

**THE HUMSAFAR TRUST
ANNUAL REPORT**

2019-2020



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 LGBTQ+ and provide them services, then this work will lead to acceptance and equality of sexual minorities and a healthier community

The Humsafar Trust (HST) was founded in April 1994 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 LGBTQ 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 Azadi Document (MAD) - A reference Manual for LGBTQ+ rights in India, Sanchar – A language recommendation manual for Media on reporting LGBTQ+ 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 2019-2020

The deliberations on Supreme Court Judgement continued through the year. The Humsafar Trust (HST) organised a series of 5 community consultations following the judgment on 6th 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 2020-2021 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 to take HST work forward till 2022 after which the same will be reviewed and strategic plan for 2022 – 2025 will be prepared.

The following are the key highlights of the 25th Anniversary year of The Humsafar Trust

- **25th Year Anniversary of Humsafar Trust:** 2019 marks the beginning of the 25th Year of The Humsafar Trust serving the spectrum of LGBTQ Rights in India and also launched the silver jubilee year logo. Also, HST board members and team members launched the 25th year HST dairy at the Gulaabi Mela Event held in January 2020.
- **INFOSEM Annual General Meeting and Elections 2019:** HST being a secretariat for India's largest LGBTQ network. The Integrated Network for Sexual Minorities (INFOSEM) conducted its Managing Committee (MC) & Governing Board (GB) elections on 28-30 March 2019 in VITS, Mumbai. The meeting was supported by Amplify Change under CONNECT Project. The meeting was attended by 59 INFOSEM members.
- **IDAHOTB 2019:** The Humsafar Trust observed the IDAHOTB by organizing different events in Mumbai and Delhi on Mental Health and discussion on acceptance to address homophobia and transphobia. HST also conducted workshop to design an online campaign with the partners from the 18 states. After the workshop, all the participants developed the about 55 posters and shared it on social media. The online campaign provided visibility to the regional partners through the post. The IDAHOTB campaign was supported by British High Commission, New Delhi and Amplify Change.
- **LGBTQ Pride March:** After the landmark judgment from SC, community initiatives came forward and organized the community mobilization events in different cities. We observed that there were small community groups who wanted to organize pride marches in smaller town especially in rural India. HST managed to support pride marches in 15 cities of India.
- **LIKHO Workshop 2019:** The Humsafar Trust hosted the 5th edition of Likho Citizen Journalism Workshop in Delhi from July 26-28, 2019. The workshop aimed to train budding writers to write, produce mojo and audio podcast content on LGBTQ issues in a sensitive, inclusive and correct manner. The workshop was attended by 20 participants from 16 states of India.
- **LIKHO Media Fellowship 2019:** The participants who completed the three days workshops in Delhi. There were awarded with three months Likho Fellowship. During three-month guided fellowship and mentorship, fellows produced 3 stories in their chosen stream - print, mobile journalism or audio. As outcome of the workshop, we have received 30 stories in the form of articles, podcast and mojo files.

- **#Standwithpride - celebrating our first real Independence Day with the LGBTQIA+ National Anthem:**

15th August 2019, is first real Independence Day for LGBTQ community in India. To celebrate this, **Interactive Avenues – A Reprise network Company**, which is the digital arm of **IPG Media brands India**, and **The Humsafar Trust**, created a special **National Anthem film**. The prominent community members and a few of the petitioners who worked towards this landmark judgement have come together to present their own rendition of our nation's National Anthem.

- **First Anniversary of SC Judgement Events 2019: #safarabhibakihai**

In the month of September 2019, The Humsafar Trust organized series of events in different 12 states of India to mark the first anniversary of Hon'ble Supreme Court's historic ruling on IPC section 377 that decriminalized sexual acts in private between two consenting same-sex adults. The event was organized by in collaboration with our regional partners in the form of – celebration, panel discussion, awareness sessions, sensitization workshops, pride marches, mobilization event etc.

- **Ek Madhav Baug:** An advocacy initiative of Humsafar Trust. Ek Madhav Baug written by Late Chetan Datar and is one of the pioneering plays written on homosexuality and acceptance of the community. The play completed its 133 performances. the play was performed in educational institutions, corporate houses and various other forums and great tool to initiate discussion on SOGI
- **Connect Dissemination Event:** The Humsafar Trust, Delhi has been implementing project CONNECT, with the support of Amplify Change since Nov 2016. We organized the project dissemination in Delhi on 10th & 11th October 2019. The project played key role to strengthen Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to address health & human rights of sexual minorities in India. In the last 3 years, the project has been instrumental to strengthen the capacities of CBOs & its leaders and supported various advocacy initiatives across the country. There was greater emphasis on strengthening the community network, along with research, evidence-based approaches and innovations. The objective of the dissemination was to share the key learnings, achievements, challenges and innovations from the project. The dissemination was attended 73 attendees along with by senior dignitaries from National AIDS Control Organization, UN agencies and partners from across the country.
- **Q-rious: First LGBTQ Job Fair in Delhi**

The Humsafar Trust organized Q-rious - first of its kind job fair being organized in the North region of India. This was collaboration between Equiv and The Humsafar Trust. The vision is not just to give jobs and access to the community to safe workspaces. Q-rious has also training and guidance modules for the members and is open to everyone in the country. In 2019, the job fair witnessed the footfall of around 1200+ community members in Delhi.
- **LIKHO Summit and Awards:** The Likho Indian LGBTQ Media Summit & Awards was held on December 20, 2019 at Rangsharda Hall in Mumbai. Every year the summit, which is an initiative of Bombay Dost and The Humsafar Trust, aims to bring together Media professionals in a national network aimed at promoting fair and inclusive portrayal of the LGBTQ communities in the Indian media. And the LIKHO awards acknowledge media persons who help in bridging gaps and put efforts to ensure that the LGBTQ voices are heard all over the world. The event was attended by 150+ individuals and stakeholders.

- **NH7 Weekender:** NH7 Weekender is an annual, multi-city and multi-genre, music and comedy festival held in India. HST and Six Degrees collaborated with OML at NH7 toward making the space safe for attendees, foster sensitive and informed attitudes toward all gender and sexual identities, and encourage open conversations around consent. We had proposed a list of activities comprising training sessions, content generation, and on-ground participation for furthering messaging on consent, gender/sexuality-focused sensitivity and mental health. The festival held from November 20 – December 1, 2019 in Pune, 22 team members from HST worked hard to achieve the goal and make the festival inclusive for all gender and minorities.
- **The Humsafar Trust 25th Anniversary Event:** On 19th December 2019, the trust celebrated its 25th Anniversary in the presence of over 3000 guests at MMRDA grounds in BKC complex in Mumbai. It was a moment of honor, recognition and reaffirmation of the 25 years of the journey of small community-based organization that grew manifolds and has global presence and its work recognized. It has been responsible for various policy level and social changes and has taken LGBTQ movement to a higher level in the Indian context.
- **Prabal – An Initiative for Parents of LGBTQ:** HST initiated Prabal which aims at strengthening parents of LGBTQ to mobilize and form networks of support. In the first phase of the initiative HST conducted six different training session with parents of LGBTQ in collaboration with Sweekar – The Rainbow Parents in Mumbai. The initiative also aims to reach out more parents from two tier cities and travel to different regions.
- **Mumbai Pride Month 2020:** The Humsafar Trust is active member of Pride Collective – Queer Azaadi Mumbai (QAM) which organizes the pride event and Pride march in Mumbai every year. Like every year our initiatives Yaariyan & Umang organized pride month events and celebrated the Mumbai Pride Month in 2020. This is year we organized 5 events in January 2020 which comprised of Queer Premier League (QPL), Queer Games, Gulabi Mela, Flash Mob and Pride Walk.
- **Community Consultation on LGBTQ+ inclusion in Workplace:** The Humsafar Trust being India's oldest LGBTQ+ community-based organization has worked for over 25 years to bring community voices to the forefront of policy landscapes. A community consultation was organized with individuals identifying with various identities in the LGBTQ+ spectrum and employed in diverse sectors at different levels. 29 individuals from different parts of the country attended this consultation and shared their journeys of carving a niche for themselves in workplaces. The two days consultation aimed to create Community Aspirations: document voicing community aspirations that we seek from a truly inclusive workplace, which will be disseminated with different corporates employees.
- **Research and Program Dissemination 2020:** The Humsafar Trust organized Research and Program Dissemination on March 12-13, 2020, in Delhi. The dissemination showcased research findings and programmatic achievements of HST for the years 2017-2019. Our teams and collaborators have presented their work on HIV prevention among internet-based communities, mental health interventions with MSM, acceptability of new HIV prevention techniques among MSM-TGW and different approaches for mainstreaming transgender and LGBTQ communities in educational and workspaces.

PROJECT AND EVENT UPDATES OF YEAR 2018-2019

TARGETED INTERVENTION AND OUTREACH

HST continued outreach services to MSM and TG communities in Mumbai through its 3 projects, Dostaana, Yaarana and Aarambh. The programs reached out to 8022 MSM and TG and 10919 were tested. The TI achieved higher testing and linkage numbers in 2019_2020. HST continues to have strong linkages with public health systems in Mumbai and has strongly embedded ART services in the five ART centres of Mumbai and Thane. HST also continues to provide legal support, crisis management, mental health counselling, and nutrition counselling to its communities. Routine events organized by the TIs saw the participation of over 4000 community individuals.

Integrated HIV clinic

During this period, the clinic tested 3742 clients after which 39 clients who tested HIV positive were referred to ART centres. Further 128 clients who tested positive for syphilis were connected to public hospitals for treatment. The clinic introduced a rapid finger prick test to screen for HIV which minimized waiting time and ensured faster delivery of services and linkage to ART centres. Further, HST implemented Free Integrated Counselling and Testing Centre (FICTC) and organized health camps for free HIV testing for unreached populations. In Hub clinic, provide 184 mental health counselling and 162 nutrition counselling who has accessed the HST also conducted a Hepatitis testing and vaccination camp for LGBTQ clinic attendees. In span of one year, total 5200 community members who have visited DIC services So far 55 PLHIV are accessing ART medicine from HST LINK ART centre.

SANJEEVANI Care and Support

Sanjeevani Care and Support group is a team of peer navigators working exclusively to strengthen PLHIV care and support across Mumbai and Thane. Despite financial constraints, Sanjeevani continues to provide referral, treatment and care services, follow-ups and counselling/legal/nutrition support to over 300 PLHA registered with the group. In this period, we have provided clinical services to 265 people for their routine medical check-up

Mental Health Counselling

Integrated with Clinic Unit, HST's (Mental Health) Counselling unit is among the most important services offered for the community. Relationships, Depression, Anxiety issues, OCD, stress at work due to non-hetero-normative gender expressions and sexuality, education and career are the key issues currently discussed by clients as per counselling records. Although the drop-in crowd is of mixed age and class, the issues of family pressure, coming out traumas, career pressure and the relationship were also discussed. 184 individuals accessed the mental health counselling services from Hub clinic.

RESEARCH

CHALO 2.0: A mobile-technology-based intervention to accelerate HIV testing and linkage to prevention and treatment

This study aims to investigate the efficacy of a messaging intervention on HIV testing and linkage to prevention/treatment services among internet-using MSM in Mumbai via a three-arm randomized control trial.

Funding agency: National Institutes of Health (R01MH119001-01A)

Duration: 03/2020–05/2025

Collaborators: Einstein School of Medicine and Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx, New York

Reducing health inequalities among sexual minorities in India: generating evidence for action

This collaboration aims to identify factors that affect health seeking among sexual minorities with focus on the understanding how syndemic conditions form as well as exploring the role of stigmas in the production of syndemics.

Funding agency: DBT India Wellcome Trust

Duration: 06/2017–06/2023

Collaborators: Fellowship: Dr. Venkatesan Chakrapani/Center for Sexuality and Health Research Policy

Identity, Attraction and Trust: How MSM Compose and Assess Location-Aware Dating/Hookup App Profiles in four non-megametropolis Indian districts

The goal of this research project is to understand the unique self-presentation and impression formation challenges faced by MSM who use social applications to connect with each other in four non-mega-metropolitan Indian cities

Funding: SPAN Award:

Duration: 09/2019–03/2021

Collaborators: Northwestern University

Assessing barriers to PrEP prescribing among physicians in Mumbai: a qualitative study.

This study seeks to identify factors influencing awareness of PrEP and then decision making about prescribing PrEP by physicians to individuals at high risk of HIV in Mumbai, India.

Funding agency: Washington University Global Health

Duration: 04/2019-09/2020

Collaborators: Washington University, St. Louis

Fostering resilience to psychosocial and HIV risk in Indian MSM

This collaboration seeks to test a behavioral intervention in a randomized controlled trial to foster resilience related to HIV/AIDS related safer behavior and mental health among Kothi and Double Decker identified MSM. In the intervention arms the clients receive a counseling intervention.

Funding agency: National Institutes of Health (R01MH100627)

Duration: 05/2014-06/2020

Collaborators: Massachusetts General Hospital/Fenway Institute of Health, Boston

Analyzing Yaariyan: An internet-based e-safe space facilitating access to HIV prevention, treatment and care services among MSM and transgender youth in Mumbai, India.

This is a mixed-methods qualitative content analysis, key stakeholder interviews using an Implementation Science framework to understand how a private/secret Facebook group grew to include over 8000 LGBTQ young individuals from across India, how social support, health information, and HIV preventive behaviors are fostered and diffused in this online support group.

Funding Agency: International AIDS Society

Duration: 04/2018-03/2019

Collaborators: Einstein School of Medicine and Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx, New York

CAPACITY BUILDING

Sahyog Project (MAC AIDS FUND) – Sahyog project that focuses on strengthening the outreach work, existing clinical services, Sanjeevani group, capacity building of staff and advocacy is currently in its 7th 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 funded through any other projects. This project winds up in June 2020 and it is important that we find an alternate project to support this core initiative. HST needs to look out for larger projects such as Pehchan, DIVA and Linkages which can support to a considerable number of staff and also provides support to absorb some of the administrative and office running expenses. Thus, we initiated a dialogue with NACO that HST would like to pitch for the Global Fund 2021-2024 cycle and present a proposal on virtual model of intervention.

FHI 360 LINKAGES – USAID supported LINKAGES project supported by FHI 360 was not performing as per the expectations of the USAID team. Hence the term of the current project was reduced and is being readied for closure on 30th September 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 who will be placed in Mumbai to take care of the social media handles of the organization. An organizational strengthening grant has also been applied to strengthen the clinic and organizational leadership.

ADVOCACY PROJECTS

Transcend – Publicis Sapient project focuses on promoting transgender rights and sensitization in educational and corporate sectors. This project will continue for 12 more months from 1st April 2020. HST has been approached by several Corporates, as they are confident of our deliverables and are aware of our strong systems and policies. Corporate agencies prefer to work more on issues of transgender community. It is important for us to increase visibility of transgender communities in our workforce and also strengthen our work on transgender health and rights.

The Humsafar Trust Annual Report 2019-2020

A plan of action prepared for 2020 – 2021 the financial statements including audited statements IT reruns, FCRA returns were shared with the Board of Trustees.

26th August 2020

Finalized by CEO-Vivek Raj Anand

The Annual Report for 2019 – 2020 was approved by the Board at its meeting on 19th September 2020