



# ANNUAL REPORT

**2024**



EMPOWERMENT SELF-DEFENSE

ESD Global is a global collective of Empowerment Self Defense (ESD) instructors, activists, and educators committed to making ESD training accessible worldwide. Founded in response to the pervasive issue of gender-based violence, our mission is to scale the reach of ESD by training diverse communities and equipping them with the tools to teach methodologies tailored to their unique needs. Our trauma-informed, empowerment-based approach goes beyond conventional self-defense by addressing all forms of violence—physical, emotional, and psychological. With evidence-backed strategies, ESD Global empowers individuals to interrupt, respond to, and heal from violence while building resilience and confidence.



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## Letter from the Executive Director

**As we reflect on the last (post-COVID-19) years of impact, I am filled with gratitude for our dedicated trainers, partners, and supporters who continue to advance our mission of making Empowerment Self-Defense (ESD) accessible worldwide. This year has been one of incredible growth, innovation, and a deepened commitment to creating lasting, sustainable change.**

One of our most significant strides this year has been the continued development of our Social Franchising Model, revolutionizing the way ESD is implemented globally. By equipping local leaders with the tools, resources, and frameworks to run their own ESD programs, we are fostering long-term sustainability and greater local ownership. This model ensures that ESD is not only widespread but also deeply embedded within diverse cultural contexts, making it truly transformative.

We are also proud to have achieved a major accreditation milestone, further solidifying ESD Global's credibility as a leader in self-defense education. This rigorous process has strengthened our training standards, validated the high quality of our instruction, and opened doors for new partnerships that will help expand ESD access to even more communities worldwide.

Recognizing that ongoing support and professional development are key to success, we launched our new Alumni Program to foster continued engagement, mentorship, and collaboration. By connecting our growing network of accredited certified trainers with resources, learning opportunities, and a platform to share best practices, we ensure that the impact of ESD continues long after initial certification.

### **A Call to Action: Stand with Us**

While we celebrate these achievements, we also recognize the urgent challenges ahead. Since the onset of COVID-19, gender-based violence has surged, and now, amid political instability and shifting funding priorities, women and marginalized communities remain particularly vulnerable. The need for ESD has never been greater.

As funding landscapes shift, we must act now to ensure the continuity and expansion of life-saving self-defense training. We need your support more than ever to keep this movement alive:

- Fund the Future of ESD – Your donations directly support scholarships, training programs, and community-based initiatives that empower women and girls.
- Advocate for Change – Help us raise awareness by amplifying our mission in your networks and communities.
- Join Our Movement – Whether as a trainer, volunteer, or partner organization, your engagement strengthens the global ESD network.

Now is the time to stand together. Every contribution—financial, vocal, or hands-on—helps build a world where safety, dignity, and empowerment are within everyone's reach. Thank you for being an essential part of this journey.

Together, we can continue breaking barriers, uplifting communities, and creating lasting change.

### **Dr. Dawn Lindsey**

Chief Executive Officer, ESD Global Inc.





## MISSION STATEMENT

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At ESD Global, our Mission is to interrupt interpersonal violence, through the benefits of Empowerment Self Defense (ESD) training so that everybody at risk of interpersonal violence is equipped with the tools to prevent and fight it, while promoting positive masculinity.



## VISION STATEMENT

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We envision a world where people can live free of violence, educated in a culture of peace.

**Together, we are creating a **safer world**,  
one **empowered individual** at a time.**



# YEAR IN REVIEW

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## Transition to Social Franchising Model:

ESD Global officially launched its new Social Franchising Model, marking a transformative step in our evolution as a global leader in Empowerment Self Defense (ESD).

This reimagined approach reflects our commitment to cultural relevance, adaptability, and sustainability. We are moving beyond a linear development model, now embracing the whole individual—their culture, skills, and experiences. Our guiding motto, “Bring the Whole You,” encourages teachers to bring their full selves to the ESD Community, fostering a richer, more resilient network.

The introduction of the Social Franchising Model empowers ESD teachers to become social entrepreneurs within their own communities.

### This model:

- Provides a global standard for ESD teaching programs while allowing for local adaptation.
- Ensures sustainability by reducing reliance on large-scale international trainings.
- Expands ESD’s reach by supporting teachers through accreditation, alumni networks, and partnerships.

This evolution addresses past challenges and positions ESD Global for greater impact, helping us scale solutions to prevent violence worldwide while supporting the global mission for safer, empowered communities.





# YEAR IN REVIEW

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## Launch of Approved Education Provider Program:

ESD Global took a monumental step forward by transitioning from certification to an accredited certification model. This evolution ensures that our Empowerment Self Defense (ESD) training programs and instructors meet globally recognized quality standards.

### Why Accreditation Matters

Accreditation provides external validation, assuring students, employers, and the public that ESD Global's programs uphold excellence and professionalism. With this model, ESD professionals are now able to:

- Teach at or below their level (e.g., Level 3 instructors can teach Levels 1 and 2).
- Receive trademarked certificates and be listed in our global directory.
- Enhance credibility, consistency, and career opportunities within the ESD field.

This evolution strengthens our commitment to quality, adaptability, and global impact.



## Launch of Free Teacher Hub

We introduced the FREE Empowerment Self-Defense (ESD) Teacher Resource Portal—a comprehensive library designed to support ESD teachers at every stage of their journey!

### This Hub is perfect for:

- New Teachers in their first or second year
- Those returning to teaching after a break
- Instructors looking to enhance their basic ESD class



# YEAR IN REVIEW

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## Launch of the Alumni Program:

ESD Global launched the Alumni Program, an initiative designed to support and empower Empowerment Self Defense (ESD) instructors worldwide. This program connects alumni to a wealth of exclusive resources, tools, and a global network to enhance their teaching and advocacy efforts.

## Key Benefits of the Alumni Program:

- **Professional Research Studies & Articles:**  
Access evidence-based studies on ESD effectiveness and gender-based violence prevention to enhance your knowledge and advocacy.
- **Webinars:**  
Participate in expert-led training sessions covering the latest techniques, strategies, and empowerment topics to stay informed and engaged.
- **Essential Training Tips & Drills:**  
Explore resources for verbal assertiveness, situational awareness, and physical defense techniques to improve your ESD teaching practice.
- **Alumni Discussion Groups:**  
Connect with peers and experts to share insights, receive support, and discuss topics like trauma-informed care, community-building, and personal growth.
- **Trauma-Informed Care Resources:**  
Integrate trauma-informed practices into your ESD teaching, prioritizing safety, empowerment, and respect for your students.

This new program strengthens the ESD Global community, offering ongoing learning, connection, and professional development for instructors around the world. Together, we continue to build safer, more empowered communities.





# IMPACT METRICS

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## Global Reach:

Our community now includes instructors in over 42 countries, reflecting our commitment to making ESD training accessible worldwide.



## Our Alumni Reported



An estimated 18,000  
people learned ESD



Over 102 active  
instructors this year



Spanning at least  
42 countries

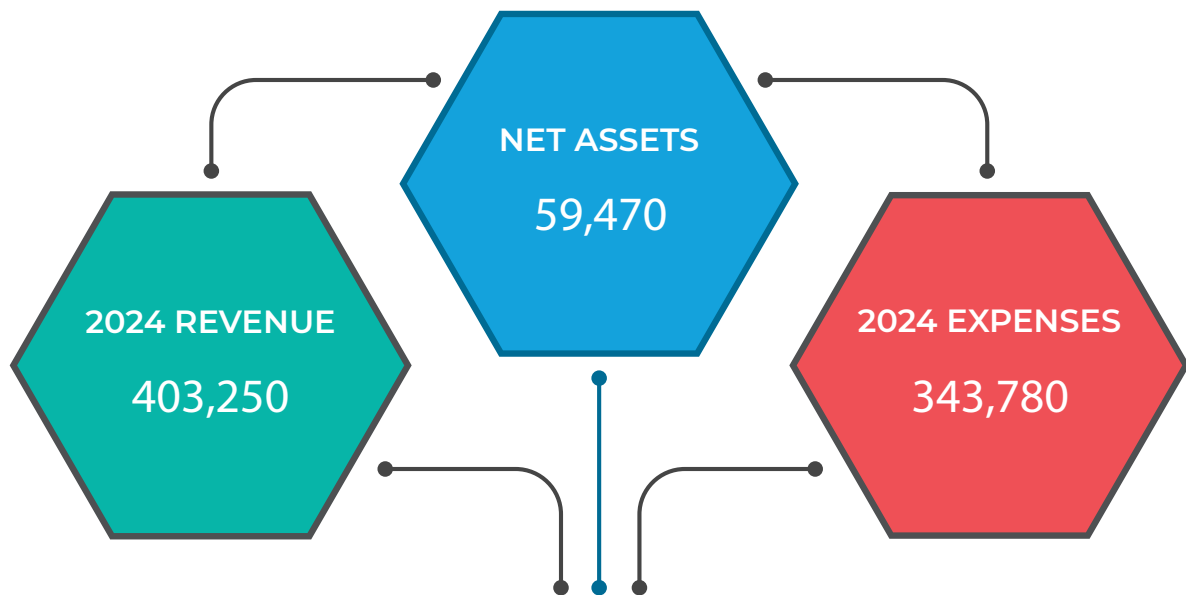


Over 2500  
classes taught

## Membership Engagement:

The launch of our membership programs has provided instructors with essential tools and resources, fostering continuous learning and skill enhancement.

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY



## DONOR / PARTNERSHIP RECOGNITION

- Thanks to Yudit Sidikman, ESD Global's founder, for her final donations to ESD Global at the top of the year prior to her retirement.
- Thank you Dawn Lindsey, our CEO, for her personal donation of her salary for the final quarter of the year.
- Thank you Stephanie Cyr for the donation of many of her licensed teaching materials to our teaching alumni.
- We would like to thank Julie Harmon for her contributions on the topic of Trauma- Informed practices to our teacher resource library.

We would also love to recognize our Approved Education partners that are now Accredited institutions of ESD teaching and learning:

- LYA Enterprises
- San Francisco State University
- PowerUp Moves LLC
- ElleLiveAction
- RIA Abya Yala
- Groupe du Développement de l'Afrique (GDA)
- Arise Empowerment Programs
- Mshindi Arts, LLC

**More to come in 2025**







# ESD GLOBAL OFFICIAL PODCAST

We would like to acknowledge our Communications Director, Adanma Nwokoma for her work on two podcast series in 2024:

## Trauma Healing Series



### Guests Include:

- Idara Ekanem
- Cassandra Hitzman
- Tasha Ina Church
- Chana Weinberger
- Sarah Rees
- Lisa Gaeta
- Ijeoma Ann Nwafor
- Gabriela Rojas-Lozano
- Tiffany Taylor

## Empowerment in Action: Global Voices of Self-Defense



### Guests Include:

- Kim Rivers
- Eric Ellis
- Dr. Dawn Malotane-Lindsey
- Miriam L. King
- Dr. Lami Ibrahim



We would also like to thank all of our podcast guests for their time and support.

## STORIES OF IMPACT

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"I find it difficult to put into words how important this initiative is and the impact it will have on young people, This is life-changing."

**Bora Muzhaqi**

**Minister of State for Youth and Children  
Albanian Government**

"Through my work and advocacy, I've seen how ESD can transform communities, equipping girls like Amina in Nigeria with ESD knowledge to reclaim their right to safety and autonomy. No girl should be denied the opportunity to be free from harm because every girl is costly."

**Dr. Costly Aderibidge-Saba**

**Minister of State for Youth and Children  
Albanian Government**

"ESD is one of the most critical skills I have learned; it has helped me to feel comfortable and have very empowered interactions in my daily life."

**Nuna Gleason**

**Executive Director  
Wounded Healers International**



## LOOKING AHEAD

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We are dedicated to expanding our global reach by establishing new social franchises in diverse communities, enhancing our online resources, and continuing to provide high-quality training and support to ESD instructors worldwide. Our focus remains on empowering individuals and communities to establish their right to live full, free lives.

Despite ongoing funding challenges—a common issue within the ESD community—our team has demonstrated resilience and resourcefulness. We have re-engaged with the community and are forging a new path forward with the social franchising model.

The future of ESD Global is one of growth and innovation as we continue to expand our impact and reach.

### Here's what's next:

- **More Partnerships:** We're building stronger connections with organizations and individuals to amplify the ESD movement.
- **More Teachers and Classes:** Our goal is to the training efforts of more instructors and reach more learners worldwide.
- **Expanding Community:** By welcoming new faces and supporting the next generation of ESD teachers, learners, and ambassadors, we're fostering an empowered community.
- **Sustainable Innovation:** We're committed to developing a sustainable path forward, ensuring that ESD professionals have the resources, support, and community they need to thrive.
- **Global Leadership:** As a hub for connection, learning, and innovation, ESD Global will continue to support the advancement of the ESD movement around the world.

The future is bright, and we're excited to create ways for greater access, impact, and community in the ESD movement.





# ESD GLOBAL STAFF

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ESD Global is led by a dedicated team of professionals committed to advancing Empowerment Self-Defense (ESD) worldwide.



## **Dawn Lindsey**

Chief Executive Officer

Dawn oversees the development and execution of the organization's strategic plan. With a diverse career, she has held roles such as Chief Operations Officer at HOPE Community Development Corporation and CEO of the South African Local Economic Development Network.

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## **Sarah Stephens**

Chief Operating Officer

Sarah ensures the smooth implementation of strategic initiatives. Her varied experience includes positions in Early Intervention Services, Children and Family Services, Travel Management, Secondary Education, Music Education, and Nonprofit Program Management.

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## **Adanma Nwokoma**

Director of Communications

Adanma possesses two decades of expertise in policy research, advocacy, and community engagement. Her distinguished career includes serving as an on-air personality focused on social issues, demonstrating a talent for fostering relationships and driving organizational growth while upholding institutional values.

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## **Daniela Lizano**

Director of Training & Education

Daniela has a robust background spanning 14 years. Hailing from Costa Rica, Daniela is deeply embedded and learned a lot from her community. She facilitates and develops ESD workshops and classes at schools, Universities, organizations and non-profits. As the founder and director of Learning and Development for RIA LAC, she spearheads initiatives aimed at fostering personal growth and safety awareness for the ESD instructors and communities throughout the region.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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- **Kassoum Coulibaly, Board Chair:** An esteemed economist, strategist, governance, and gender expert dedicated to advancing global economic and social progress, sustainable development, and universal peace promotion.
- **Mark Nessel, Board Member:** A thought leader, educator, author, and speaker on Empowerment Self-Defense with over 25 years of experience in the field.
- **Andrea Gioia, Board Member:** A seasoned executive with a proven track record as Vice President of Product Management and UX/UI Design, known for her insatiable curiosity and data-focused approach.
- **Robert Froese, Secretary/Treasurer:** A seasoned professional with over 35 years of independent agency management experience in the commercial insurance sector, holding an MBA specializing in Finance and International Business.
- **Timothy F. Scott, Board Member:** A seasoned business executive with extensive financial and operational leadership experience in various industries, known for his dynamic and innovative approach to achieving operational excellence.

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

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- **Advocate for Change**

Help spread the word about Empowerment Self Defense and ESD Global in your community and beyond.

- **Make a Donation**

Your support enables us to create more resources, support more teachers, and expand the reach of ESD worldwide.

- **Bring ESD to Your Community**

Partner with us to introduce Empowerment Self Defense training programs tailored to your local needs.

- **Stay Connected**

Subscribe to our newsletter for updates on upcoming programs, inspiring stories, and opportunities to get involved.

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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At ESD Global we'd like to thank the ESD teachers around the world, doing the work and sharing the skills to help people lead safer, more empowered lives. We would be nothing without our teachers and their dedication.



## CONTACT INFORMATION



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<https://www.facebook.com/esdglobalselfdefense>



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