



Brief Note

About South Asian Human Rights Association for Marginalised Sexualities & Genders (SAHRA)

We are all aware of human rights violations of sexual and gender minorities in India. Some of these are documented, but most of them are not. Rights need to be exercised, expanded upon and at times, created.

With this in mind, SAHRA was conceived by a group of rights activists from Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan, at a regional meeting held in Kathmandu in 2008. SAHRA is a human rights association that aims to strengthen the human rights of sexual and gender minorities in South Asia.

Membership

SAHRA is a membership organization for individuals and groups, developed in partnership with LLH (The Norwegian National Association for Lesbian and Gay Liberation). Members comprise organizations and individuals working on human rights of gender and sexual minorities from the SAARC countries. Presently the members are: India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan. SAHRA will build on rights work already taking place in the region, and strengthen the capacity of member organizations and individuals in documenting and responding to human rights violations.

Mandate

- Systematically document human rights violations against sexual and gender minorities.
- Respond to these violations.
- Strongly advocate for an increase in the recognition, protection and promotion of the human rights of sexual and gender minorities.

Constituencies

The constituencies of SAHRA are sexual and gender minorities in South Asia.

SAHRA's key activities

- Community consultation
- Capacity building with emphasis on human rights
- Membership and network building
- Releasing documents on human rights violations of gender & sexual minorities in South Asia
- Translating documents into local languages and disseminating them.

Structure of SAHRA

To set up SAHRA, a task force was formed with representatives from the five South Asian countries mentioned above. It consists of three members each from Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal, and given its large size, six from India. These representatives were elected or selected by local activists and groups during national consultations. The current SAHRA India task force continues to be the governing body of SAHRA.

As an interim measure, pending the registration of SAHRA, and in order to facilitate country-specific work plans, each country will have an elected steering committee. These will comprise of task force members and others from the community. India will have 5 regional

steering committees – one each in: North, South, East, North East and West. Each steering committee will comprise of 3 members – one transgender, one woman (assigned female at birth and self identified as female) and one man (assigned male at birth and self identified as male) from the LGBTI community.

The West Zone election

Thirty individuals representing various organizations and persons interested in/working on LGBTI rights in West India, will be shortlisted and invited to participate in the above elections. We are attempting to build representation across gender identity and sexual orientation, and hope to divide the above number of 30 within participants as follows: 10 trans persons (5 trans men, 5 trans women), 10 women and 10 men. This shortlisting for the purpose of elections, will be made from the following states: Gujarat, Goa, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

Two members, one man (defined as above) and one woman (defined as above), shall be elected at the meeting to be held in Goa. The West Zone Steering Committee will comprise of three members: one transperson, one woman and one man. The Steering Committee is mandated to include the already elected Task Force members. Since for West India, the elected Task Force member is a trans person, the October elections will be for the remaining two positions: one woman and one man.

The process of election will be by casting a secret ballot and declaring the selected candidates through a simple majority. Candidates will be permitted to canvas.

Obligations of Steering Committee Members

Please refer:

The Kathmandu Concept Note 2012,
Page 3, section III on 'Proposed work'.

Tenure of Steering Committee Members

Please refer:

The Kathmandu Concept Note 2012
Page 7, section VI on 'Country-Level Steering Committees'.