancing an "ever-readiness" without putting all other work on hold. The consoling grace is that we know that when it does hit the floor of parliament GFSA will be ready.

The sign of a healthy organisation is that it is able to change and transform as is needed. Similarly it is good for an organisation to try new strategies and come at the "same old issue" from fresh angles. Over the last two years GFSA has done this and will continue to do so through partnerships such as the one with Children's Radio Foundation (CRF) which facilitates extended coverage of the gun issue across 18 community radio stations. This is again testimony to a creative GFSA partnership where all parties grow and develop though creative relationship with each other.

Finally, as we have learnt over the years and been reminded of again during this period, especially from the USA, we will never know what will be the straw that breaks the camel's back regarding gun violence. We will never know which policy or tragic shooting will precipitate a mass response as seen from school learners all over the States. Similarly in South Africa, this final straw may take place outside of GFSA's direct and planned influence and be seemingly unrelated to our years and years of work. This matters not, for the task of GFSA is not to predict the final straw, but to patiently (and impatiently!) persist in loading the camel, always trusting that the final straw will one day come.

May it happen soon! Peace, Alan Storey



# **Key Achievements**

• GFSA has continued to play an important role in shaping the policy and programming environment with regard to strengthening firearms control systems and enforcement of the Firearms Control Act (FCA) as well as lobbying to strengthen the law. One of the ways in which GFSA does this is through the development and distribution of relevant, evidence-based policy briefings on firearms-related matters. Over this two year period GFSA developed 18 Firearms Control Briefings, with the first of our briefings in 2017 being included on the Safer Spaces website allowing for a wider consumption and extending our reach.

During 2016 GFSA was invited to attend a Portfolio Committee on Police (PCoP) meeting examining the circumstances of police killings while on and off duty. This has remained an area of research and lobbying as GFSA has explored ways in which to increase police member safety.

The two most significant policy interventions in 2017 were inputs to the PCoP: one on the Firearms Amnesty: Ten Factors for Success on 15 March 2017; and the second on the Integrated Firearms Control Management System presented on 1 September 2017 as the SAPS gave a progress report on the Central Firearms Registry (CFR) turn-around strategy.

GFSA has also continued to position itself within the broader violence prevention field emphasising how reducing gun violence can strengthen other violence prevention interventions, such as reducing access to alcohol and early childhood development initiatives.

• GFSA undertook several successful social media campaigns in 2016/17 in collaboration with strategic partners, including the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and Sonke Gender Justice. These were aligned to key calendar events such as Valentine's Day when our #GunFreeValentine campaign raised awareness of the risks that guns pose to women in their home; in August, which is women's month, we profiled resilient women who have survived gun violence, telling their stories on video and posting these on our website; and the annual 16 days of activism when we ran workshops for NGOs working in the violence prevention sector on understanding the law and how, with the Domestic Violence Act (DVA), the FCA can assist in removing guns from the home.

# **Key Achievements**

- GFSA and CRF established a meaningful and mutually beneficial partnership in early 2016, resulting in a two year project funded by the European Union (EU), to provide young people with information to raise awareness of violence and gun violence in their communities. The partnership will support young radio reporters to create community strategies to build safer communities through broadcast, outreach activities and parliamentary submissions as gun laws come under review. The project was launched in Cape Town on 3rd August 2017.
- GFSA ventured into the arena of pursuing social justice through the courts. In 2017 GFSA was admitted as Amicus Curiae in the SA Hunters vs the Ministry of Police case regarding the constitutionality of s24 and s28 of the FCA. Although the Judge in the High Court ruled in favour of the SA Hunters in July 2017, the successful appeal by the Minister to the Constitutional Court was heard in early 2018, at which GFSA was once again admitted as Friend of the Court. Being admitted as Amicus in both instances demonstrates that GFSA is regarded as having the necessary expertise to assist in helping the Court make an informed judgment, as our primary input emphasised the principle of the renewals of firearm licences as well as highlighting SA's international legal obligations for the effective control of firearms within its national borders.
- One of the most significant developments for GFSA during this period has been the restructuring and growth of the organisation. This included a new management structure, with new staff positions and new areas of work: a specialist researcher, communications and community stakeholder officer, a finance administrator, and a director.



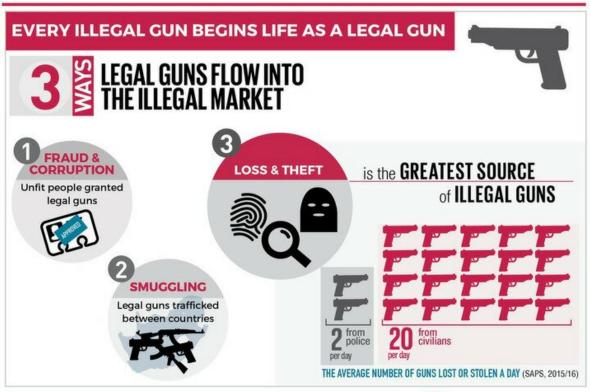
# 1. STRENGTHENING THE LAW: ADVOCATING FOR POLICIES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO BUILDING SAFE COMMUNITIES

Once again the Firearms Control Amendment Bill was not brought to Parliament over this period primarily due to two factors: the instability in the political leadership both within the Police Ministry and the SAPS as well as the national political leadership of the country; and the ongoing review of the 2015 Amendment Bill which included extensive consultation with the SAPS entities, namely the Civilian Secretariat for Police (CSP), PSIRA, IPID, DPCI and the Firearms Appeal Board before finalising the Draft Bill.

Advocating for the strengthening of the FCA and its enforcement has remained a strong focus for GFSA during this period, highlighting the importance of enforcement as a key element in effective implementation of the law, including the need for an integrated firearms control management system.

Focusing on the impact of illegal weapons has been an important and necessary strategic shift for GFSA as it links directly to the greater emphasis that GFSA is placing on the importance of enforcement as a means to reduce and prevent gun deaths. The development of the infographic *Where do Illegal Guns Come From? is* a concrete demonstration of this shift and has been very well received especially by community activists.

#### WHERE DO ILLEGAL GUNS COME FROM?



OFFICIAL TIP-OFF LINES

www.saps.gov.za/crimestop/crimestop.php info@gfsa.org.za | www.gfsa.org.za | @GunFreeSA

www.corruptionwatch.org.za/report-corruption iss@issafrica.org | www.issafrica.org | @issafrica



# 1. STRENGTHENING THE LAW: ADVOCATING FOR POLICIES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO BUILDING SAFE COMMUNITIES

#### **ACTIVITIES/OUTPUTS**

- Advocating for and supporting national firearms amnesties: During 2016/17 GFSA continued to lobby SAPS to hold a national firearms amnesty which included developing and distributing two policy briefs: one identifying the key elements of a successful amnesty; and the other using Brazil as a case study to demonstrate success in how to conduct an amnesty. Lobbying efforts were also directed at the CSP and the members of the PCoP both of which are in support of this intervention. However, the instability and changes at senior leadership level contributed to no final approvals given for the 2017 amnesty which was postponed into 2018. GFSA also collaborated with the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) in raising awareness on the importance of destroying surplus stocks through marking the annual International Gun Destruction Day on 9th July and in 2016 GFSA was invited by the SAPS to speak at the public destruction at Arcelor Mittal.
- Developing Firearms Control Briefings: GFSA continued to develop and distribute regular Firearms Control Briefings seeking opportunities to engage key topical issues such as commemorating the 5th anniversary of the Marikana massacre with a briefing issued on 15th August 2017 - this was a departure from our usual briefings, being issued in partnership with Corruption Watch and ISS in support of their #TopCopSA campaign; and using the most recent UN report on children and armed violence to focus on gun violence and children in SA, especially in the Western Cape.
- **Telling the Story of Gun Control in SA:** Research was conducted during 2017 with the focus on tracking the implementation of the FCA: this included working with the Medical Research Council of South Africa to access data on gunshot deaths from StatSA's Nesstar system; accessing and analysing media reports; SAPS annual reports; and Parliamentary Monitoring Group reports dating from 1999.
- Making a submission to the High Level Panel on the Assessment of Key
   Legislation: GFSA also made a submission to the High Level Panel on the Assessment
   of Key Legislation, providing evidence of the positive impact that the FCA has had on
   lives saved, as well as emphasising the importance of the enforcement of the FCA to
   ensure that the gains made are not lost.



#### 2. ENGAGING YOUTH AS A CONSTITUENCY

During 2017 GFSA made important progress in taking forward this strategic objective as articulated at the 2016 strategic review meeting. Perhaps the most significant growth in this new area of work is the deepening of the relationship with CRF which included: holding several workshops with CRF staff and the Young Reporters Network (YRN) five regional facilitators on key issues such as gender, violence and guns and exploring the parliamentary process; developing content for 10 of the production guides; and witnessing young people engage with the impact of gun violence in their communities, arguing passionately for local solutions. GFSA also began to explore a more formal relationship with the Social Justice Coalition (SJC), beginning to work with their youth constituency in Khayelitsha and Phillipi on understanding the link between illegal and legal guns.



#### 2. ENGAGING YOUTH AS A CONSTITUENCY

#### **ACTIVITIES/OUTPUTS**

- **Exploring youth and guns:** A research report on young people's attitudes, perceptions, beliefs and experiences of guns and gun violence which was finalised in 2017 has been used by GFSA to develop a baseline survey as part of the Raith Foundation youth funding proposal in communities affected by gun violence such as Alexandra Township in Gauteng.
- Working with affected communities: GFSA worked in several communities in the
  Western Cape through partnerships with organisations located in these communities
  such as New World Foundation (Lavender Hill) and Ithemba Labantu (Phillipi). This
  included several workshops doing community violence mapping, sharing information
  on the nature and extent of gun violence in SA, and exploring how to support
  communities in developing local solutions such as declaring their homes, courts and
  public spaces as Gun-Free Zones.
- Working with survivors and victims of gun violence: This is an emerging theme, with increased traffic on the GFSA website as a source of advice; many people who request further assistance through the info@ email address often reference the website as a place where they have gotten information on for example, how to remove a gun from the home. GFSA has also provided extensive support to Mr Dube and his family following the accidental shooting of his son in June 2017. This has included helping him navigate the criminal justice system; connecting him to senior SAPS officials to assist with the negligent firearm's use charge; sourcing pro bono legal support; attending some of the court proceedings; and helping him to tell his story through a GFSA video on our website and a GroundUp interview.
- Appointing new staff: Two young members were appointed in 2017 to focus on improving our social media reach and extending our reach into communities through developing a youth-based network focused on violence prevention at the local level.



#### 3. KEY CAMPAIGNS

Campaigning is a key element of GFSA's modus operandi and over the last few years has taken on a number of forms including short sharp social media campaigns, while developing partnerships in the execution of the campaigns remaining a strong feature. The campaigns usually follow calendar themes such as Valentines Day, Women's Month and 16 Days of Activism against Violence.

#### **ACTIVITIES/OUTPUTS**

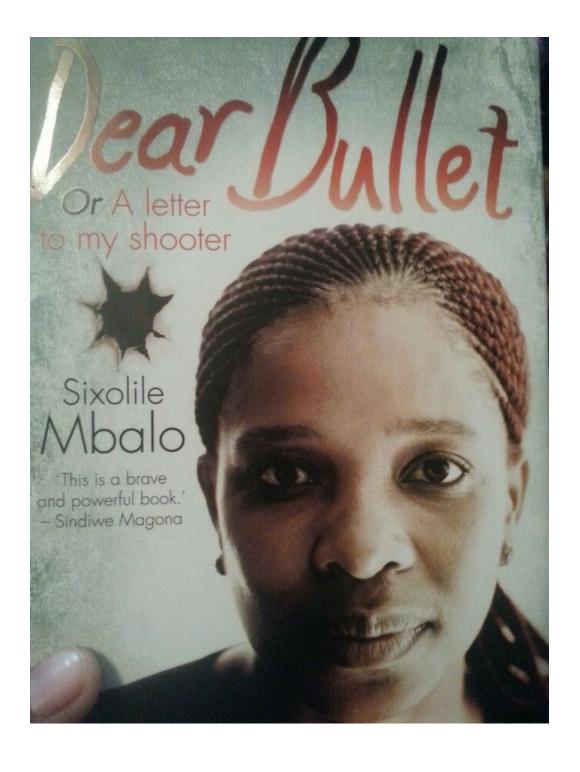
**#GunFreeValentine:** Since the killing of Reeva Steenkamp with a legal gun by her male partner on Valentines Day, GFSA has campaigned to raise awareness of the risk of having a gun in the home. The hearts campaign, developed by Young and Rubicam, making the point: guns don't belong in a relationship.



#### 3. KEY CAMPAIGNS

#### **ACTIVITIES/OUTPUTS**

women, encouraging them to tell their stories which were offered to the media and posted on our website. An example is Sixolile Mbalo. She shares her life experience with the bullet – that is lodged in her neck – through her memoir. Years after being viciously attacked, Sixolile faced her attacker and also worked within the Western Cape's prisons discussing themes such as forgiveness, respect and responsibility, and the effects of the prisoners' crimes on their families, communities and society at large.



#### 3. KEY CAMPAIGNS

#### **ACTIVITIES/OUTPUTS**

• Handing out tampons for #Women'sMonth: GFSA's Bul-lets campaign, undertaken in partnership with the Reeva Steenkamp Foundation and Black Girl Fat Girl Magazine, involved handing out packets of tampons, renamed Bul-lets, to women leaders across the country, including Lady Skollie. Included in the packaging was an illustration of how to use tampons in the event of a shooting, so comparing homes where domestic violence occurs to battlefields where tampons have been used as a quick fix for bullet wounds. The purpose of the campaign was to empower women to know that the FCA includes provision for any woman who lives in fear of violence in her home to ask the police to remove the gun immediately.



#### 4. MEDIA ADVOCACY

The media is a fundamental tool to raising public awareness and GFSA continued to enjoy excellent media coverage throughout this period. The growth of social media also means that our Twitter @GunFreeSA account is active and engaging daily with issues relating to guns and violence. Here is a snapshot of some of our media presence.

**Annual crime stats:** GFSA engaged with the media following the release of SAPS' annual crime statistics in both 2016 and 2017. The ISS also included GFSA as a media contact to unpack those factors that have contributed to the rising use of guns in crime during this time.

**International Gun Destruction Day:** GFSA spoke at the SAPS 2016 gun destruction event, resulting in significant coverage. Although there was no public gun destruction in 2017, GFSA issued a media release on the importance of regular gun destructions which got significant uptake and coverage, including on the eNCA breakfast show, the Cape Argus and Radio 702.

**Phillipi & Las Vegas shootings:** GFSA undertook extensive media engagement following two mass shootings that took place just days apart in South Africa and the United States: Eleven young black men were shot and killed in Marikana, Phillipi East, an informal settlement 25 kilometres from Cape Town; the next evening 60 concert-goers attending a country music festival in Las Vegas were gunned down. In our media work, which included issuing statements and op-eds, we emphasised the link between gun availability and violence and called for immediate action to mop up the existing pool of guns and stop the flow of new guns into communities.

MEDIA COVERAGE OF GFSA 2016/2017

Medium	Highlights
Radio Interviews	98 Radio Interviews conducted on radio stations across the country including 702, YFM, SAFM, Radio Islam and East Coast radio.
Newspaper Articles	35 Newspaper articles quoting GFSA appeared in leading publications such as the City Press, Sunday Tribune, Cape Argus.
Television	GFSA appeared in 16 Television interviews including ENCA, SABC TV news.
Online	11 electronic articles featured GFSA including a piece on Marie Claire website and international Buzzfeed website.
Magazines	2 magazine articles

### **GFSA** Networking

GFSA attended a number of events such as seminars, Community Policing Forum (CPF) meetings, and Embassy dialogues that enabled us to develop new relationships, increase public awareness of our core message and use these opportunities to create new circles of influence. This included: addressing the Sedibeng CPF on the Gun-Free-Zone concept and how CPFs could engage with any future amendments to the FCA; attending the 8th March International Women's day event in 2016 hosted by the Swedish Embassy and the UNFPA; attending several ISS seminars related to violence prevention; and meeting with Advocate Pikoli on the role of the Office of the Western Cape Police Ombudsman with regard to gunrelated violence and misuse of firearms by SAPS members.

GFSA attended the Safety & Violence Initiative conference in September 2016, giving us the opportunity to engage with both the research community and community activists on building safer communities. We also attended the launch of the publication Lethal in Disguise: The Health Consequences of Less Lethal Weapons in late 2016 at the Legal Resources Centre. GFSA will include this as an additional area of research and lobbying. A new area of interest for GFSA is growing our understanding of the nature and extent of political killings in SA. We attended the launch of the SALGA Violence in Democracy Research Report in 2017, which highlighted the number and circumstances of political killings across South Africa; with several calls being made by both sitting councillors and community activists for a 'gun-free' South Africa.

In June 2017, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum held a consultation on the Sustainable Development Goals to develop indicators to measure success against Goal 16 at the national level. GFSA made input on Target 16.4: to significantly reduce the flow of illicit arms flows through recording increased recovery of illegal weapons; systemic approach to firearms control management and record keeping.

### **GFSA** Networking

GFSA made a presentation at the first Cape Town Trauma Conference in November 2017, entitled: Strong Gun Laws Save Lives: Poor Enforcement Kills. It gave GFSA an opportunity to engage with several trauma surgeons from across the country and the possibility of greater collaboration and sharing of data is very promising and requires follow up in 2018.

### SAVE THE DATE



This Conference is Proudly hosted by The Trauma Society of South Africa And The South African Orthopaedic Trauma Society

Global networking included attending the Stop Bombing Towns and Cities Conference in Geneva, 31 August and 1 September 2016. Organised by Handicap International on behalf of the International Network on Explosive Weapons, the Conference was held to incorporate African states in opposing the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.



### Governance

#### 5. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The growth of GFSA is dependent on a number of issues including developing more efficient and cost effective ways of working, recruiting new staff to help expand and maximise our reach, particularly with young people, and working with board members to enable them to give as much as they can in their area of interest and expertise to help the organisation achieve its objective.

#### THE BOARD

Over the last two years there have been no changes to the composition of the board and the nine board members continue to be passionate about the vision of GFSA, providing strategic oversight and guidance.

BOARD MEMBERS: GFSA's Board is made up of nine committed and active board members

Name	Position on Board	Organisation, skills and experience
Alan Storey	Chair	Methodist Minister, Central Methodist Mission, Cape Town
Felicity Harrison	Vice-Chair	Director, Goedgedacht Forum
Pamela Crowsley	Secretary	Business woman, victim of gun violence.
Nareshnie Maharaj	Treasurer	Finance Manager, PACSA (Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community Social Action)
Richard Matzopoulos	Board Member	Specialist Scientist, Burden of Disease Research Unit, Medical Research Council
Malose Langa	Board Member	Registered psychologist and lecturer at the School of Community and Human Development, University of Witwatersrand and CSVR associate
Lewina Rowland	Board Member	Teacher at South Peninsula High School, Cape Town
Ronald Menoe	Board Member	Deputy Director at Corruption Watch.
Angelica Pino	Board Member	Human Rights lawyer, gender activist, and Programmes Director at Sonke Gender Justice

### Governance

#### 5. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

#### **STAFFING**

Over the two year period GFSA has had five staff members, with a financial consultant employed to manage our finances. The staff include: Adèle Kirsten, director; Claire Taylor, specialist researcher; Nurahn Ryklief, communications manager and community stakeholder manager (contract ended in December 2017); Desire Jackson, finance administrator (contract ended in December 2017); and Sara Chitambo, communications consultant.

GFSA works remotely with staff operating out of Johannesburg, Cape Town and a small town in Mpumalanga.

#### **MEETINGS**

GFSA held two successful annual strategic review meetings which energised and renewed both staff and board members, with many creative and innovative campaigning ideas crafted over the three days and as always held and directed by Sue Soal with such incredible insight and sensitivity to the dynamics and challenges facing all of us as we continue to work towards a society free from the fear of gun violence.

GFSA also held two AGMs: the 2016 AGM was held in Johannesburg on 29 June with expert input by a violence scholar, Brett Bowman on new research in the area; and the 2017 meeting was held in Cape Town on 3 August to dovetail with the launch of the EU CRF/GFSA Young Reporters Network project, with the majority of staff and board members in attendance.

In addition the GFSA board had four ordinary meetings during this time.



### Governance

#### 6. FINANCIAL REPORT

GFSA continues to have good financial and organisational management systems in place, with an efficient finance team. At the 2017 AGM, the Board agreed to reappoint Horwath Zeller Karro as GFSA's auditor for the next financial year.

#### **GUN FREE SOUTH AFRICA**

#### STATEMENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

	2017	2016
	R's	R's
Grants and donations received	1 108 587	1 088 953
Other income	276 384	387
Total income	1 384 971	1 089 340
Operating expenses	(1 543 709)	(1 214 483)
Operating deficit	(158 738)	(125 143)
Investment income	26 914	20 503
Equipment fund	(8 875)	-
Deficit for the year	(140 699)	(104 640)
Reserves: At beginning of year	144 493	249 133
At end of year	3 794	144 493

### **GFSA** Donors

Increasing our donor support base remains a priority for GFSA. The successful approaches made in 2016/17 increased our donor base from two secure and long term donors to four donors, including DG Murray Trust and a three year grant by the Raith Foundation for the period September 2017 to end August 2020.

Financial support is also sourced from pro bono work and services provided to GFSA. This includes the work done by the advertising agency Young & Rubicam as well as pro bono legal advice provided by John Simpson as well as Faskens Martineau and our senior legal counsel, Matthew Chaskalson, with Jessica Griffiths and Lwandile Sisilana as junior counsel. Other income sources include private donations and interest yielded.

We acknowledge the support of the following donors who have provided funding for implementation of activities and operational costs. The support of our funders enables us to save lives and reduce gun violence.









### Conclusion

It has been a challenging two years with many unexpected turns both internally in the managing of the organisation and externally with regard to the political and social climate in which GFSA operates. Engaging a youth constituency took a massive leap forward as we began to see the impact of working with the young radio reporters from CRF: listening to how young people engage with the issue of gun violence in their communities through story-telling, visually mapping gun violence in their communities, and grappling with how to build safer communities.

Finding the right mix of a youth project officer who has project management skills and is able to connect with young people in their local context remains a challenge. Our use of social media is evolving, and we are now able to review our impact and growth through Google Analytics which shows the demographic and location of who follows GFSA and what brings them to our website. In 2017 we produced some of our most creative work, taking us into different spaces, ranging from the soft hearts of the #GFSAValentines meme through to the very bold Bul-lets campaign, and ending with strong memes and videos to raise awareness of the risks of having a gun in the home for the 16 days of activism campaign.

Perhaps one of the most frustrating aspects of our work in 2017 was the amount of energy and effort put into tracking the progress of the Firearms Control Amendment Bill, constantly exploring avenues to influence and shape the debate, with little traction and no concrete outcomes. This also impacted on the lack of movement in holding a national firearms amnesty. A first for GFSA in 2017 was entering into the arena of the judiciary to support the key principles underlying South Africa's national gun law by being admitted as Amicus Curiae in the SA Hunters vs Minister of Police case. It has positioned us well as we consider legal action on behalf of those killed as a result of fraud and corruption and poor management of firearms by the state.

Gun violence remains an everyday occurrence in South Africa. And the work of GFSA remains as important as when we first started on this journey almost 25 years ago.





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