



**CONSORTIUM**

## **Abbreviations**

HST	The Humsafar Trust
CBO	Community Based Organization
LGBTQ+	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
MSM	Men who have Sex with Men
TG	Transgender
IDHOBIT	International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia
IRB	Institutional Review Board
NALSA	National Legal Service Authority
INFOSEM	Integrated Network for Sexual Minorities

## **The Humsafar Trust and CONNECT Partners**

### **Introduction and Background**

The Humsafar Trust (HST) is a community-based organization (CBO) in Mumbai – India working on the health and human rights of LGBTQ+ communities since 1994.

The organization has four verticals that include Health, Advocacy, Research and Capacity building of the communities. HST currently implements HIV prevention and treatment programs with an outreach to 3,000 Gay identified, Men Having Sex with Men (MSM) and TG/Hijra communities in Mumbai every year through outreach work on physical sites, and 100,000 + users through social media, dating apps and online programs.

The Advocacy teams works on the civil rights and acceptance of the LGBTQ+ communities in India and its activities include sensitization and awareness of employers, educational institutions, law enforcement agencies, and government bodies, staging and reading of LGBTQ+ themed plays and mobilizing the community around LGBTQ+ focused events such as World AIDS Day, Pride marches and International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT).

HST Research unit implements studies that strengthen and generate evidence on critical health and social needs of communities. HST Research unit is governed by an ethics review committee and has a registered IRB with FWA certification in USA and Directorate of Health Services (DHR) in India. HST builds capacities of CBOs across 27 states of India on HIV prevention, treatment, care and support, and advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights.

The last one decade has seen some progressive judgements delivered by the Supreme Court of India that included the April 2014 National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) judgment which brought recognition to Trans communities of India, the reading down of Section 377 judgement in September 2018 that decriminalized same sex intimacies in India. The HIV and AIDS (Prevention and Control) Act 2017, the Right to Privacy Act 2017 and Transgender Persons (Protection of rights) Act 2019 have paved path for the marginalized communities to pro-actively seek its rightful place in the society as equal citizens.

HST is at the forefront of supporting community-based organizations, support groups and initiatives that strengthen the voices of the communities at a National Level. There was a felt need to work in the semi urban and rural India and support LGBTQ+ communities in the younger India so that the health and human rights movement is consolidated, and the journey of equality finds an impetus to pave way for community engagement and ownership. It is in this endeavor that in the year 2016, HST initiated project CONNECT with support from Amplify Change to strengthen LGBTQ+ networks, support groups and build their capacities to promote human and health rights of LGBTQ+ communities in India.

The Project implementation began in November 2016 and over a period of next 6 years, the project received one costed and two no cost extensions and had a total budget of nearly 700,000 EUROS (approx. 6.5 Cr INR). The Project began with a capacity assessment (Annexure I) of community-based organizations who were part of INFOSEM network and 25 out of the 63 CBOs that took the assessment were shortlisted as CONNECT Partners. During the six years period of project implementation, 25 CBOs, 10 Initiatives – Support Groups and 25 Individuals received support of which 20 CBOs and Initiatives stood strengthened while few could be not taken forward largely owing to COVID 19 pandemic concerns and lockdowns that happened during the two-year period but will be followed up for further strengthening in future.

The implementation saw National level activities with support from CONNECT Partners that included capacity building initiatives, advocacy initiatives and innovations that influenced attitudes of the communities and key stakeholders creating an enabling environment for LGBTQ+ communities in India. INFOSEM network strengthening significantly mobilized communities who volunteered their time and efforts at no cost for providing emergency support during COVID 19 pandemic in terms of dry ration distribution, provision of ART medications, mental health support, and reaching to community persons facing violence at home created by the national level lockdown during the pandemic. This coming together of community warriors was a major learning that indicated community ownership and dealing with disaster situations created by an unexpected pandemic which affected the lives of millions of LGBTQ+ persons across the country. In this period a CONNECT LGBTQ+ Resource Center has been created <https://connect-lgbtqplus.org/> which aims to serve as a one stop center of community resources available in India.

The CONNECT Partners of The Humsafar Trust met at the National dissemination of Project CONNECT in New Delhi on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 which also marked the official closure of the project in India.

The CONNECT Partners expressed their gratitude to Amplify Change for its 6-year support and creating a platform that now needs to be taken forward. CONNECT may cease to be a project but CONNECT Partners decided to stay together to form a consortium that will join hands and continue to work on the health, human rights and make efforts to address the unmet needs of the community.

Thus, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 marked the beginning of CONNECT Partners consortium with its existing 12 CBOs, 8 Initiatives-Support Groups making a total of 20 CONNECT partners that have been strengthened in the 6 years of the Project CONNECT implementation along with Integrated Network of Sexual Minorities (INFOSEM).

This document defines the scope of the CONNECT Partners consortium and their role in broadening and strengthening the LGBTQ+ movement in India.

## **Eligibility criteria**

CONNECT Partners will be chosen on the basis of following criteria

A CONNECT Partner can be

- 1) Registered Community Based Organization
- 2) An LGBTQ + Initiative-Support Group
- 3) An Individual pro-actively working in the LGBTQ+ spaces.
- 4) Effort will be made not to exceed more than one CONNECT Partner in each state of India. However, this is subject to relaxation where there may be more than one competent partner in the same state.
- 5) Members from 2 / 3 tier cities will be given preference to strengthen community work in non-urban India.

## **Compliance Requirement**

**The CONNECT partners will have a set of compliance requirements that will have to be met at agreed upon time intervals as specified below.**

- 1) Need to undertake a soft capacity assessment on annual basis.
- 2) Indicators of capacity assessment will be jointly decided by the CONNECT Partners.
- 3) Need to submit audited annual reports, in case of registered organizations.
- 4) Need to submit an annual report of work achieved and activities done during the year by all partners
- 5) CONNECT Partners will not have any legal cases on them (except in the case where they have been charged for protesting against violation of human rights) or blacklisted by the funding/govt. agencies.
- 6) Annual regional dissemination of their work will be required (Funding support will be done jointly by HST and CONNECT Partners)

## **Support for CONNECT Partners**

HST will act as a Mentor Partner to younger groups and individuals in the country and build their capacities for effective and quality outcomes in their regions. The support can include the following but not only limited to the list below.

- 1) Financial support
- 2) Non-Financial support
- 3) In case of restrictions from government on onward funding or absence of Bank Accounts, HST can agree to be an implementing partner in collaboration with the local organizations.
- 4) Support for visibility initiatives by partners will be a priority
- 5) Technical support for partners who may wish to register as CBOs
- 6) Project Partners with HST
- 7) Recommendations to Support Agencies.
- 8) Regular updates on the available funding opportunities
- 9) Creating sustainability opportunities for CONNECT Partners

## **CONNECT Partners Engagement**

An annual Offsite for CONNECT partners with a specific theme that may include cross learnings from across states/regions will be organized. HST will take lead in raising funds for this engagement activity. CONNECT Partners will be given exposure visits that may be virtual or physical meetings at Humsafar Trust Mumbai Center or across partners for learning and sharing of best practices followed by the Consortium partners.

## **CONNECT PARTNERS Goal Statement:**

*Strengthening LGBTQ+ communities and creating acceptance to achieve an equitable society.*

## **CONNECT PARTNERS Consortium Objectives and Activities**

### **1) To conduct periodic needs assessment of CONNECT Partners and strengthen their capacities to match their unmet needs.**

#### **a) Community Needs Assessment as a step towards capacity building**

Community needs assessment is a systematic process designed to determine the current status and unmet needs; sometimes, both the present and future needs - of a defined population or geographic area with regard to a specified program or subject area.

#### **b) Needs Assessment Component**

- i. Profile of CONNECT Partners
- ii. Gap and response analysis
- iii. Identification of unmet needs
- iv. Available resources
- v. Prioritization of needs to be met
- vi. Identification of key community players

#### **c) Needs Assessment Process**

- i. Step 1 Write a Needs Assessment Proposal (Background, objective, proposed methods, expected output, budget and personnel)
- ii. Step 2 Form a core group selected from within CONNECT Partners and HST.
- iii. Step 3 Discuss the issue, questions with the members and set a methodology (key questions, techniques, tools, sample, area)
- iv. Step 4 Conduct needs assessment of the community, resources, gap analysis
- v. Step 5 Set up priority needs, discuss with the community groups

The unmet needs of the community will be discussed at the Annual meeting of CONNECT Partners for further action and follow-up plan.

**2) To build Organizational Capacities and strengthen governance structures of CONNECT Partners**

This objective will provide training and assistance to registered CBO CONNECT Partners in development of policies like Human Resources, Governance and Board Manual, Resource mobilization policy, Finance Manual, setting up financial systems, provisions of necessary certificates like 80G and 12A to receive funds, training them on documentation and for younger initiatives provide support for registration and help them achieve registration process with relevant authorities that give them legal status as Not for Profit organizations and/ or CBOs. HST will aim to support them in Grants writing processes and link them with traditional and non-traditional donors.

**3) To build capacities by training CONNECT Partners on Health, Civil rights and Advocacy work in India**

This objective will involve training CONNECT Partners for networking and collaborating with external stakeholders. This objective will include building Partners Capacities on hosting workshops on HIV service delivery, Mental Health, Civil rights, access to social entitlement, crisis mitigation, stakeholder management, evidence gathering, Identification, prioritization of research areas, abstract writing, facilitate attendance of Connect partners in various workshops and conferences and nurturing a bank of LGBTQ+ researchers.

The objective will also include Training Of Trainers (TOT) of CONNECT Partners for Crisis situation management, Identification and training mental health professional for sensitive approach to LGBTQ+ issues, provide support for independent Project Development Support and Grants Writing to CONNECT Partners, Create opportunities for partners to increase visibility in international workshops and research opportunities and providing them training and capacity building for abstract writing and managing international stakeholders. It will also aim to train partners on resource mobilization, organizational development and other key areas identified by the Consortium.

**4) To strengthen CONNECT Partners visibility for Social Media advocacy and train them for larger platforms.**

This objective will include strengthening capacities of CONNECT Partners to implement social media campaigns and conduct effective and quality advocacy to strengthen health and human rights of the LGBTQ+ communities in India. It will also involve dissemination of information and strengthening <https://connect-lgbtqplus.org/> This objective will aim at ensuring correct and meaningful representation in media and digital platforms. Advocacy with various government and policy making authorities will be a key activity under this objective to ensure that the schemes are also LGBTQ+ friendly and accessible by the LGBTQ+ individuals.

**5) To enhance engagement with various stakeholders like Govt, civil society and relevant entities**

This objective aims to challenge issues of stigma, discrimination and gender-based violence and policies that can be formulated to address these critical aspects that affect the mental and physical wellbeing of the communities. The engagement with stakeholders will also aim at networking with them and working towards building friendly environments for the communities and enable them to access health services and social entitlements.

**Conclusion:** The Supreme Court of India read down Section 377 in India in 2018 and made recommendations to Government of India for inclusion of LGBTQ+ and the Transgender Act of 2019 paved the path of Trans communities and embrace them as integral part of Indian society. But little has been achieved. We are aggressively working with The NITI Aayog and UNDP to develop a national framework for LGBTQ+ communities as well and have communities included in the development agenda. Though agencies have been forthcoming working on Trans rights but have shied away from including LGB+ communities. The journey is far from over. We notice a significant rise in HIV positivity as our current interventions haven't been able to reach out to younger gay men, Transwomen and MSM in India. The violence against LGBTQ+ is on the rise and end of discrimination is a farfetched dream. There is an urgent need to reach out to the families of young LGBTQ+, policy makers, law enforcement agencies create conducive and inclusive workplace environment and strive for stigma free health services. There is a need to harness the new digital media technology to reach out to the younger generation of LGBTQ+ communities and the different stakeholders to disseminate information. There is a long journey ahead towards building an equal and Inclusive society for our communities and CONNECT Partners is a small effort in the right direction.



*This document was envisaged by a group of key contributors who have been part of CONNECT Partners initiatives in a one day writing retreat held in Lonavala (Maharashtra) on 19<sup>th</sup> May,2022. This document will be presented to all CONNECT Partners for their feedback and approval.*

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**List of Annexures:**

**Annexure 1: Capacity Assessment tool developed in 2017**



Capacity assessment  
tool\_CONNECT Partne

CONNECT Partners  
The Humsafar Trust- LGBTQ+ Consortium  
CBO Profile Sheet

Q1. What is the name of your CBO?	Q.1.a Details of Contact Person:
Q2. Type of organization: MSM CBO / TG CBO/ LGBTQ+ organization / Others	
Q3. Contact details of the CBO	
Q4. Registration details of the organization: Place of registration, year of registration and registration number. <i>Attach copy of the registration certificate</i>	
<i>Place of Registration:</i> <i>Year of Registration:</i> <i>Registration number:</i>	
Q5. Details of board members and executive members: Name, Age, Qualification, and duration. Please <i>attach the details of the same.</i>	
Q6. What is the geographic area of your work?	
Q7. How would you best describe the work of your organization?	
Q8. Does the organization have a vision and mission statement?	
Q9. Does your organization have its own bank account?	

Q10. Is your organisation part of any other network? If so, please state name of network(s)?
Q11. Details of governance documents status: Provide details of PAN number, 80G, 12A, FCRA whichever is available:
Q12. Are there written organizational policies and procedures that govern the work of your organization? If yes provide details of the same ( <i>Just the name of the policies</i> )
Q13. Details of projects in last two years: Provide details of the project including name of funding agency and duration of the project.
Q14. Number of full/part-time paid staff; volunteers
Q15. Does the organization have an annual report for the past two years? If yes, <i>please attach the report with email.</i>
Q16. Does the organization have an Audit report for the past two years? If yes, <i>please attach the report with email.</i>
Q17. Does the organization have a strategy/operational plan for the next year/s? If yes, <i>please attach with email.</i>
Q18. Any other information you wish to share

**Annexure 2: List of existing CONNECT Partners (CBOs, Initiatives-Support Groups and Individuals)**

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>CBO/Support Group/Initiative</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Registration Number</b>	<b>Email id</b>	<b>Mobile Number</b>	<b>Typology</b>
<b>1</b>	Sarathi trust	CBO	Maharashtra		sarathi.avert@gmail.com	<b>9325632795</b>	MSM
<b>2</b>	Lakshya Trust	CBO	Gujarat		sylvestermerchant@gmail.com	<b>9825311997</b>	MSM
<b>3</b>	Dinajpur Notun Aalo Society	CBO	West Bengal		dinajpurnotunaalo@gmail.com	<b>7319504665</b>	TG
<b>4</b>	SCOHD SOCIETY	CBO	Pondicherry		scohdpondy2011@gmail.com	<b>9894455200</b>	TG
<b>5</b>	Badlaav Samiti Indore	CBO	Madhya Pradesh		badlaav.samiti@gmail.com	<b>7771002777</b>	MSM
<b>6</b>	Basera Samajik Sansthan	CBO	Uttar Pradesh		basera.pehchan@gmail.com		TG
<b>7</b>	Umang- LBT Support Group	Support Group	Maharashtra		umanglbt@gmail.com	<b>9930095856</b>	LBT
<b>8</b>	Mansa Foundation	CBO	Punjab		pehchan.mansa@gmail.com	<b>9569330422</b>	MSM/TG
<b>9</b>	Mitwa Sankalp	CBO	Chhattisgarh		cgmss69@yahoo.com	<b>9009448443</b>	TG
<b>10</b>	RAQS	Support Group	Uttar Pradesh		raqs.alld@gmail.com		LGBTQ+

<b>11</b>	Abhimaan	Support Group	Maharashtra		abhimaan.kolhapur@gmail.com	<b>7972724183</b>	LGBTQ+
<b>12</b>	Yaariyan	Support Group	Maharashtra		yaariyan@humsafar.org		LGBTQ+
<b>13</b>	Vikalp Women's Group	CBO	Gujarat		vikalpomensgroup@gmail.com	<b>9879725969</b>	LBT
<b>14</b>	Forum Foundation	CBO	Gujarat		foramfoundation@yahoo.com	<b>9979891095</b>	MSM/TG
<b>15</b>	Parivartan Trust	CBO	Karnataka		parivartantrustblr@gmail.com	<b>9535100902</b>	MSM/TG
<b>16</b>	MITO Trust	CBO	Odisha		meetombj@gmail.com	<b>9040140168</b>	MSM/TG
<b>17</b>	Sahayog Transman Group	Support Group	Maharashtra		sahyogtransmansanghatana@gmail.com		Transman
<b>18</b>	Xomonoy Assam	Support Group	Assam		xomonoy@gmail.com	<b>6000482822</b>	LGBTQ+
<b>19</b>	Jamshedpur Queer Circle	Support Group	Jharkhand		ssouviksaha@gmail.com	<b>7004091105</b>	LGBTQ+
<b>20</b>	Yutak Charitable Trust	Support Group	Maharashtra		yutak.lgbtiq@gmail.com	<b>9764024697</b>	LGBTQ+

**Annexure 3: A logical Framework Analysis (LFA)**

<b>Goal</b>	Strengthening LGBTQ+ communities and creating acceptance to achieve an equitable society					
<b>Objectives</b>	1. To conduct periodic needs assessment of CONNECT Partners and strengthen their capacities to match their unmet needs.		2 & 3 To build Organizational Capacities and strengthen governance structures of CONNECT Partners		4 & 5 To enhance engagement with various stakeholders like Govt, civil society and relevant entities	
<b>Activities</b>	1.1. RFP for Identification of key CONNECT partners	1.2 Conduct need assessment of CONNECT partners and identify gaps, unmet needs, priorities of each partner.	2.1 Capacity building workshops on selected topics such as governance, program management, HR, advocacy, communication and documentation, and grant writing	2.2 Identification of regional Advocacy needs on health and human right of LGBTQ+ and train CONNECT partners on Advocacy activities.	3.1 CONNECT partners challenging issues of stigma, discrimination and GBV incidents in their regions	3.2 CONNECT partners documenting evidence and disseminate at the national level and push for policy changes
<b>No.</b>	Invite CBO, support group, initiative working with LGBTQ+ community in India.	One assessment at the beginning with each partner	At least 2 Capacity building workshops covering selected topics with CONNECT partners	4 TOT trainings to be conducted with CONNECT partners on hosting workshops on HIV service delivery, Mental Health, Civil rights, access to social entitlement,	At least 2 incidences of stigma and discrimination being reported by CONNECT partners	1 National dissemination highlighting the community concerns and policy gaps

				crisis mitigation		
<b>Inputs</b>	-RFP -Potential partner list	- Findings of capacity assessment tool	-2 Capacity building workshop materials	-Final training plans with partners - Technical Support from HST	-Documentation and gathering evidence from CONNECT partners	-Policy inputs -Recommendation to govt. stakeholders
<b>Outputs</b>	-Identification of approx. 26 regional CONNECT partners	- Formation of core group CONNECT partners	- CONNECT partners trained on identified areas during assessment	-At least 50 individuals representing CONNECT partners to be trained events	-Areas of intervention identified for policy change in each region by CONNECT partners	-Dissemination report and key recommendation
<b>Outcomes</b>	CONNECT Partners Consortium formed with 26 partners	26 CONNECT partners consortium effectively working towards equal health and human rights of LGBQ+	CONNECT partners with strengthened governance processes.	CONNECT partners equipped with knowledge on health and human rights of LGBTQ+ persons to create more safe spaces	Documentation leading to effective engagement with key stakeholders.	CONNECT Partners influence local and national policies and laws.
<b>Indicators</b>	-Number of need assessment conducted with CONNECT partners -Number of Partners identified in each region - Expected number of LGBTQ+ community reached by CONNECT partners		-Number of trainings conducted on governance and management with CONNECT partners.  - Number of CONNECT partners trained and provided capacity building support developed, implemented, and achieved organizational capacity-building plans  -CONNECT partners representatives trained		-Number of CONNECT partners documented the instances of stigma, discrimination as per their advocacy plans  -Newly identified advocacy plans with CONNECT partners  - Document on learnings, challenges of CONNECT partners in one year to be documented by HST	