

ANNUAL REPORT

Project TRANScend 3.0

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Project TRANScend 3.0

To empower and enhance the capacity of local transgender individuals and transgender Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)

- **Project Beneficiaries:** Transgender Community Leaders and Trans-led CBOs
- **Project Location:** Pan-India implementation.
- **Project Duration:** April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025

Objectives:

- 1.To understand the needs of regional trans-communities through Trans-led CBOs in India.
- 2.To build the capacities of Transgender leaders and Community-based organizations led by them.
- 3.EQueL Fellowship

Project Overview:

TRANScend 3.0 successfully implemented a national-scale intervention focused on strengthening the leadership, governance, and advocacy capacity of transgender individuals and Trans-led Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) across India. The project was executed through a three-pronged approach: regional community consultations, leadership capacity building through the Emerging Queer Leaders Workshop, and implementation of regional advocacy initiatives via the EQueL Fellowship.

Over the course of one year, the project directly impacted transgender individuals through consultations, training, and fellow-led community initiatives, contributing to increased visibility, empowerment, and structural support for trans-led grassroots efforts.



Activity 1:

5 Transgender Community Consultations

Total Consultations Conducted: 5 regional consultations across India

Total Participants Engaged: 175 participants

Cities Covered: Jehanabad (Bihar), Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Mumbai (Maharashtra), and New Delhi.

As part of the first objective, five focused transgender community consultations were conducted across various Indian cities. These consultations were designed and led by transgender leaders, offering a space to reflect, respond, and strategize around key community issues. The consultations not only offered a platform for local voices to surface but also directly influenced the programmatic direction of TRANScend 3.0.

Themes we covered:

01. Developing Transgender Awareness Resources

A two-day consultation brought together 19 community members from diverse identities to co-create sensitisation toolkits for multiple stakeholder groups, including educational institutions, law enforcement, legal bodies, workplaces, and corporates. The result was the creation of six tailored PowerPoint presentations, developed as tools for future workshops to enhance inclusion and understanding across sectors.



02. Discussions on Gender-based Violence Prevention Against the Transgender Community

Held in Jehanabad, Bihar in collaboration with Sangharsh Foundation, this consultation shed light on the lived experiences of violence within homes, public spaces, and institutions. The presence of 25 trans participants, government officials, and civil society stakeholders led to robust discussions and action-oriented recommendations. A role-play session, community panel, and media briefing ensured multidimensional engagement. A key takeaway was the urgent need for systemic redressal, protection mechanisms, and localized policy interventions.





03. 10 Years of NALSA Judgement: Reflecting Progress and Reimagining the Future

The consultation on "10 Years of NALSA Judgement: Looking into the Future" reflected on the progress and persistent challenges faced by the transgender community in India since the landmark 2014 ruling. Vivek Raj Anand emphasized the importance of self-reliance, visibility, and economic empowerment, while Suditi Srinivas outlined HumSafar's ongoing advocacy through the TRANScend initiative. A dynamic panel discussion highlighted lived experiences, pointing out ongoing discrimination, bureaucratic hurdles, and the urgent need for legal literacy. A group problem-solving exercise addressed five key areas—SMILE Scheme, TG Card access, livelihood, healthcare, and housing—resulting in practical recommendations such as simplifying documentation, enhancing healthcare infrastructure, promoting inclusive housing policies, and fostering economic opportunities. The event concluded with a consensus that legal recognition must be accompanied by systemic reforms and active community participation to achieve real empowerment and inclusion for transgender and non-binary individuals.



04. Strengthening Trans Inclusion in the Education System

Conducted in Chennai, this consultation brought together trans activists, educators, and state officials to assess gaps and envision inclusive education. Speakers and participants discussed harassment, lack of policy clarity, and systemic exclusion faced by transgender students. The consultation concluded with a strong commitment to policy advocacy, training for educational institutions, and improving access through state collaboration.



05. Understanding Roles of Parental Acceptance and Chosen Families

Hosted on the International Transgender Day of Visibility at The Humsafar Trust's office in Mumbai, this consultation marked Transgender Day of Visibility with a focus on familial and legal support systems. Discussions led by trans advocates explored parental acceptance, chosen families, and the intersection of identity with legal recognition. Testimonies illuminated evolving social dynamics and highlighted gaps in current laws, calling for reform, mental health support, and broader family-oriented sensitisation efforts.



Activity 2:

EQuEL – 2024 Emerging Queer Leaders Workshop



Five emerging trans leaders were trained at the Emerging Queer Leaders (EQuEL) Workshop 2024 that brought together a total of 20 dynamic LGBTQ+ individuals from across India for a powerful three-day residential workshop in Mumbai. The workshop aimed to build leadership capacity, enhance understanding of LGBTQ+ well-being and health, and equip participants with resource mobilization skills to strengthen grassroots queer initiatives.

The program featured knowledge-building sessions, interactions with veteran activists, and hands-on activities, creating a transformative space for learning, sharing, and growing together.

Day 1: Queer Nexus – Meet & Connect with Amazing Queer Leaders and Activists in Mumbai

Day 1 kicked off with a powerful networking event that set the tone for the days ahead. Sudhanshu Latad welcomed participants and introduced the vision behind the EQuEL initiative. His address emphasized the need for nurturing young queer leadership and how such capacity-building spaces are personally meaningful to him.

He then facilitated a round of introductions, creating a sense of community right from the start.



Suhail Abbasi, Co-Founder and Chairperson of The Humsafar Trust, shared his journey of founding and leading India's oldest LGBTQ+ organization. His words motivated participants to find strength in their identity and vision.

Sakshi Mane, Director of Health Programs, shared both personal and professional perspectives as a trans woman working in queer health advocacy, adding a powerful layer to the evening's inspiration.

Several esteemed queer leaders and activists from Mumbai—including **Dr. Subojith Sen, Rayyan Monkey, Sumit Pawar, Zoya Lobo, Sakshi Juneja**, and others—shared their personal stories, organizational work, and insights into leadership, visibility, and advocacy.

The event closed with a Maharashtrian-style dinner catered by a trans-run café, welcoming participants from outside Mumbai and showcasing queer entrepreneurship in action.

Day 2: Foundations of Queer Leadership – Learning & Capacity Building

Day 2 was dedicated to building a solid foundation in queer leadership and understanding systemic issues faced by the community. It opened with a welcome note by Sudhanshu Latad, followed by introductions and an expectations setting led by Nilofer and Ravendra K.

Key learning sessions included:

- **Understanding SOGIESC** – Facilitated by Anjali S, this session deepened participants' understanding of gender and sexual diversity.
- **Land of Queer Mental Health** – Led by Kavita N, this session explored mental health issues specific to queer individuals.
- **HIV and Queer Health** – Co-facilitated by Shruta Rawat and Sumi MK, providing essential information and support strategies.
- **Legal Rights of LGBTQ+ Persons in India** – Delivered by Suraj S, the session empowered participants with legal awareness.
- **Mobilization and Advocacy** – A collaborative session by Sudhanshu L and Anjali S, encouraging participants to think critically about activism, organizing, and sustainable impact.

The day concluded with ideation homework, encouraging participants to begin shaping their own advocacy projects.





Day 3: Funding Futures – Resource Mobilization & Grant Writing

Day 3 focused on translating vision into actionable projects by equipping participants with the tools to seek funding and support.

The day began with a robust session on Proposal Writing and Resource Mobilization Avenues by Sudhanshu L and Harshul A, followed by a theory-based session on Grant Writing facilitated by Vivek Anand, Chief Executive Officer of The Humsafar Trust.

Participants then engaged in a practical workshop titled “Let’s Write a Grant”, where they drafted proposals addressing real-world issues. These were later presented to the group during a session moderated by Harshul A and Dhruv G, offering peer learning and collective feedback

Over the course of three immersive days, EQuEL 2024 empowered a new cohort of queer leaders with the skills, knowledge, and networks to champion change in their communities. The workshop not only fostered individual growth but also strengthened the collective fabric of India’s LGBTQ+ advocacy landscape. The movement continues—stronger, wiser, and more connected than ever.

Activity 3:

EQueL Fellowship

The EQueL Fellowship supported five dynamic transgender leaders to implement region-specific advocacy initiatives across India. These fellowships were designed to amplify trans-led visibility, community empowerment, and intersectional advocacy efforts. Each fellow worked on a unique issue, catering to the distinct socio-cultural needs of their community. Their initiatives collectively reached and impacted individuals through education, training, arts-based advocacy, legal awareness, and livelihood initiatives.

Shivani Mamgain (they/she) – Project InQLaw

Location: Pan-India (Law Schools)

Focus: Queer Affirmative Practices in Indian Law Schools

Shivani's Project InQLaw focused on embedding queer-affirmative policies and sensitivity in Indian legal education institutions. Through consultations, surveys, and four well-attended online workshops, Shivani engaged with over 120 law students and faculty from 13 law schools. The project developed customized sensitization modules addressing queer rights, inclusive policies, and institutional responsibilities. A standout element was the collaboration with queer practitioners and One Future Collective for trauma-informed facilitation.



Lucky Neog (he/him) – Living on the Edge: Climate Justice (Research Study)

Location: Delhi

Focus: Climate Change and Transgender Shelter Vulnerabilities

Lucky conducted an in-depth qualitative study with 16 trans individuals across Delhi's shelters, exploring the intersection of climate change, health, and trans marginalization. The report highlighted critical issues like extreme heat, inadequate infrastructure, water scarcity, and medical access. The research provides actionable recommendations for integrating trans-inclusive resilience planning in climate policy and was used for strategic advocacy with climate and housing policy stakeholders.



Tejas Kshatriya (he/she/they) – Mist Trans & Queer Allies Art Festival (QAAF)

Location: Pune

Focus: Visibility through Art and Culture

Tejas coordinated the Mist Trans Pageant 2024 and the Queer & Allies Art Festival in Pune, offering a stage for trans representation through performance and pageantry. The event included seven trans contestants, multiple artistic performances, and a queer flea market. Supported by The Humsafar Trust under TRANScend 3.0, the initiative engaged over 200 community members and allies, fostering public dialogue, celebration, and normalization of trans identities in cultural spaces.



Newton Nadiebum (he/him) – Food Processing Livelihood Training

Location: Manipur

Focus: Livelihood Training for LGBTQIA+ and PLHIV

Responding to the compounded challenges in post-conflict Manipur, this fellow organized a 7-day food processing training in collaboration with Meira Foods. The training empowered 20 LGBTQ+ and PLHIV individuals with entrepreneurial skills in pickle, jam, and candy making. Sessions covered hygiene, food safety, product design, and startup planning. Participants reported increased confidence, economic resilience, and a stronger sense of community belonging.



Testimonial:

"The training was an incredibly enriching experience. I learned a wide range of skills—from making pickles and candies to understanding how to start my own small business. But what struck me the most was the supportive and inclusive environment. For the first time, I felt truly seen and valued as an LGBTQIA+ person. This training didn't just teach me recipes; it helped me build confidence and gave me a vision for a better future." — Bontu, LGBTQIA+ community member and training participant



Ishada Kawade (they/she/he) – Satrangi Mann: Mental Health Advocacy

Location: Mumbai

Focus: Queer & Trans Affirmative Mental Health Training

Satrangi Mann project aimed at sensitizing psychology students to queer and trans issues. A pilot workshop was successfully conducted at S.K. Somaiya College, training 17 students using content drawn from Mariwala Health Initiative and QACP. Despite logistical limitations (academic rescheduling), two additional sessions have been planned post-project. This work lays the foundation for long-term change in the mental health ecosystem through education and peer learning



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TRANScend 3.0 reaffirmed a powerful truth: **when transgender individuals lead, communities transform.**

Over the past year, this project:

- Amplified regional voices through community consultations
- Strengthened grassroots leadership with focused capacity building
- Sparked change on the ground through the EQuEL Fellowships
- Created spaces of safety, skill-building, and storytelling

The project conducted **5 regional consultations** reaching over 175 transgender individuals, **trained 5 emerging trans leaders** through the EQuEL Workshop, and supported **5 community fellowships.**

We end this journey not with a full stop, but with a comma...

A pause before we continue investing in trans-led action, policy advocacy, and movement building.

Together, we TRANScend barriers—and reimagine futures.

Thank you for being part of this journey. ♥

