

MHI's Work

We work with multiple stakeholders, including non-profit organisations, governments, mental health professionals, and activists in the pursuit of an INCLUSIVE mental health ecosystem. Our core strategies include ADVOCACY, CAPACITY BUILDING, GRANTMAKING, KNOWLEDGE CREATION, and TRAINING.

Innovation
Insights
Philanthropy
Challenges
Lived Realities

MHI's Work

Besides fulfilling its primary role as a grantmaking agency, MHI has included various endeavours within its work that utilise its strengths in knowledge creation, communication, and dissemination. We aim to engage with dominant knowledge critically while centring knowledge from the margins in all our initiatives.

Re-Vision

Workplace Mental Health:

MHI launched a toolkit for corporate workplaces called *Mental Wellbeing at the Workplace*. The toolkit addresses mental health in the workplace by providing a framework that challenges the narrative that it is an individual issue. Instead, it introduces the concept of ecosystem stressors and how an organisation's culture and ways of working can lead to mental health issues among employees.

Suicide Prevention Initiatives:

A groundbreaking report titled *Suicide Prevention: Changing the Narrative* was also released, which centred around building a comprehensive approach to tackling suicide in India. The report covers critical methods and evidence-based strategies for suicide prevention. It also offers tangible steps that various stakeholders can take to prevent suicides.

The Alliance for Suicide Prevention (ASP):

Seeded by MHI, the ASP brings together stakeholders, including organisations, activists, funders, researchers, and policymakers, to work collaboratively on preventing suicide at the individual and community levels.

Gender and Sexuality-Based Initiatives:

We published *The Queer Affirmative Counselling Practice (QACP): A Resource Book for Mental Health Practitioners in India*, the first of a series of anti-oppressive practice resource manuals for practitioners, educators and students, and those working on gender and sexuality.

MHI also launched *Building Allyship: The Mental Health Community and LGBTQI+ Rights* - a report that showcases the queer affirmative mental health work undertaken during a High Court Judgement. The resource book is a guiding tool for mental health practitioners who want to build allyship and promote LGBTQI+ rights.

International Peer Support Practice:

Our first international peer workshop had activists from 10 South and South-East Asian countries. In collaboration with Asia Pacific Transgender Network, the workshop focussed on sharing systems and tools for participants to provide mental health support to their queer-trans community.

Youth Mental Health:

MHI collaborated with the Asia and South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE), a regional network of more than 200 civil society organisations and individuals in 30 countries in the Asia-Pacific region to provide training to build capacities of researchers on youth mental health. The training was translated into four languages and ASL for this cohort of 45 young people from 12 nations.

Context

On the second anniversary of the lockdown, MHI launched *Mental Health Diaries: COVID Stories*, a series highlighting how the COVID-19 pandemic and its accompanying lockdowns exacerbated psychological stressors. In addition, they highlighted how COVID impacted marginalised communities - caregivers, healthcare workers, and young persons, among others.

We also collaborated with BBC StoryWorks to produce two films:

1. The first showcased MHI's approach to funding community-based mental health — Atmiyata, a community-based mental health intervention in Mehsana District, Gujarat; and
2. The second highlighted helplines as service providers, showcasing iCALL, a project primarily funded by MHI since 2015. It provides mental health support through professional, accessible, and confidential counselling through the telephone, email, and chat to anyone in distress.

Engage

MHI collaborated with the ASCENT Foundation to launch an *Entrepreneur Mental Health Toolkit* and Microsite focussing on entrepreneur mental health and wellbeing. The toolkit and microsite focus on unique stressors experienced by the organisational leaders, which can also be felt throughout the business, including the employees.

MHI, in collaboration with Sangath, launched *DIYouth Advocacy*— a complete guide to mental health advocacy for young people. The advocacy guide is developed by a group of young people, mental health experts, advocates, and technologists, including those with lived experiences of mental health needs.

MHI partnered with 48 organisations/collectives across 22 states to provide relief support through food rations, medicines, hygiene kits, vaccine awareness, rents, and bank transfers.

Leadership:

Manjula Pradeep, the founder of MHI partner WAYVE Foundation, was featured in BBC's 100 Women of 2021. Two MHI partners—Isvar Sankalpa and the Centre for Mental Health Law and Policy, Pune, were also featured among the 25 good practices for community outreach mental health services worldwide by WHO guidance and technical packages on community mental health services in the same year.

MHI's CEO, Priti Sridhar, was elected as a South East representative on the advisory board for Global Mental Health Action Network (GMHAN), a community of mental health professionals from across the world to improve support for mental health globally. In addition, Raj, MHI's Director, was invited to participate in a panel discussion on community-led approaches to adapting and integrating Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, organised by UNICEF East Asia and Pacific.

COVID-19 Crisis Reponse 2022

COVID relief

The COVID-19 pandemic, further compounded by lockdowns, implicated that people had to undergo structural exclusion along with psychosocial distress. For MHI, this meant that its COVID relief efforts go beyond mental health support to include relief support within its ambit. Partnering with 48 organisations across 22 states, MHI funded food rations, medicines, hygiene kits, vaccine awareness, rents, and bank transfers. Smaller NGOs and collectives took centrestage in the outreach process as these organisations are often denied funding for relief work.

We provided relief support to 28 NGOs, CBOs, Collectives, and individuals

- Advocate Rajesh Kumar
- Advocate Gordhan Ram Jayapal
- Adivasi Mahila Aapsi Madad Pahal
- Agadhbodh Foundation
- Ambedkarite Women's Era
- Anubhuti Trust
- Bharathamatha Family Welfare Foundation
- Burans
- CHARM
- Devadasi Vimochana Vedike
- Disha
- DLR Prerna
- Education Society Chamba
- Ekjut
- Future Vision
- Gram Parivartan Prabodhini
- Indigenous People's Collective
- Jan Jagran Shakti Sangathan
- Jeeva
- Karnataka Vikalachetanara Samasthe
- KOSISH Charitable Trust
- Lok Kalyan Pratishtan
- Manav Vikas Sanshodhan Kendra
- Moitrisanjog
- M/s Vasantham Maatru Thiranaligal Group
- Muzaffarpur Vikas Mandal
- Nirangal
- Nirdhar Samajik Sevabhavi Sanstha
- Ohana
- People's Voice Korav
- Purva Bharati Educational Trust
- Raahi
- Reconstruction and Development Society
- Roshan India Foundation
- SAATHII
- Sadbhavana Trust
- Sahara Sakshrta Educational & Social Welfare Society
- SamajikShodhEvamVikas Kendra (SSEVK)
- Sangvari Gond Youth Network
- Save the Destitute Foundation
- South India AIDS Action Programme (SIAAP)
- SSK, UP
- Voice for Peace
- Volunteers in Saharsa
- Wavye Foundation
- Women Centre
- Ya_All: Youth Network
- Yusuf Meherally Centre

Vulnerable marginalised communities:

- Persons with Disability
- Adivasi/NT/DNT communities
- Persons living with long term illness - Physical/Mental
- Ante-natal persons/post-natal persons
- Children living in tea gardens
- Persons living on streets
- Dalit/SC/Bahujan
- Marginalised religious communities
- Transpersons/LGBTQIA+ community
- Daily wage earners
- Domestic workers
- Persons from the Devdasi community
- Persons living with HIV/AIDS
- Persons living in urban bastis
- Sex workers



COVID Impact Map

COVID RELIEF

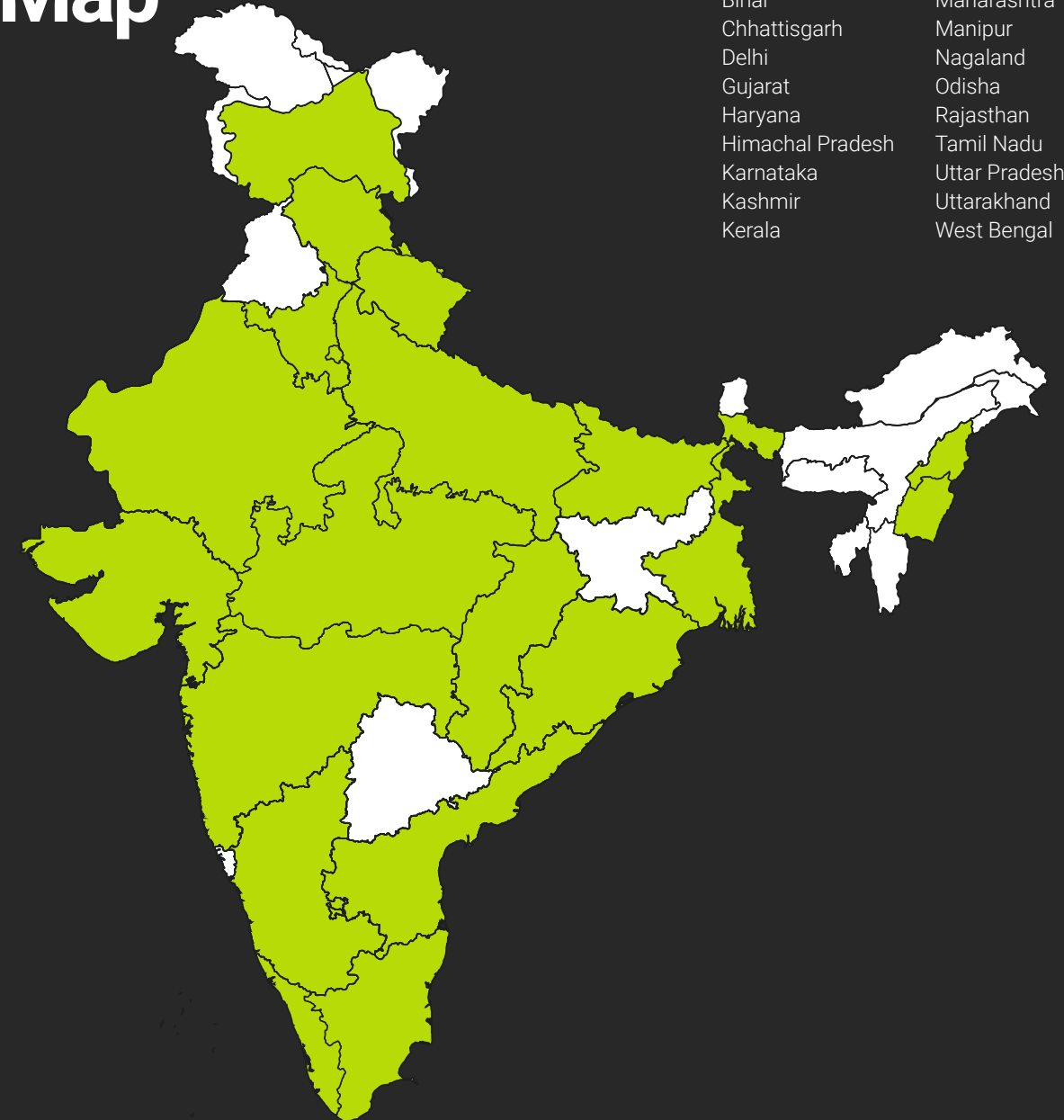
People supported: 28560
CBOs, NGOs and Collectives: 48
States: 22

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Andhra Pradesh | Madhya Pradesh |
| Arunachal Pradesh | Maharashtra |
| Assam | Manipur |
| Bihar | Odisha |
| Chhattisgarh | Punjab |
| Gujarat | Rajasthan |
| Himachal Pradesh | Tamil Nadu |
| Jammu & Kashmir | Telangana |
| Jharkhand | Uttar Pradesh |
| Karnataka | Uttarakhand |
| Kerala | West Bengal |



Primary Impact Map

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| Andhra Pradesh | Madhya Pradesh |
| Bihar | Maharashtra |
| Chhattisgarh | Manipur |
| Delhi | Nagaland |
| Gujarat | Odisha |
| Haryana | Rajasthan |
| Himachal Pradesh | Tamil Nadu |
| Karnataka | Uttar Pradesh |
| Kashmir | Uttarakhand |
| Kerala | West Bengal |



Demographic Snapshot

MHI goals include reaching out to and making mental health accessible to marginalised populations and communities. To bridge the mental health care gap for persons facing structural oppression—it is even more important to provide psychosocial interventions and support.

TOTAL REACH OF OUR PARTNERS



1,454

DISABILITY



58,792
women

2,974
lgbtqia+

GENDER



8,123

RELIGIOUS MINORITY

32,394

youth

AGE



15,387

sc/st/obc /
indigenous
& tribal

CASTE



20,468

ECONOMICALLY
MARGINALISED



158

ANY OTHER

The 5 Pillars

MHI uses a 360 degree approach comprising of 5 pillars to support quantum change and encourage innovation, scalability, and capacity building.

awareness

Lack of information combined with stigma around mental health inhibits persons with mental health needs from approaching friends, family, and mental health professionals for support and care.

effective service delivery

Overall, there is minimal access to mental health services, which are marked by both poor availability as well as poor quality. Accessible, holistic, rights-based services in multiple delivery formats need to be made available to all.

capacity-building

Building the capacity of individuals, organisations, communities, and institutions, through training and knowledge sharing, is of critical importance.

references & linkages

Strong linkages need to be forged between mental health service providers and allied services concerned with livelihood, health, gender, sexuality, education, legal support, as well as government welfare schemes.

research

A thriving and responsive mental health ecosystem must rest on a support base of research that documents and records context and community-specific experiences in the field, along with evaluating the efficacy and impact of a variety of interventions.

138,076 PERSONS

70,094 PERSONS

9 PRESENTATIONS + PUBLICATIONS

4,332 PERSONS

16,181 PERSONS

228,692

sum of persons impacted

Partners

As of June 30th 2022, MHI works with 33 partners across 38 projects in 20 states, in 15 languages with communities, institutions, and governments for service delivery, advocacy, deinstitutionalisation, capacity building, community mental health, law and policy, LGBTQIA+, and youth mental health.

partners are



Activists



Service Providers



Researchers

that affect state & civil society at these levels



Government



Institutions



Communities

partners prior to 2020

ANJALI • ANUBHUTI • BAPU TRUST • BASIC NEEDS INDIA • BEBAAK COLLECTIVE • BURANS • CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH LAW AND POLICY, PUNE • DARJEELING LADENLA ROAD PRERNA (DLR PRERNA) • DISHA • ICALL PSYCHOSOCIAL HELPLINE • ISWAR SANKALPA • KASHMIR LIFELINE • MANN • MOITRISANJOG • NIRANGAL • RAAHI • RESOURCE CENTRE FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE • SCHIZOPHRENIA AWARENESS ASSOCIATION • SHIVAR FOUNDATION • SOCIETY FOR NUTRITION, EDUCATION, HEALTH ACTION (SNEHA) • SUKOON • WAYVE FOUNDATION • YA-ALL

partners since
April 2021

Jeeva
Trust

Samvada

Project
OHANA

Mental Health
Action Trust

Project
Manmarziyan

PROJECT / INITIATIVE

Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for Sexual and Gender Minorities in Karnataka

Building Capacities for Community Mental Health through Courses for Gender Development Practitioners, Youth Entering Professions

Recreation and Safe Spaces for Dalit and Adivasi Leaders

Ongoing Support and Scaling-up of Community Mental Health Programmes in Kerala

An Initiative on Mental Health with the Urban Gond Youth Community of Bhopal

NATURE OF PARTNER



STATE & CIVIL SOCIETY



LOCATION

Karnataka

Karnataka

Kerala

Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

DETAIL

As a community-led organisation, Jeeva focusses upon issues around mental health, providing crisis intervention, livelihood support, and community media for working class sexual minorities in Karnataka. In their project with MHI, Jeeva aims for capacity building of community leaders from rural/semi-rural districts in Karnataka who, in turn, can provide mental health support, facilitate links and referrals, and develop awareness on mental health through community existing networks and CBOs working on HIV/AIDS in Karnataka.

MHI partners with Samvada with their Baduku Centre for Livelihood Learning's "Gender Development Practitioners Course with Counselling Skills and Mental Health Perspectives," providing mental health care on campus and self-care modules to all Baduku students. The course aims to equip students from marginalised backgrounds with the critical perspectives of feminist therapy, inculcating reflexivity and developing key skills of non-judgemental and empathetic listening, mediation, networking and referral, women's mobilisation, sensitisation and advocacy for gender justice, while working with marginalised communities.

Project Ohana is designed by marginalised women leaders that aims to holistically address the unique stressors faced by Dalit, Adivasi, and women leaders from marginalised groups and to create a space for addressing their mental well-being through a three-month residential programme. The initiative will provide healthcare services (physical and mental), capacity-building (that is, writing workshops), and peer support opportunities for those in residence with the larger aim of these leaders sustaining their social justice work.

Mental Health Action Trust (MHAT) provides community-based and community-led mental health care models free of cost for economically marginalised individuals with severe mental health issues. Through their partnership with MHI, MHAT provides services to their 46 community partnerships across eight districts in Kerala, and for scaling up of 15 community-based programmes with the Adivasi communities and coastal fisherfolk in a few districts of Kerala. MHAT's partnerships include government community health centres, various government departments as well as local NGOs working across sectors such as health and palliative care among other practices in their work.

Project Man Marziyaan works with youth from Gond and other Adivasi communities residing in urban spaces such as Bhopal, on their mental health, their understanding of the self and society, and in building peer support networks in bastis of Bhopal. The project aims to engage with Adivasi youth of all genders aged 15 and above through a 12-month youth programme. While facilitating direct counselling support to youth in these bastis and making referrals, the project also provides counselling skills for a few identified youths, who later on can go on to become peer counsellors.

partners since April 2020

Parcham

The Listening Station

BDS Samabhabona

The Centre For Mental Health Law And Policy (CMHLP-CASP)

M.S. Chellamuthu Trust And Research Foundation (MSCTRF)

PROJECT / INITIATIVE

Career Counselling and Life Skills for Adolescents and Young Adults from Vulnerable Communities

Helpline and Mental Health Awareness Project in Nagaland

Trans Community Drop-in Centre and Ongoing Community Support

Contact and Safety Planning Project (CASP): Suicide Prevention

Project SPEAK: A Suicide Postvention Initiative

NATURE OF PARTNER



STATE & CIVIL SOCIETY



LOCATION

Mumbai, Maharashtra

Nagaland

Kolkata, West Bengal

Chhattisgarh

Tamil Nadu

DETAIL

Parcham is a community-based organisation working with Muslim adolescent girls in Mumbra and Mumbai. Their flagship program is using sports for the empowerment of girls and to foster fraternity and solidarity amongst young women across different religions. They also work on rights education and agency building of marginalised young women to access public spaces, recreation and equal representation. MHI is partnering with Parcham to offer Career Counselling Life skills for young Muslim women.

The Listening Station project operates a helpline staffed by academically trained counsellors, where service users can avail mental health support free of cost. The helpline has a call-back facility for service users to follow up. In order to facilitate greater access to mental health services for communities in Nagaland, the Listening Station team aims to begin community outreach work with key stakeholders and influencers, such as colleges, community spaces, and churches so that they can provide awareness and education, as well as facilitate discussions on mental health in local and vernacular languages.

A Kolkata-based trans-activists-led organisation- BDS Samabhabona was launched by trans and queer activists, comprised of Dalit, working class persons, sex workers, and migrant workers. Samabhabona is partnering with MHI to support a drop-in centre/ community space in Kolkata, which will facilitate mental health support and crisis intervention for around 150 trans persons. In tandem with Samabhabona's feminist, intersectoral, and rights-based approach, this project will support elderly and homeless trans persons, while also facilitating community advocacy activities such as sensitisation workshops, consultations, and meetings that advocate for legal rights, wellbeing of trans sex workers, trans labour unions, leadership training, livelihoods, and peer support as well as art activism.

Partnering with MHI, CMHLP's Contact and Safety Planning (CASP) project will be implemented in Balod and Rajnandgaon districts of Chhattisgarh. With an aim to reduce repeat suicide attempts among individuals, the project seeks to get the CASP intervention delivered through capacity-building of emergency ward nurses and community health officers (CHOs). Post discharge from district and sub-district hospitals, trained CHOs follow-up with participants and their families at regular intervals. The study will aim to identify the feasibility of implementing CASP in the public health systems across all districts in the state.

Spearheaded by women survivors of suicide loss themselves, Project SPEAK is a suicide post-vention pilot initiative by MSCTRF in Madurai district of Tamil Nadu—that focusses on providing support to women survivors of suicide loss through support groups, local outreach to suicide survivors, peer-led support groups for survivors (online and in-person), immediate response by trained volunteers in the event of a suicide death in the communities and sensitisation and training programmes on suicide and suicide loss for various stakeholders such as mental health professionals, police, media, and teachers among others.

partners since
April 2020

Project Sahyog

PROJECT / INITIATIVE

**Studying Mental Health
Capabilities in Kashmir**

NATURE OF PARTNER



STATE & CIVIL SOCIETY



LOCATION

Kashmir

DETAIL

Project Sahyog is an independent research study led by a group of Kashmiri researchers, mental health sector professionals, and lawyers on mapping the availability and accessibility of rights-based mental health services in the Valley. Keeping the backdrop of marginalisation and conflict in Kashmir, the project will be a 1-year collaborative study across mental health stakeholders in Kashmir such as practitioners, service providers, policy-makers, and community members to document the state of public and private mental healthcare systems in Kashmir through a mapping of service providers, and develop a framework on rights-based mental health work in Kashmir, including context-specific indicators for rights-based care.