



ANNUAL REPORT

2022



OUR MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Mission: To advance reproductive justice and uproot gendered violence, by establishing access and choice for the most impacted Muslims

Vision: A world where all Muslims are safe, can exercise self determination over their reproductive lives and thrive in the communities they live, work and pray



Values:

We are faith-driven.

Compassion, justice, accountability, and gratitude are core Islamic values that drive our work.

We practice empathy.

Non-judgmental support is essential for individuals to heal, live authentically, and reclaim their stories

We cultivate belonging.

Everyone – including Muslims – of all races, sexual orientation, gender identities, economic backgrounds, abilities and religious practice should feel welcome, seen, and heard.

We are committed to compassionate truth telling.

Challenging harmful narratives is critical to achieving equity and freedom.

We approach our work with humility.

Those we work with are experts in their cultural realities and are our partners to help grow this work.

If you're anything like us, you can't believe it's already 2023. Three years into a pandemic, two years after the white supremacist attack on the capital, and several months after the Supreme Court overturn of Roe v. Wade and a historic midterm election, we're grateful to to have made it to 2023.

You might've heard us say we love acronyms, and if you didn't know, HEART is actually an acronym! Standing for (H)ealth (E)ducation, (A)dvocacy, (R)esearch, and (T)raining, we take a holistic approach to ending gendered violence, promoting sexual health, and advancing reproductive justice. **We're proud to say in 2022, we reached new levels in every arm of our work!**



HEALTH EDUCATION



Health Education

Equipping people with critical health information to make informed decisions

In 2022, not only did we produce resources, deepen frameworks, and collaborate with leaders in the field, we published a book! Based on years of work, this was no easy task. Between co-authors Haddi, Navila, and Nadiah, our editor, Dr. Asifa Qureshi, and the countless collaborators, **we did the thing.**

This book is the book we wished we had when we were younger. Hoping to meet everyone where they're at, this book is a tool to build more equitable, compassionate, and liberated relationships and community. **Pulling from our rich Islamic traditions and histories, this book is a resource for **all** Muslims, regardless of sexuality, sect, or background.** Since publishing the book in August, we have already **donated and sold over 900 copies, hosted over a dozen events nationally and internationally, and are in the process of launching specialized workshop and youth-led book club programs in 2023!**



[Sabreen](#), our recently hired Health Education Manager based in Atlanta, will continue to take the lead on much of this work alongside [Kiran](#), Social Media and Youth Engagement Coordinator.

[Donate here to help sponsor more free and reduced cost copies of this book!](#)



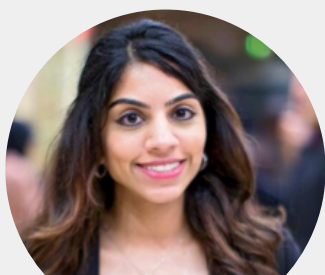
Sabreen Mohamed



Kiran Waqar

“

Being a Virtual Peer Educator has been incredible. I didn't realize the need for this in our community until I started doing it. I believe that we need to do preventative work to combat patriarchal values and sexual & domestic violence, and empowering people through education has been a large, significant part of this. **When we educate community members and they pass the education forward, we can slowly start to break stigmas and change norms.**



Kinza Khan

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FAITH
Inspired

Reproductive
Justice

SEXUAL
HEALTH

SEXUAL
VIOLENCE

ADVOCACY

Bel...

Advocacy: Enhancing safety for survivors of violence as they seek healing and justice

It was a busy year for gendered violence and [reproductive justice](#) advocates. In 2022, we saw an increase in our [Survivor Care Fund](#) by almost 20%. This year, we increased our distribution of funds to survivors by a 37%, re-distributing almost \$60,000 to survivors of violence. As we faced new attacks to our reproductive choice, we also launched the [Reproductive Justice Fund](#), a fund to help Muslims access resources like menstrual management, sexual dysfunction treatment, and more.

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“In the midst of deep confusion and crisis, reaching out to the HEART team was one of the greatest blessings from Allah. I hesitated so many times to contact them because I was afraid and unsure how they could help. Not only did they respond quickly, they were professional in their communication and efficient in their support, spending hours of one on one time to witness my story, explore my fears and concerns, and draw a plan that felt safe for me and aligned with my goals. I openly and gladly refer others to HEART, and I'm immensely grateful to Nadiah and Navila and the entire team for their tireless work in the unfortunate reality of abuse.”

- Survivor

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And as an organization that has been doing this work for over a decade, we know that this work isn't going to be solved by just working at the individual level. With the overturn of Roe v Wade and a historic midterm election, we worked on systemic and structural levels to protect our communities. Between workshops (with fabulous partner organizations like Queer Crescent and If/When/How) and a collaborative [Muslim Abolitionist Voter Guide](#), we strove to protect our legal rights and create community solutions. In an unmistakable show of community force, Muslim and BIPOC voters from California to Michigan defended abortion through supporting ballot measures that we educated around through our social media and in-person engagement.

5 legislative wins

for reproductive justice in Vermont, Michigan, California, Kentucky, and Montana

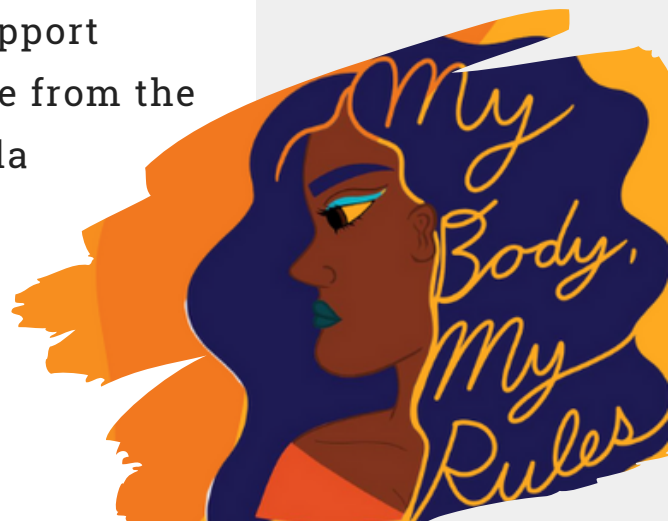
1,262 individuals

accessed our abolitionist voter guide

\$60,000+ re-distributed

to survivors of violence

In 2023, we are committed to continuing to support survivors of violence: whether that violence be from the state or individual perpetrators. Support Navila (Training and Survivor Advocacy Manager)'s efforts around the Survivor Care Fund and Sahar (Movement Building Manager)'s work through the [Reproductive Justice Fund](#) [by donating here.](#)





RESEARCH

RESPOND
WITH
RAHMA

Research:

Bridging the gap between research and practice to better understand the needs of Muslim communities

This is really groundbreaking work that is being done right now. As someone that treats sexual dysfunction in Muslim women - 30-40% of my patients are Muslim and we don't have any studies right now to go off of...Community organizations like HEART can go in and educate. And this is what needs to be done to reduce the burden of sexual dysfunction and sexual violence to destigmatize a lot of this so that women can get help for what they experience... Once this is out there, this is really going to be the study that is quoted, particularly for this area.



Dr. Sameena Rahman, Principal Investigator

We are dedicated to doing this work with intentionality, accessibility, and inclusivity - because research doesn't just belong in the ivory tower. That's why one of our main arms is research, to fill gaps and collect life-saving data **on Muslims that is by and for Muslims**. We are excited to say that we published another manuscript, ["They Sit with the Discomfort, They Sit with the Pain Instead of Coming Forward": Muslim Students' Awareness, Attitudes, and Challenges Mobilizing Sexual Violence Education on Campus](#) in Religions. See some of our sharable research information [here](#) and [here](#).

We also conducted two community-based focus groups on our recently released book, [The Sex Talk: A Muslim's Guide to Healthy Sex and Relationships](#). Our first focus group worked with Muslim undergraduate and graduate students and **received the best paper prize at the Society of Muslim Ethics conference**. Our second focus group worked with Gen Z and Millennial Muslims in the DMV, and will also produce an accompanying video project. In 2023, we will build on this research with our book clubs.

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We don't know what we don't know and this study is going to tell us that and what programming could look like - not only for HEART but for all Muslims throughout the US and Canada. I wanted to highlight one thing that was powerful HEART was able to do with some of the funding that they have received for this study through donations - which was to have research assistants to be part of this work [to build a pipeline of Muslim researchers].
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Dr. Wajiha Akhtar-Khaleel

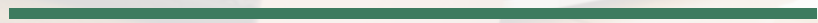
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One of the largest barriers is this stigmatized topic of sexual assault and the barriers within our Muslim communities to engaging this larger social issue. The research HEART is doing is not only to meant to have more Muslim representation in the research but to do a more of that culture shifting work to through these culturally specific programming to unhinge these deeply ingrained sexual assault attitudes in our communities.
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Yasmeen Khayr



TRAINING



Training:

Building the capacity of leaders and communities to build safe and inclusive spaces.

2022 was also a year of empowering HEART-led trainings! Part of our work is working directly with other advocates to provide life-changing information. Using our research-backed and faith-inspired curriculum, **we were fortunate enough to offer over 50 events, including panels, workshops, speaking at the White House, book events, and more.** Moreover, given the attacks on our reproductive freedoms, we prioritized trainings in impacted states such as Michigan, Florida, and Georgia.

We also held two Chicago city-wide trainings, one that was focused for Muslim leaders/orgs/professionals and another for direct service orgs/advocates/providers. Also with the fall of Roe v. Wade, we offered trainings that demonstrated the intersection of reproductive justice and gender based violence, and ways providers can support Muslim survivors impacted by both.

I believe that this course was exactly what I needed, at the exact moment it was necessary for my community. We are struggling with issues of spiritual abuse and I feel like I have been armed with the knowledge I need to speak to it with confidence and competence.

It has equipped me with knowledge, tools, resources and more importantly, a support network of outstanding committed Muslims doing the work who are resources in themselves. This course experience has empowered me to make more of an impact helping people than I could have made had I not gone through this course.





COMMUNITY

Community:

Cultivating spaces of belonging to build resilient and connected communities

After two years of being fully virtual, we returned to (COVID-safe) in-person and hybrid programming. A big adjustment from the world of Zoom breakout rooms and pre-recorded programming, HEART dreamed big in 2022: **hosting 3 in-person iftars with over 100 attendees, over a dozen book events with over 300 attendees, and more!**

In addition to our in-person community building and programming, we also offered hybrid and fully virtual programming. And how has our virtual community grown! For example, **in 2022 our Instagram grew by almost 50% in just one year.** Just because we can't break bread in person doesn't mean we aren't in relationship, Alhamdulillah.

What better word to encapsulate 2022 than Alhamdulillah? Thank you to Allah (swt) for our successes and growths; thank you to our team for working together to weather one challenge after another; and thank you to YOU for making this work possible. HEART would not exist if it were not for your engagement, consistency, and resources.





Muslims of diverse race/class
Black Muslims

LOOKING AHEAD: 2023 AND BEYOND

RESPOND
ALMA

Muslim

Looking Ahead

As we enter 2023, we are reminded of one of our key community agreements: no quick fix. Building the world we want won't happen overnight or even in one lifetime, we are building worlds. But to do so, we need your help. Donate to our organization, share our organization and its work, and get involved.

Health Education: [sign up for our newsletter](#) to get updates on workshop offerings

Gendered Violence Advocacy: Donate to the [Survivor Care Fund](#). For any legal and/or mental health providers, join our referral network by emailing navila@heartwomenandgirls.org

Reproductive Justice: Look out for our Reproductive Justice for Muslims workshops this summer, and donate to the [Reproductive Justice Fund](#)

Research: Download and distribute our newest [published manuscript](#)

Training: Your generous [donations](#) support our work to offer needs-based training and technical assistance to Muslim and other service providers and advocates