

**THE HUMSAFAR TRUST**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2018-2019**



## The Humsafar Trust Vision

*The Humsafar Trust is committed to a holistic approach to the rights and health of sexual minorities and promoting rational attitudes towards sexuality.*

## The Humsafar Trust Mission Statement

*Our mission is to strive for the human rights, social wellbeing of sexual minorities and provide them comprehensive health services.*

## The Humsafar Trust Theory of Change

*If we work for the human rights and health of sexual minorities who are LGBT and provide them services, then this work will lead to acceptance and equality of sexual minorities and a healthier community*

## INTRODUCTION

The Humsafar Trust (HST) was founded in April 1994 by reputed journalist Ashok Row Kavi along with Co-Founders Suhail Abbasi and Sridhar Rangayan to reach out to LGBTQ communities in Mumbai Metro and surrounding areas. After much networking and advocacy with the Mumbai Municipal Corporation it became the first openly Gay Community Based Organization to be allotted space in a Municipal building in Mumbai.

The Trust began its activities by inviting gay men and lesbian women to attend its workshops on Fridays at its drop in center. The drop in center saw various workshops on issues of HIV/AIDS and human rights of LGBTQ and it soon became evident that the trust will have to work aggressively on the health and human rights of the community. The HIV interventions of HST are supported by National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) and Mumbai District AIDS Control Society (MDACS) to provide health services to 8500 Men who have sex with men and Transgender communities every year through Public Health Care delivery systems and its In-house clinics.

In the last two decades the outreach program has reached out to more than 110,000 Gay, Men having Sex with Men and Transgender and distributed over 700,000 condoms every year at more than 129 physical sites in Mumbai and nearly 40000 HIV tests and 70000 STIs screened and treatments provided. HST reaches out to over 10,000 gay men and men who have sex with men and transgender communities every year through its social media and online outreach programs.

HST Collaborations with Public health delivery systems of Mumbai like LTMG, Nair, KEM and JJ Hospitals. In house clinics remain open five days a week with three qualified Doctors and two Lab Technicians attending to clients. A clinical psychologist works full time along with a team of 4 community counsellors and 2 health facilitators and a nutritionist working on the program providing nutritional counselling assistance.

HST organizes advocacy workshops for health care providers, law enforcement agencies, judiciary, legislators, politicians and political parties, Government bodies, media, student community to sensitize them on Gay, MSM and TG issues.

HST has institutionalized its various capacities by developing a Human Resources Policy, Finance, Procurement, Risk and Fraud policy, Child Protection Policy, Credit Society Policy, Organizational M & E framework, Strategic Plan, Mission Azaadi Document (MAD) - A reference Manual for LGBTQH rights in India, Sanchaar – A language recommendation manual for Media on reporting LGBTQH issues, SHAKTI- A Hijra health care

manual for health care providers, AROGYA- Community health workers training manual, Onward granting manual, National Advocacy Plan for MTH groups, Institutional Review Board (IRB) Policy and procedures for research projects. It has developed four guidebooks to provide ongoing support to community-based organizations.

HST has nurtured support groups YAARIYAN for young LGBTQ, UMANG for LBT persons and SANJEEVANI for persons living with HIV. HST also provides legal support, crisis management, mental health and nutrition counselling to its communities.

## **HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR 2018-2019**

On 6, September 2018 the Supreme Court (SC) of India delivered a historic judgement on Section 377 and decriminalized consensual sex between adults. In its decision the Court observed that ‘a person’s sexual orientation is intrinsic to their being’ and society cannot dictate the expression of sexuality between consenting adults. The judgment is a victory for Indian LGBTQ communities and the remarkable judgment can be used to fight for equality and civil rights as accorded to every Indian citizen in its constitution.

The judgment opens the doors for different opportunities and closes the door of a dark chapter of Indian history. Although the judgment is considered to be a remarkable victory, the civil rights movement for the LGBTQ community needs to bolster advocacy to drive our goals. It is important to create safe spaces for LGBTQ community and work towards strengthening the community.

The Humsafar Trust (HST) organised a series of 5 community consultations following the judgment on 6<sup>th</sup> September to gauge the response of the communities and collect recommendations on rights for LGBTQ beyond Section 377. These consultations provided action points for the future advocacy priorities of the community. The community strongly expressed concerns about social acceptance, civil rights and anti-discrimination laws. Our work in 2019-2020 will be geared towards achieving these goals.

HST reviewed its strategic plan 2018 – 2021 after the 5 community consultations and incorporated the community inputs and presented a revised plan for 2018 – 2022 to the board. HST will work forward till 2022 after which the same will be reviewed and strategic plan for 2022 – 2025 will be prepared.

## **PROJECT AND EVENT UPDATES OF YEAR 2018-2019**

### **HEALTH AND TARGETED INTERVENTIONS**

MDACS supported Targeted Intervention (TIs) projects Aaramabh, Yaarana and Dostana focusing on HIV prevention services, testing and linking HIV positive clients to care and treatment to continue till March 2020 and renewed after undergoing evaluation process by the funding agency. The Project Directors regularly provide support to the TI team to strengthen their community outreach, reach their targets and update the project documentation. The ICTC unit of the organization is implemented as Public Private Partnership model where it receives HIV kits from Mumbai District AIDS Control Society, while all other expenses of maintaining the clinic and the HR costs are borne by The Humsafar Trust. The MTV Staying Alive project focuses on reaching out to the unreached youth through innovative strategies. As part of this project, Khushpudis (Pleasure Pack) and condom usage booklet has been developed along with tips on managing crisis on field. The project only supports the costs of the project activities with no support from Human resources.

### **RESEARCH**

Fostering Resilience – Mass Gen/ Fenway / NIRT/ HST-June 2020 – This project focused on the need for mental health interventions to promote positive sexual health among MSM community. This study was implemented in Chennai and Mumbai with support from NIH funds. The project is currently in its 5 year and will end by June 2020. The project has a saving of 42 lakhs to be used to disseminate the research findings at The Humsafar Trust and also support any presentations at the upcoming International AIDS conference to be held in San Francisco in July 2020.

Wellcome trust- DBT fellowship – This project has been received by Dr. Venkatesan Chakrapani to support his doctoral program. Initially the project was to be implemented through PGIMER, Chandigarh. However due to logistical issues the project has been shifted from PGMIER to HST with due approvals from Wellcome Trust. The project has been submitted to HST IRB for approvals.

### **CAPACITY BUILDING**

Sahyog Project (MAC AIDS FUND) – Sahyog project that focuses on strengthening the outreach work, existing clinical services, Sanjeevani, a PLHIV group for MSM and Transgender community , capacity building of staff and advocacy activities of The Humsafar Trust. The project is currently in its 7<sup>th</sup> Phase. MAC cosmetic has provided support of \$35,000 for the current year. This is an important project as it helps to fill in the gaps of HST

services and covers most of the salaries of the organizational staff who are not supported through any other projects. This project winds up in June 2020 and it is important to find an alternate project to support this core initiative. A proposal was written to Paul Hamlyn Foundation to continue this project but the same wasn't successful. HST needs to look out for larger projects such as Pehchan, DIVA and Linkages which can support a considerable amount of staff and also provides support to absorb some of the administrative and office running expenses.

FHI 360 LINKAGES – USAID supported LINKAGES project supported by FHI 360 would be winding up on 30th September 2019. This project would be implemented as Project ACCELERATE by John Hopkins University and YRG Care from 1st October 2019. AMPLIFY CHANGE- CONNECT- PHASE II NOV 2019 TO APRIL 2021 –Phase I of the project had some savings which has helped to continue the project till October 2019. Amplify Change has approved Phase II of the Connect project to continue the work in the area of advocacy and policy change. The second phase of the project would be from November 2019 to April 2021 for a period of 18 months. In terms of human resource, HST has asked for a full-time communication officer to take care of the social media handles and communication unit of the organization. An organizational strengthening grant has also been applied to strengthen the clinic and organizational leadership.

FK Norway – SAKSHAM learning Projects Phase II –The current round of FK Norway exchange project ended in September 2018. The Phase III of the project has been approved and is being implemented from 01<sup>st</sup> October 2018 for a period of three years. Under this project, two participants from Bandhu Welfare Society, Bangladesh would visit Humsafar Trust, while two participants from Humsafar Trust would visit Blue Diamond Society, Nepal for a period of one year.

BEING EQUAL- Positive Action ViiV project is a costed extension project focusing on supporting smaller community-based organizations. The budget has been approved and the contracts are also done, however the project implementation got delayed due to delay in money transfer. The costed extension of this project has been approved from January to December 2019.

## **ADVOCACY PROJECTS**

Transcend – Publicis Sapient project focuses on promoting transgender rights and sensitization in educational and corporate sectors. This project will wind up on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and an extension of this project is also expected. HST has been recently been approached by several Corporate, as they are confident of the deliverables and are aware of strong systems and policies of HST. It is important to align with the priorities of the corporate organization to to strengthen our work on LGBTQ health and rights.

## **ANNUAL REGULAR UPDATES**

### **Sustainability of HIV treatment center (currently supported by Linkages except ART medicines coming from NACO)**

Linkages Project takes care of most of the clinical staff, while ART medicines are procured through MDACS/NACO. It is important that though the services continue after the closure of Linkages project. Funding support needs to be procured to continue the human resource required for running the HIV treatment center post 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019

### **Status of New Grants updates and low success rate of new proposals**

The current scenario funding of HIV projects is shrinking globally and locally as well. It is time to look at other health issues such as TB, mental health, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and diabetes which disproportionately affect the LGBTQ community. Humsafar has written a collaborative proposal with Mamta on addressing the mental health needs of young LGBTQ community.

The grant status highlight that around 30 projects have been written with key agencies such as Norwegian Embassy, Azim Premji University, European Union and others of which only 7 projects were approved so far (List attached as **Annexure A**)

### **Strategies needed to deal with current situation**

The organization needs to look beyond traditional funding opportunities and reduce donor dependency if it needs to sustain the organizational growth. It is time to look for newer strategies if HST needs to achieve the vision and mission of the organization. HST needs to think of aligning with CSR projects, request CSRs to fund key positions at HST, introduce subscription models and also network with philanthropic groups to strengthen the organizational fund, identify its core competencies such as clinical services, PLHIV support groups, outreach with the community, advocacy with educational and corporate and use them as tools to raise funds with various stakeholders.

### **Funding opportunities and new entrants (support groups/CBOs/ NGOs) and their impact on our work and funding status**

HST needs to work with govt. institutions such as Niti Aayog that focuses to invest on infrastructure building and health initiatives. HST needs to use the opportunity to lobby with medical institutions and start the Committed Community Health Worker course and also be part of the system to sensitize health care professionals on the

issue of sex, gender and sexuality on a regular basis. Crowd funding, aiming for larger scale projects, innovative grants and push button to be promoted regularly for fund raising.

In mid to late nineties there was only Humsafar Trust working on LGBTQ issues, but with the recent Supreme judgement on reading down of Sec. 377, smaller formal and informal groups have been formed and the funding agencies are keen to support them. Humsafar is being looked as a mother organization and is expected to provide technical support to smaller groups and build their capacities.

#### **Status of staff employment post Linkages and MAC cosmetics project**

List of Projects along with the staff list for the projects that are being currently implemented for the financial year 2018- 2019 and also 2019 – 2020 were presented as **Annexure B**

A plan of action prepared for 2019 – 2020 (**Annexure C**) and the financial statements including audited statements IT reruns, FCRA returns (**Annexure D**) were shared with the Board of Trustees and approved

**26<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

**Finalized by CEO-Vivek Raj Anand**

**The Annual Report for 2018 – 2019 was approved by the Board at its meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2020**