



## Advocacy Highlights April 2022 – March 2023

The following activities were conducted in FY 2022-23. The document lists the interventions, activities, innovations which were implemented in FY 2022-23.

- **Emerging Queer Leaders (EQueL) Workshop**

The Humsafar Trust organized 2-day Emerging Queer Leaders (EQueL) workshop in Mumbai for LGBTQ+ young queer leaders. The 5th edition was supported by Amplify Change where 18 young queer leaders from all over India participated in the workshop. The workshop covered various subjects ranging from Advocacy, Crisis Management, LGBTQ+-based laws and policies, HIV and STI awareness, LGBTQ+ inclusion in corporate, health, education, and more. Every year, EQueL aims to nurture queer leadership to take forward the Indian LGBTQ+ movement ahead and create safe spaces for the communities across India.



- **Prabal Empowerment programme For Parents of LGBTQ+**

Prabal is an empowerment program for the parents of LGBTQ+ designed meticulously after consultation with the core team of Sweekar:

The Rainbow Parents and implemented in a hybrid manner to increase access to parents across the country. The sessions were conducted during a period of 3 months on alternate Sundays and covered topics



relevant to making them aware about their child’s health and rights and empowering them mentally and intellectually for being strong-sighted allies enabling an LGBTQ+ friendly environment around them.

- **SAKSHAM: Communities Leading Inclusion - An inclusive Job Fair led by the LGBTQ+ Community.**

The Humsafar Trust & TRANScend initiative SAKSHAM: Communities Leading Inclusion, an inclusive Job Fair led by the LGBTQ+ Community supported by HSBC Publicis Sapient Publicis Groupe was conducted on 22nd April 2022 at Hotel Holiday Inn.

With an aim to facilitate **Equal Employment Opportunities for the LGBTQ+ Community** in mainstream workplaces, a hybrid mode job fair was organized, where 15+ employers, belonging to the various sectors from all over India joined us along with 600+ candidates

physically and

virtually.



## 5 Regional NITI Ayog Consultations

The Government of India in collaboration with NITI Aayog and UNDP India was developing National Action Plan for LGBTQ+ communities in India. To map the community needs, NITI Aayog ideated five regional consultations in Mumbai, Bhubaneshwar, Guwahati, Lucknow, and Chennai engaging representatives from the department of social justice and empowerment of 20 states along with LGBTQ+ communities. HST supported 3 out of the 5 consultations in April and May 2022 and mapped the needs and included it in the action plan. The consultations were attended by approx. 500+ stakeholders and community members.



## International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexphobia and Transphobia (#IDAHOBIT)

To observe #IDAHOBIT 2022 HST relaunch #QueersAgainstQuacks Campaign which focused on identifying individuals or collectives that practice conversion on #LGBTQ+ and collecting these experiences to report them and to make a policy brief to ban conversion practice in a legislative manner by approaching the #GovernmentOfIndia and @ministryofayush.



## INFOSEM Annual Managing Committee and Governing Board Meeting - 2022

COVID-19 Pandemic paused the activities of INFOSEM offline which delayed in changing of constituencies and supporting the redressal system within the community. To ensure the mechanism of a support network stays relevant MC and GB meeting was conducted under which brought various community issues forward by community representatives. HST CONNECT helped bring these representatives together offline and take a unanimous decision toward the evolving future of INFOSEM. New representatives were elected in the Managing committee and Governing board of INFOSEM and HST was re-appointed as a secretariat to bring much desired stability to the network that has been affected by the pandemic.



## LIKHO Excellence in Media Awards 2022

LIKHO Awards for Excellence in Media was organized on April 15 to recognize media personnel that have engaged in producing or contributing to the visibility of queer affirmative content in mainstream media. This activity turned into a grand mixer evening with representation from US Embassy, Sony CSR division, Transgender leadership of Mumbai, Sweekar: The Rainbow parents, key LGBTQ+ leaders, and communities. Every year activities like LIKHO Awards lead to encouragement of non-queer media individuals to come forward and consciously report queer content affirmatively.



**LIKHO Awards Video:** <https://youtu.be/KL07KZCgpD4>

## KASHISH Mumbai International Queer Film Festival- 2022

KASHISH-which is acclaimed as South Asia's biggest queer film festival and voted among the Top 5 LGBTQ+ film festivals in the world hosted its 13th edition from 1st June to 5th June 2022. The Humsafar Trust (HST) is a community-based organization (CBO) in Mumbai working on the health and human rights of sexual minorities supported KASHISH Mumbai International Queer Film Festival as Supporting Partner under Project CONNECT – Amplify Change as an advocacy initiative. The theme of KASHISH 2022 was **FLIGHTS FOR FREEDOM**, underling the contemporary aspirations of the LGBTQIA+ community in India and across the World, who believe in diversity in its truest sense, and are now flying towards newer horizons on wings of hopes & dreams.



## NATIONAL DISSEMINATION – Project CONNECT

The Humsafar Trust organized the National Dissemination – CONNECT Project in New Delhi on 23rd June 2022. The dissemination saw a gathering of approx. sixty-eight individuals who were part of CONNECT partners, dignitaries from NACO, NITI Aayog, UN Agencies and partner organizations who are working on health and human rights. The dissemination also marked the official closure of the project in India and community partners/leaders expressed their gratitude to Amplify Change for its 6-year support and creating a platform that now needs to be taken forward. This activity established the positive contributions that the project made in the lives of LGBTQ+ and resulted in the formation of CONNECT Partners.



## Right to Information Act (RTI) Workshop

The Humsafar Trust organized a two-day capacity building workshop under its initiative TRANScend on the Right to Information Act (RTI), in an attempt to create an enlightened ecosystem amongst the transgender community to ensure social justice and that the right to seek information is available for everyone including Transgender persons. The workshop was facilitated by our two amazing and enthusiastic resource persons Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat and Dr. Rouf Malik.



## STUDIO DHANAK Fellowship

After the first phase of STUDIO DHANAK was over, the second phase of the workshop STUDIO DHANAK FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM started in Nov 2021. In all there were 19 participants as 1 participant dropped out at the eleventh hour. The participants of the workshop worked from home and developed their synopsis into a full-fledged screenplay with dialogues over a period of nearly two months. The Mentors constantly guided them online through this process. At the end of two months all the participants submitted their scripts. Through a process of moderation 5 best scripts were chosen collectively. The scripts were judged based on originality of the idea/thought, relatable characters, engaging screenplay, feasibility/do ability of the project and marketability of the film.

**Trailer Link:** <https://youtu.be/HLzZz9A4gAo>

## International AIDS Conference 2022, Montreal, Canada:

The 24th International AIDS Conference or #AIDS2022, held in Montreal, Canada from 29 July to 2 August 2022. HST raised some funds from donor agencies, stakeholders and well-wishers for 3 team members (Suhail Abbasi, Sakshi Mane, Tinesh Chopade) to attend the International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2022) and 2 team members (Alpana Dange and Kusum) received full scholarship support from AIDS 2022 secretariat. Teams participated in pre-conference and conference sessions, panel discussion and other networking events in Montreal.

Additionally, HST's networking zone booth was accepted and allocated the space at the global village of AIDS 2022. The Global village was open for all from July 30th to 1st Aug 2022. The focus of the networking zone was womxn in sex work, the activities were led by Kusum who work as Counselor and lead new initiative "Azad Titaliya" – A sex worker collective.



## Youth Leadership Program – CFLI

The Humsafar Trust under its newly received project from Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) Canada in India (High Commission of Canada) organized a 2-day leadership training workshop in Mumbai for 25 young LGBTQ+, LBT+ and FSW community leaders, part of various initiatives and organizations across India that focused on nurturing leadership from a sustainability approach of their respective organizations. This workshop covered management, technical and financial skills, such as understanding their needs and scope of improvement, proposal & grant writing, budget making, developing implementation and visibility strategies, communications and linkage skills, and a brief social media training.



## The Acceptance Meet 2022

Yaariyan, the youth initiative of The Humsafar Trust, along with Queer Adda Mumbai organize The Acceptance Meet (TAM) annually on 15th of August to recognize and honor these allyship stories and experiences. This year The Acceptance Meet partnered with multiple Queer-led initiatives and organizations for in various formats to make TAM bigger and more accessible. The event, which had been organized virtually due to the pandemic for the last few years, could finally be celebrated in person with an audience of an estimated 250 people in Mumbai, 40 in Jamshedpur, and 30 in Kolhapur. This was the first attempt at making it a hybrid event and making it accessible to a non-urban population. The marquee event celebrates the emotional journeys and triumphs of allies (parents/families/relatives/friends/colleagues or just about anyone) who have been instrumental in supporting a loved one brave enough to come out to them.



You can watch the glimpse here <https://tinyurl.com/TheAcceptanceMeet2022>.



## **Celebrating 4 years of Reading down of Section 377**

The Humsafar Trust offices at Mumbai and Delhi celebrated 4 years of the reading down of Section 377 and we keep counting. Taking the spirit of celebration in the month of September 2022, HST organized series of events in collaboration with different community partners to mark the 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 in collaboration with our regional partners in the form of – celebration, panel discussion, awareness sessions, sensitization workshops, pride marches, mobilization event etc. These events also witnessed the interaction on how far we have come after the historic Supreme Court Judgement and what is progression civil rights of LGBTQ+ communities the impact of lockdown on the queer community and the road ahead which was followed by storytelling session by community members.

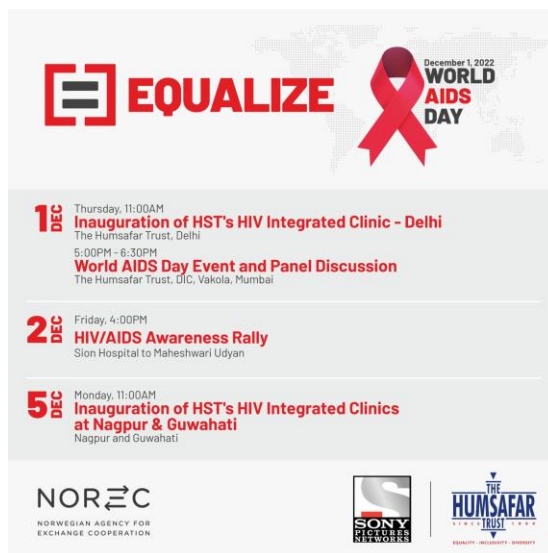


- **Transgender Day of Remembrance 2021:**

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) is an annual observance on November 20 that honors the memory of the transgender people whose lives were lost in acts of anti-transgender violence. an initiative of The Humsafar Trust, organized a community event to mark the occasion of Transgender Remembrance Day on March 22 at Hotel Ajanta, Juhu, Mumbai. A total 22 transgender and binary persons participated in this event. Participants took this opportunity to share their experiences related to violence and discrimination, a few of them expressed their thoughts through poster/paintings. It was encouraging to see young trans persons participate with much enthusiasm. The experience sharing session was overwhelming and an eye-opener for teams.

- **World AIDS Day 2021: EQUALIZE**

HST observed World AIDS Day on 1st December 2022 in Mumbai office. The event was attended by community members, colleagues, friends, allies, and partners. On the occasion of World AIDS Day 2022. The Humsafar Trust organized a Panel Discussion on the theme EQUALIZE: Equal access to health and social protection services for the community’ at its Drop-in-Centre in Mumbai. Each speaker looked at ways to tackle stigma, strengthen community connections and spread the message of testing to hidden populations - all pathways to contribute to the 2030 goal of eliminating AIDS.



- **World AIDS Day Rally 2022**

The Humsafar Trust organized its annual rally to pay tributes to the ones living with HIV, to those who we have lost to AIDS-related illness.



- **LIKHO citizen journalist workshop fellowship 2023**



Every year The Humsafar Trust identifies citizen journalists across the country and invites them to residential training under its Likho Citizen Journalism Programme. This year 17 Citizen Journalists were trained and are ready to take on conversations and articles on Queer and intersectional identities, experiences, challenges and triumphs in the media. Likho Citizen Journalism Workshop 2023 was supported by Scotia Bank, TRANScend, Quebec Government office in

Mumbai and Google.org Charitable Fund. The three days’ workshop was conducted from 24th to 26th March 2023 at Hotel VITS in Andheri East. The three-day long workshop hosted 17 participants from 6 different states.

## Community Led Sensitization Workshops

HST has an extensive experience in facilitating community led sensitization workshops with different stakeholders (Police, Government officials, lawyers, policy makers), educational institutions, universities, health care providers, mental health counselors etc. In FY 2022-23, HST advocacy teams continued their efforts in facilitating these discussions and increase the awareness about LGBTQ+ identities and promote the social acceptance through these workshops. In the last calendar years, the team facilitated over 85 sensitization workshops targeting 3200 individuals attending these workshops. Some of the highlights below –

### Tata Steel Long Products Limited, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand

HST teams facilitated 5 community led sensitization workshops with Tata Steel Long Long Products Limited, to further strengthen the company's efforts to become gender inclusive workplace. The workshop was attended by Mr. Ashish Anupam, Managing Director & senior management, Unit Managers, Heads of the Department, Utility staff and Security teams.



### Police Training School at Mana, Raipur, Chhattisgarh

HST Delhi conducted sensitization workshop at Police Training School at Mana, Raipur, Chhattisgarh. Over 100 Police personnel attended this workshop which was also supported by community partner Mitwa Samiti and LGBTQ+ Chhattisgarh.



## **Bhopal Police (Crime Branch) - Commissioner Office, Bhopal**

The Humsafar Trust collaborated with ActionAid Association to facilitate **Queer Affirmative Sensitization workshop** with Bhopal Police (Crime Branch) at Commissioner Office in Bhopal. The workshop was chaired by **Shri. Vinit Kapoor - Deputy Commissioner of Police** and attended by over 65 Senior Inspectors from Bhopal. The workshop module discussed Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity & Expression, Sex Characteristics along with Human Rights of LGBTQ+ community and challenges faced by the officers on ground while dealing with cases related to LGBTQ+.



## **Queer Affirmative workshop for Mental Health Professional, Bhopal**

The Humsafar Trust teams were invited to facilitate a workshop on 'Strengthening Queer Affirmative sensitization and Mental Health Care for LGBTQ+ persons' in Bhopal. The workshop was organized by ActionAid Association . Over 45 mental health counselors from Bhopal attended this workshop along with representatives of different organizations and LGBTQ+ community members. This was an effort to strengthen the linkages for mental health and make counseling practices LGBTQ+ affirmative.



## Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission, Mumbai

The Humsafar Trust 's Advocacy lead Tinesh Chopade was invited by the Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission to conduct a sensitization workshop and facilitate a dialogue on LGBTQ+ rights in India and its social challenges. The workshop was attended by 25 members from the commission.



## Raipur Municipal Corporation (RMC)

The Humsafar Trust collaborated with community partner Mitwa Samiti from Raipur, Chhattisgarh organized one day sensitization workshop with Raipur Municipal Corporation (RMC) in Raipur on 9th January 2023 with the support of The Humsafar Trust under the project NOREC. The workshop was attended by 62 elected representatives and appreciated by Mayor, Sabhapati, Parshad of different wards from Raipur. This was an attempt to sensitize the local authorities about #LGBTQ+ community and promote inclusion at the local level. The workshop also highlighted the challenges faced by Transgender community and provided overview of The #Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2019.



## Visibility Events:

In FY 2022-23, HST organized and supported various visibility events in the form of gatherings, Pride march, marathon, community meet ups and pre pride events etc. Approximately these events were attended by over 10,000 people in different regions.



## Advocacy Innovative Seed Grants

To strengthen community led initiatives to reduce the additional burden on the trans communities due to their different gender identity, expression, characterises and orientation advocacy seed grants were developed as an initiative under Advocacy projects. The objective was to facilitate community led advocacy intervention, particularly towards trans persons to reduce their vulnerability towards stigma and discrimination and negative impact their physical and mental health.

The seed grant initiative mainly aims conducting innovative activities in response to the urgent and emerging needs of the community in different regions of India. Although priority was given to CBO partners from Mumbai, Delhi, and Bangalore, innovative proposals were considered based on evidence and best practice on advocacy & policy work at regional /national level. Seed grants have seen overwhelming response and played key role in supporting regional advocacy efforts. HST continued to engage with local community partners and supported advocacy efforts through seed capital and supported 10 trans led organization in FY 2022 -23.

Sr. No.	CBO Name	State	Area	Theme	People reached
1.	Baruipur Asrai	West Bengal	Bishnupur	Information about LGBTQ+ community.	12
2.	Jamshedpur Queer Pride Circle	Jharkhand	Jamshedpur	Education on Financial Stability and Financial Independence.	53
3.	Nadia Sampriti	West Bengal	Nadia	Transgender and sexual minority community rights	30
4.	Prantik Bongaon	West Bengal	Bongaon	Transgender Remembrance Day	52
5.	Sahodharan Society	Tamil Nadu	Pollachi	Protest for Equal rights	10
6.	Tapish Foundation	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal, Ujjain	Advocacy about the shelter home and Transgender ID cards.	5
7.	Tarit Foundation	Orissa	Bhubaneshwar	Advocacy with Media professionals	25
8.	Mitto Trust	Orissa	Baripada	Challenges faced by the Transgender community.	16





- **Ek Madhav Baug:** As an advocacy tool to promote the social acceptance of LGBTQ+ community. Ek Madhav Baug was written by Late Chetan Datar and is one of the pioneering plays written on homosexuality and acceptance of the community. In FY 2022-23 the play was performed virtually in educational institutions, corporate houses and various other forums and advocated health and human rights of LGBTQ+ community. Through virtual performances of Ek Madhav Baug we reached out to approximately 3000+ individuals.

### **Facilitating Access for Transgender Identity Cards:**

HST's advocacy team has been supporting the Trans persons to file their application on National Transgender Portal to get Transgender/Non-Binary identity certificates. TRANScend (HST's trans led initiative) team members are key persons mobilizing the community members and creating awareness about the importance of certificates according to The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019. Through this initiative, we also intend to sensitize and create awareness among government officials by eliminating misconceptions, creating bottlenecks in the document acquisition process for the community. So far, 126 transgender/ hijra persons have filed their application on the national portal.



- **Upskilling and Education Support Initiative:**

Taking learnings from the first phase of BMC Software support upskilling project, in FY 2022-23 HST scaled up its intervention with support from different agencies and initiated the upskilling and education support program for LGBTQ+ community in India. The intervention aims to enhance the inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals in education as well as promote skilling programs and education opportunities for LGBTQ+ individuals. Under this initiative economically disenfranchised LGBTQ+ individuals get support to complete their education and upskilling themselves on 21st-century skills. In FY 2022-23, Total 197 LGBTQ+ identified students supported with a sum amount of INR 23,97,378 from 20 states across the country.

- **Crisis and Technical Support:**

Social attitudes towards LGBTQ+ individuals are unfavourable and non-accepting, in spite of consensual same sex activities in private being decriminalised in September 2018. Hostile and stigmatizing socio-legal environments often render LGBTQ+ communities vulnerable to blackmail, threats, and extortion from perpetrators. The communities are more vulnerable to face crisis on different dating Apps. In FY 2022-23, HST crisis team addressed and supported 68 crisis intervention and provided technical guidance. In some instances, HST extended financial support to the individuals who require to file case in court to address their problems.

- **Participation in Human Rights Conference and Sydney WorldPride 2023**



Sydney Worldpride and Human Rights Conference 2023 was held in Sydney, Australia from 27th Feb to 3rd March 2023. Our Board member – Shibu Thomas and Two Advocacy team members – Tinesh Chopade and Sudhanshu Latad travelled to Sydney to attend the events. Tinesh Chopade was a proud recipient of the Sydney World pride scholarship program where he received full scholarship support to attend the Worldpride and HRC 2023. Additionally, Google.org extended their support to Sudhanshu Latad to travel to Sydney and participate in important events.

- **Mumbai Pride Month Celebration: January 2023**

Yaariyan, in January 2023 with the support of the Canada Fund for Local initiative (CFLI) and NOREC: Norwegian Agency for Exchange Cooperation celebrated Mumbai's Pride Month in offline space. After the gap year of three years due to COVID-19, it became necessary for the LGBTQ+ Youth to come back and celebrate Pride. Mumbai City celebrates its Pride in the month of January and the same followed this year. The virtual pride month witnessed series of different events which was organized offline mode by Yaariyan core team.

A colorful poster for Mumbai Pride Month 2023. At the top, logos for 'THE HUMSAFAR TRUST', 'YAI YAARIYAN WE DON'T NEED TAGLINES', and 'UMANG Love. Bond. Trust.' are displayed. Below the logos, the text 'PRESENTS' is written in small letters. The main title 'MUMBAI PRIDE MONTH 2023' is written in large, bold, black letters. Below the title, three event dates are listed: '15TH JAN' with 'QUEER GAMES', '22ND JAN' with 'QUEER PREMIER LEAGUE' and 'LGBTQ+ FLASHMOB', and '29TH JAN' with 'GULABI MELA'. At the bottom, the text 'STAY TUNED FOR MORE INFORMATION...' is written in small letters.

### **Yaariyan LGBTQ Flashmob 2021 (Virtual):**

An LGBTQ+ flashmob was curated with support of voluntary choreographers, Yaariyan core team and voluntary participants. The crew practiced for 3 months and performed the flashmob at Nexus Seawoods mall on January 22nd. The performance saw an approximate footfall of 8,000 people. Equitable representation of female assigned at birth persons was ensured during planning and execution stage to have enhanced female and trans representation in the performance.

**You can watch the Flashmob Video Here:** <https://youtu.be/T3MIvD4NOyg>

### **Gulabi Mela (Pink Fate)**

Gulabi Mela, organized by Yaariyan is one of the largest visibility and advocacy activity organized in Mumbai that annually that observes a footfall of 1000+ individuals. This year Gulabi Mela witnessed a footfall of 1146 individuals and engaged 30+ LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs, 20+ LGBTQ+ artists and other vendors.

Watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BMwQEwRUzFs>

## Delegations and Networking Visits:

The Additional Secretary and Director General (AS&DG) of NACO, Shri Alok Saxena, visited The Humsafar Trust (HST) on 8th June 2022, along with NACO officials for interactions with the community and to understand the challenges faced by the young gay men, Transwomen and other Men Having Sex with Men (MSM) in accessing HIV testing and treatment.



## Networking Visit - Gauravi One-Stop Crisis Centre, Bhopal

The Humsafar Trust's Advocacy team members visited the Gauravi One-Stop Crisis Centre in Bhopal supported by state government & ActionAid Association

The teams learnt about state-supported & civil society-led efforts to combat GBV. We look forward to integrating learning's into our work. It was amazing to see commitment to EndGBV & empower communities to overcome their challenges.



### **Visit from High Commission of Canada – CFLI project team!**

The Humsafar Trust is a proud recipient of The Canada Fund for Local Initiative (CFLI) 2022-23. In the month of December 2022, CFLI project head Stéfanie Bergeron, also the First Secretary (Political), High Commission of Canada and Nabina Shrestha, CFLI project coordinator visited The Humsafar Trust to review the project progress.



### **Visit from U.S. Consulate General Mumbai**

The Humsafar Trust, Mumbai office had an opportunity to host Mr. Rayan Mullen- Vice Consul for Political Affairs from Consulate General of the United State of America.



## Visit from Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs to HST Delhi Office

On 7th February 2023, the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs – Melanie Joly visited HST Delhi office and learned about HST's work with LGBTQ+ community in India.



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