



**M•PACT**  
GLOBAL ACTION  
FOR GAY MEN'S HEALTH & RIGHTS

# 2020 Annual Report



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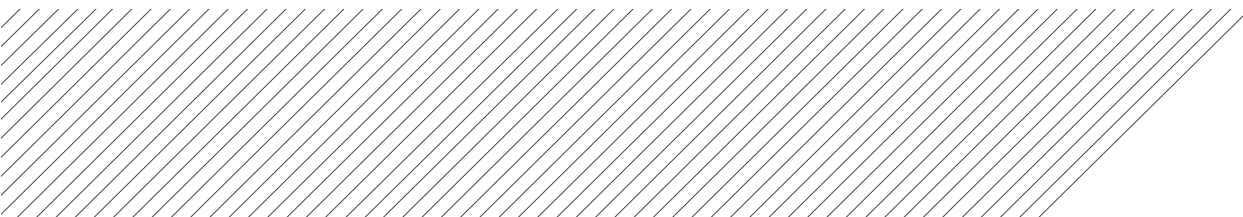
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# Making an MPact in The Lives of Gay Men Around The World

MPact's mission is to advocate for equitable access to effective sexual health services for gay and bisexual men, including those living with HIV.

We work with **120 community-based organizations across 62 countries** who are fighting for the health and human rights of our communities.

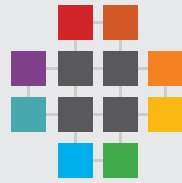


# Advocacy & Program **Outputs**



**15,575**

**LGBTI people reached**  
with funding for sexual  
health services



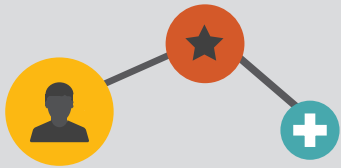
**794**

**Service  
Providers  
trained**



**7776**

**Key Population  
Advocates  
trained**



**7**

**regional  
networks  
and**

**37**

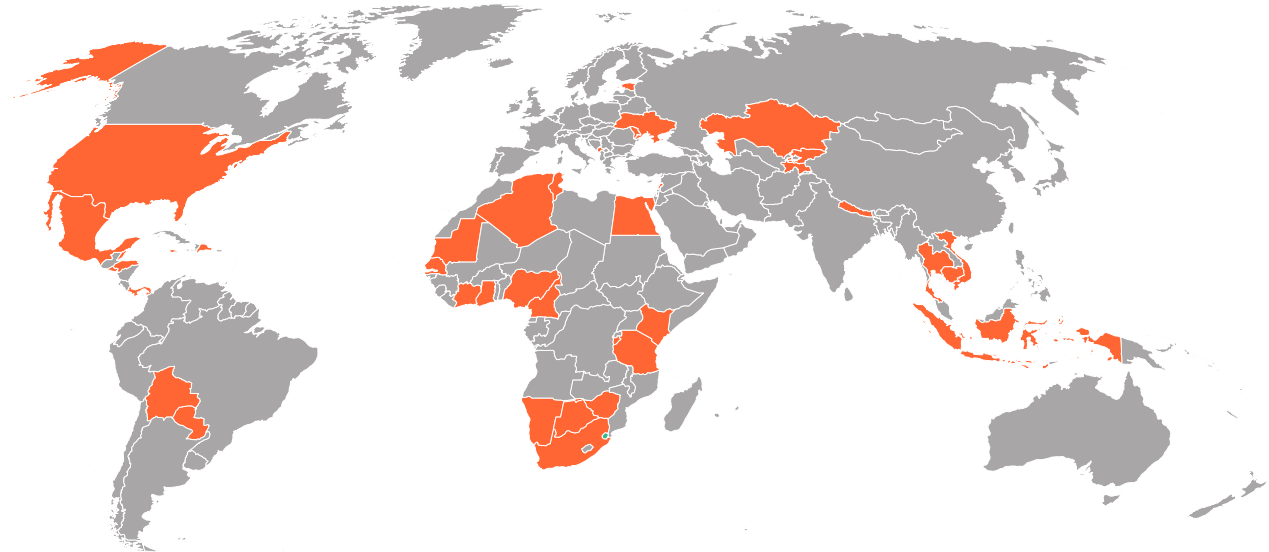
**community-  
based  
organizations  
supported**



**\$1.9M USD**

**disbursed  
in grants  
and contracts**

Technical assistance to  
**more than 30  
countries**



# Media Outputs



**137,554**  
page views on  
mpactglobal.org by  
**73,694**  
users

**112%**  
increase  
from 2019

**147%**  
increase



**211**  
new videos  
with  
**64,793**  
total views

**779%**  
increase

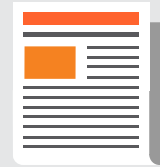
**230%**  
increase



**72**  
blog posts



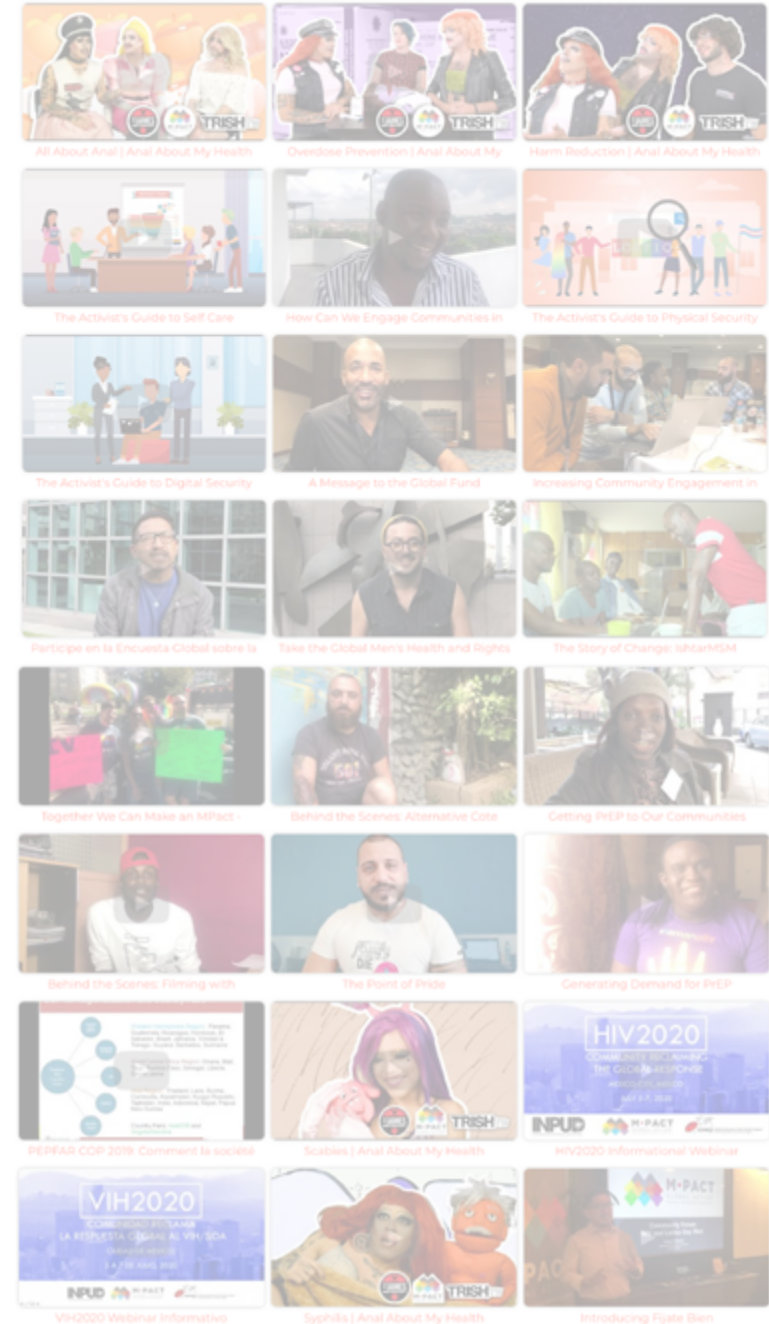
**6**  
new publications



**42**  
mentions of  
MPact & HIV2020  
in the press



**67**  
email  
announcements to  
**14,419**  
subscribers



# A Letter from Our Interim Executive Director

Every struggle is a reminder of how important our communities are to everything we do as advocates.

**Many comparisons have been made between COVID-19 and the early years of the AIDS epidemic.** History has repeated itself in many unfortunate ways. In the same way that AIDS took our friends, our lovers, and our families from us, this new pandemic has filled our communities with loss and with grief. Life-saving medicines have yet to reach the communities that need them most. LGBTI people have been unjustly blamed for the spread of the virus and denigrated as vectors of disease.

However, just as with the AIDS activism of the 80s, we also remember that **no matter the circumstances, we will not let our voices go unheard.**

In 2020, MPact issued timely guidance for gay communities about understanding and navigating the COVID-19 pandemic. We adapted to the new challenge of working digitally while serving our LGBTI partners worldwide. This resulted in numerous online advocacy interventions, technical assistance programs, and trainings being presented in powerful and innovative ways. At the HIV2020 Online Conference, thousands of key population advocates from around the world worked together to reclaim the global response to HIV.

We are grateful to all our friends and partners who have remained by our side over the years. As MPact looks forward to new leadership and strategic direction, **we know we will remain stronger than ever with your continued support.**

Sincerely,

*Dr. Mohan Sundararaj*



# Community-Led Programs

Here at MPact we believe that the strategies that are most effective in the global response to HIV, sexual health, and human rights begin on a community level.

**In all our programs, we believe in local solutions. Our in-country partners take the lead in determining what services are appropriate, and we provide them the resources they need.**



# Our Response to COVID-19

## LGBTI Advocates Responded Swiftly to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has shifted the way that MPact and our global partners think about how we conduct our advocacy. Gay men in every part of the world continue to face issues of **economic instability, discrimination by law enforcement, substance abuse & mental health, and barriers in access to HIV & STI care and treatment** because of this global virus.

As a result, MPact knew we had to respond quickly by providing up-to-date, sex-positive, and non-judgmental messaging around the issues that are most important to our communities including:

- navigating sexual health • the role of health professionals
- protecting human rights • tips for advocates

You can find all our resources and recordings of our webinars at [www.mpactglobal.org/covid-19](http://www.mpactglobal.org/covid-19).

Though the international travel which remains essential to our work was inhibited this year, MPact quickly adapted by moving all our meetings, our internal processes, and our global programming online. For the safety of our staff, we also pivoted to becoming an **entirely digital organization**, closing our Oakland offices and requiring our entire team to telecommute.

Though this may have seemed a barrier to executing our work, it only demanded that we **expand our audience through our website and social platforms** and to move boldly into an increasingly global and digital world.







# HIV2020 ONLINE

## Communities Reclaimed the Response

The **HIV2020 Online Conference** was co-organized by key population-led networks including The Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+), The Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP), The International Network of People Who Use Drugs (INPUD), and MPact.

The HIV2020 Conference was originally intended to take place in Mexico City. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the HIV2020

Conference was **re-imagined as a series of virtual sessions** that took place between the months of July and October. The virtual series retained the event’s original objective to **reaffirm the leading role key population and communities play in the global HIV response**.

MPact organized multiple sessions covering topics of importance to gay and bisexual men worldwide. This included discussions about [body image](#), [sexual satisfaction and kink culture](#) as well as issues regarding [safety and security](#).

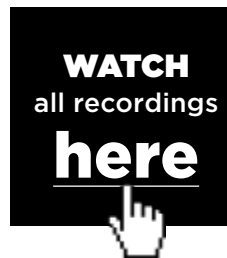
- [All sessions from the HIV2020 Online Conference are now available online as video and audio recordings](#) •



**7,397**  
LIVE PARTICIPANTS  
from  
**131**  
COUNTRIES

**33**  
SESSIONS  
available in  
**5**  
LANGUAGES

Recordings  
**WATCHED**  
more than  
**37,000**  
TIMES



The virtual conference concluded with a [celebration on World AIDS Day](#) in December where a panel of community members and experts shared what they had learned and formulated their [strategic recommendations](#) for strengthening the leadership of key populations in the global response to HIV & AIDS.

# Latinx Programs in the United States

## Working with Latinx Gay Men in the U.S. to **END THE EPIDEMICS**

MPact's **Fijate Bien** program has added a critical voice to conversations about the challenges and opportunities for sexual health programming within the Latinx community in the United States. As part of the U.S. government's **End the Epidemics** initiative, we are addressing the many ways that racism, xenophobia, homophobia, and transphobia contribute to inequities in HIV prevention, care, and treatment among Latinx gay and bisexual men.



## FÍJATE BIEN 2020 Highlights:

- ▶ Co-convened an End The Epidemics **town hall** in Fresno, California with approximately 80 participants and provided **technical support to local organizations** seeking funding from this initiative
- ▶ Participated in the **National Hispanic/Latinx Health Leadership Summit** where 150 Latinx HIV activists came together to create a national policy agenda to eliminate structural barriers to life-saving health services
- ▶ Co-facilitated two spanish-language focus groups for the **National Minority AIDS Council** Latinx Constituent Advisory Panel
- ▶ Provided public comment to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on the **HIV National Strategic Plan: Roadmap to End the HIV Epidemic 2021-2025**
- ▶ Organized three virtual versions of the **Alzando La Voz Training of Trainers** with thirty activists from Southern Texas, Puerto Rico, and California's Central Valley
- ▶ Provided small grants to support breakthrough initiatives by community members including sexual health education at the **U.S.-Mexico border region** and HIV & STI testing services in **Fresno County**

# PrEP Demand Mobilization

## Generating Demand for PrEP and Access to HIV Prevention Services

We know that not everyone who should have access to Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis—also known as **PrEP**—for HIV can easily access this life-saving sexual health intervention. This is especially true in an era where international resources for HIV initiatives, particularly for HIV prevention, are fast drying up.

MPact acted quickly and effectively in 2020 by partnering with organizations in **Cameroon, Ghana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Tanzania, Ukraine, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe** to make PrEP access a reality for all gay men in their regions. The home-grown initiatives included:

- **Mobilizing communities** around HIV prevention
- Spreading awareness and **generating demand for PrEP**
- Producing **LGBTI-focused educational materials**
- **Training queer leaders** on advocacy skills, and
- Developing **social media campaigns** to target key populations.



In Ukraine, **Alliance Global** reached over 2,000 gay and bisexual men with PrEP messaging through their online platforms.

PrEP



# Training Health Professionals

## Sensitizing Healthcare Providers on the Needs of Communities

MPact and Johns Hopkins University partnered to roll-out an [online training program for health professionals](#) in Botswana, Kenya, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe on the essentials of gay and bisexual men's health. In collaboration with **John Hopkins' Center for Public Health and Human Rights** in the Department of Epidemiology, MPact taught healthcare providers how to offer sensitive and appropriate care to gay and bisexual service users.

Of the 158 participants who applied to be part of the program, **89 were selected to participate in the nine-week digital training**. Mentors provided small group and individual support to participants to increase their knowledge about barriers to health for gay and bisexual men.

This new online training format builds upon a previous curriculum that MPact and Johns Hopkins developed together in 2014. This new virtual program was created in collaboration with community-based organizations including **Bonela, Legabibo, and Men for Health** in Botswana; **Ishtar, MAAYGO, and PEMA** in Kenya; **CENTA** in Tanzania; and **GALZ, Sexual Rights Centre, and TIRZ** in Zimbabwe.



# Sexual Health Campaigns

## Anal About My Health

This year, MPact expanded our [Anal About My Health](#) campaign into a series of six videos featuring discussions between drag performers and experts in the field of sexual health and harm reduction.

This campaign, developed in collaboration with San Francisco's St. James Infirmary, aims to break taboos around sex & other issues such as:

- ▶ [Drug Use](#)
- ▶ [Living with HIV](#)
- ▶ [Sex Work](#)
- ▶ [Overdose Prevention](#)
- ▶ [HIV Prevention](#)
- ▶ [Anal Health](#)

The videos were shared widely on social media and viewed over 23,700 times across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Youtube.



MPact has commissioned a series of **comic strips by nine queer artists** from around the world discussing their personal sexual health stories, set to be released on social media and published as a comic book in 2021.

# Community-Based Research

## The Global Men's Health and Rights Study

Over 15,000 gay and bisexual men from across the world participated in the fourth iteration of MPact's [Global Men's Health and Rights \(GMHR\) survey](#). In collaboration with the **Sexual Health Advocacy for Gay Men Consortium**, the survey was launched in ten languages in October of 2019 and was disseminated online through March of 2020.

The findings from the survey supported the importance of creating structural interventions that are designed to **decriminalize homosexuality, reduce societal sexual stigma, sensitize healthcare providers, and support community engagement** among gay and bisexual men.

The data was ultimately presented in a [final publication](#) as well as in the form of two [abstracts presented as posters at AIDS2020](#) and a series of [infographics for social media](#).

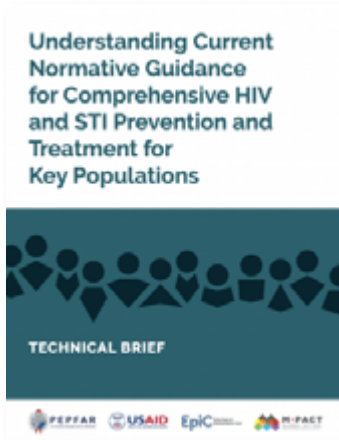
Our **Action for Access!** team from Vietnam and Kenya met throughout the year, both virtually and in-person when possible, for trainings and [discussions on how to interpret data from the GMHR report](#). These partners developed country-level and regional reports in order to build an evidence base that supports their local programming and their policy and advocacy goals.



**Read the full report:**  
[Structural Violence, Community,  
and Access to HIV Services](#)

# Additional Publications

## Equipping Communities with Tools for Advocacy



### [Understanding Current Normative Guidance for Comprehensive HIV and STI Prevention and Treatment for Key Populations](#)

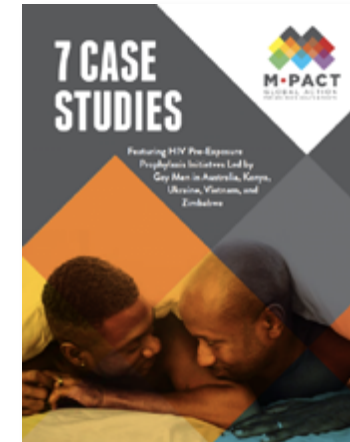
[►English](#) [►Français](#)

This technical brief seeks to **demystify normative guidance, share current implementation tools, and highlight recommendations** on using normative guidance to design and implement effective HIV and STI services and advocacy. It also provides examples of the successful use of normative guidance by key population communities from different regions.



### [Reducing Stigma and Discrimination in Access to HIV Health Care for Gay and Bisexual Men and Transgender Women Using Mystery Patients in Cameroon and Zimbabwe: A Case Study](#)

This case study highlights two examples of a community-led monitoring approach using mystery patients to **document stigma and discrimination in the provision of health care**. The process and outcomes of using these strategies in Cameroon and Zimbabwe are described. In each country, over a period of 10-12 months, gay and bisexual men and transgender women documented their experiences at select health care facilities using standardized tools.



### [7 Case Studies Featuring HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis Initiatives Led by Gay Men](#)

[►English](#)  
[►Español](#)  
[►Français](#)

The case studies offered here are intended as an instructional tool for anyone interested in **leading new or strengthening existing PrEP efforts**. It will especially be beneficial to advocates, community-based organizations, healthcare providers, and policymakers working in HIV prevention, sexual health, or human rights.

# High Level Advocacy

Through monitoring national and international policy, we advocate for increased and sustained funding for programs that address the unique needs of gay and bisexual men.

**Our continued advocacy ensures that LGBTI people and other marginalized communities are involved at every level of human rights decision making.**





In order to ensure that funding is secured for the needs of our communities, MPact continually monitors international funding institutions such as the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

This year, MPact:

- Published a series of webinars, publications, and tips to prepare key population advocates for the [2020 PEPFAR Country Operating Plans](#) in Eswatini, Cote d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Kenya
- Wrote a letter of concern to PEPFAR in response to its emphasis on [index testing](#) which resulted in an immediate halting of this initiative among key populations until guidelines were developed to monitor its adverse effects in criminalizing contexts
- Developed a plan to monitor the roll-out of the **Key Populations Investment Fund (KPIF)** including a desk review of investments by country, interviews with grant recipients, and forum discussions with activists
- Condemned the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to uphold PEPFAR's [anti-prostitution loyalty oath](#) as a requirement to receive funding



# The Global Fund

Our advocacy at The Global Fund ensures that this institution's programs and funding focus on addressing the key populations most disproportionately affected by HIV, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.

This year, MPact:

- Attended meetings in Geneva to advocate for increased support for the uptake of **community-based monitoring** in Global Fund mechanisms
- Released an updated version of the **Community Leadership and Action Collaborative's Global Fund Toolkit** to reflect the institution's latest guidance and policies. This has been downloaded more than 200 times by activists and organizations interested in understanding how to access funding.
- Provided in-depth technical assistance to advocates in Togo, Belize, Madagascar and Mauritius to support the **meaningful engagement of community-based organizations** in the development of future funding requests for HIV, TB, and Malaria
- Led a consortium of partners from **27 countries across 7 regions** in preparation for sustainability, transition, and co-financing planning including **ensuring that gay men were included in the concept note development** for 2021-2023



# UN Partners

The United Nations is a key opportunity to call attention to the importance of community-centered approaches to rolling out and scaling up global initiatives for HIV care and treatment. That's why this year MPact:

- Organized a webinar and provided technical assistance to ensure the **inclusion of key populations in the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR)** of Sustainable Development Goal implementation
- Supported activists in Malawi, the Kyrgyz Republic and Nigeria to produce civil society parallel reports to be submitted to the virtual **High Level Political Forum**
- Submitted inputs to the U.N. Independent Expert on Protection Against Violence and Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity regarding the **impact of COVID-19** on our communities

The MPact Steering Committee is now also an official advisory body to UNAIDS on the health and rights of gay and bisexual men, with a special emphasis on issues facing young men. As part of our first actions in this committee, MPact:

- Participated in consultations on the **integration of HIV with other health services** for 2025 target setting, impact, and resource needs estimations.
- Conducted focus group discussions, provided comments, and issued **a set of guidance** on how gay and bisexual men can contribute to the UNAIDS strategy development process



03/0

# Country Spotlights

Our grassroots partners are the backbone of our advocacy, because they are the ones who know best what their communities need.

**We work with local community-based organizations and help them grow their programs and expand their capacity to bring their innovative initiatives to life.**



## Using Research to Improve Programs for Youth

**Lighthouse Social Enterprise** has been a long-time partner of MPact in using community-based participatory research to inform better programs for our communities.

This year, Lighthouse’s **“Young, Wild and Free Project”** began by documenting local sexual health interventions for young key populations including gay men, people who use drugs, and sex workers between the ages of 16 and 24. Through a series of interviews and focus groups, they **collected data which allowed them to learn more about why some interventions for sexual health have worked better than others** in their region.

Lighthouse presented their findings in a **series of online webinars with young sex work activists in Kenya and with young drug users’ organizations in Ukraine**. The sharing sessions encouraged MPact partners in Kenya and Ukraine to use this information to adopt, adapt, and tailor Vietnam’s interventions for use in their countries. This multi-regional exchange will help all three groups **inform the design of future programs for sexual health, to develop public advocacy campaigns, and to create an evidence base to inform policymakers in their region** about the needs of young key populations.



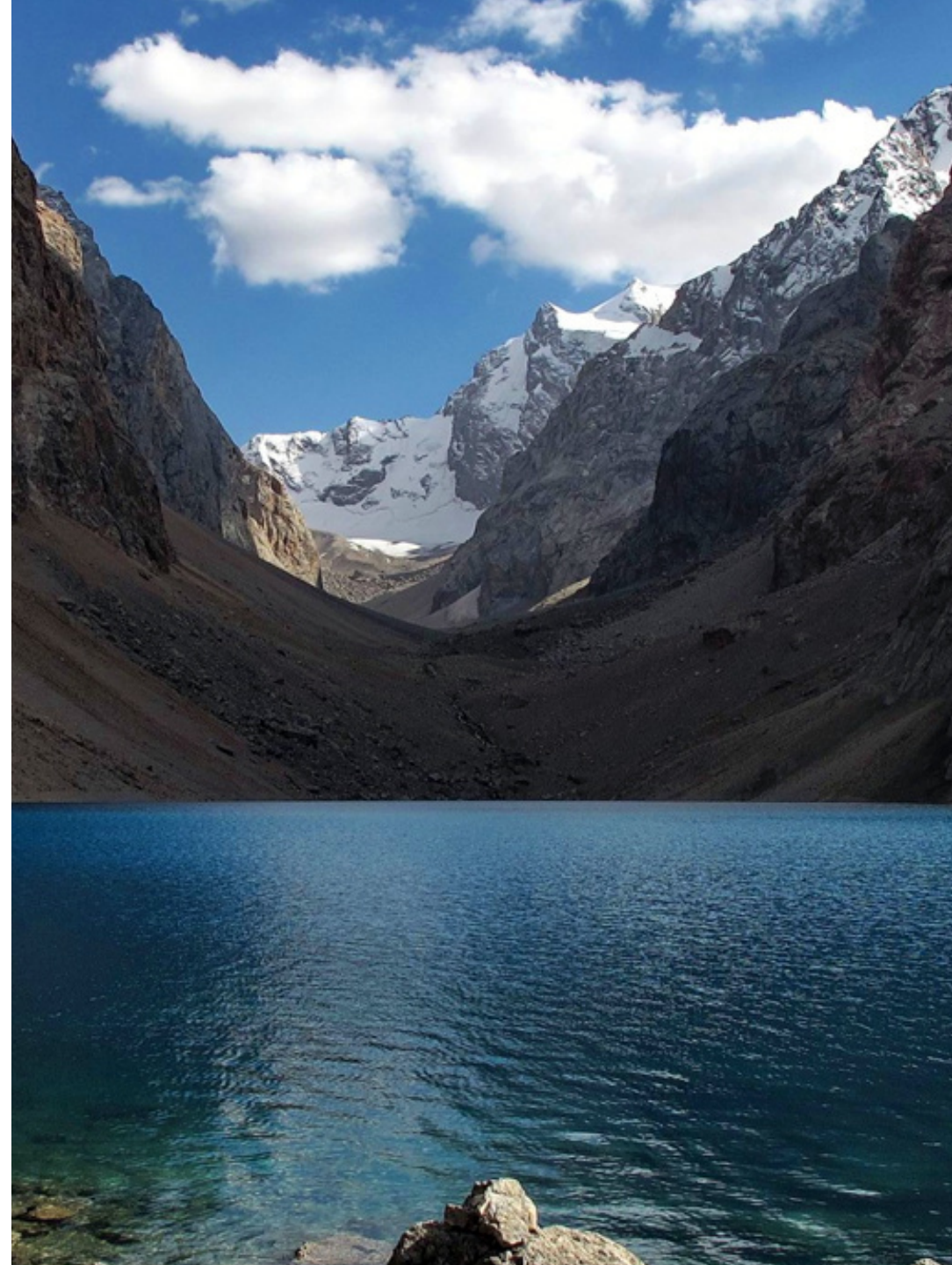
# Tajikistan

## Creating Safe Spaces and HIV Services

In a criminalized setting such as Tajikistan, resources for gay and bisexual men are scarce and issues of security are of utmost concern.

With support from the MPact as part of the **Bridging the Gaps Initiative**, our local partner in Tajikistan (who wishes to remain anonymous) hosts **monthly support group meetings** for gay and bisexual men in their region. At these meetings, participants are able to **share their experiences as people living with and affected by HIV**. This group provides a safe space for anyone seeking to build community and discuss their personal experiences. The group's discussions help participants learn about living with HIV, how to access quality treatment, and other important sexual health topics.

Our in-country partner also **distributes condoms and lubricants** to gay and bisexual men in Dushanbe as part of their HIV prevention and education project. Peer-to-peer counselors do outreach in public gardens, parks, saunas, and other known cruising spots. While the trained counselors are distributing these resources, they also **educate their peers on these and other HIV & STI prevention strategies**. In some instances, outreach workers even referred people to other organizations for legal services to ensure their rights and safety are protected.



## Community Mobilization through Social Media

Social media is a powerful tool to generate demand for health services and to mobilize and educate communities. As part of the **Key-Population Empowerment and Leadership Program**, four community-based organizations in Eswatini indicated their interest to increase their skills and knowledge of how to use **social media for advocacy purposes**.

As a result, MPact conducted individual coaching sessions with **Rock of Hope, HealthPlus4Men, House of Our Pride, and Voice of Our Voices** on how they use social and web platforms for their advocacy work. In the first four months since MPact began offering technical assistance to these organizations, they have collectively **gained over 1800 followers across multiple platforms with an average growth of 75.7% per platform**.

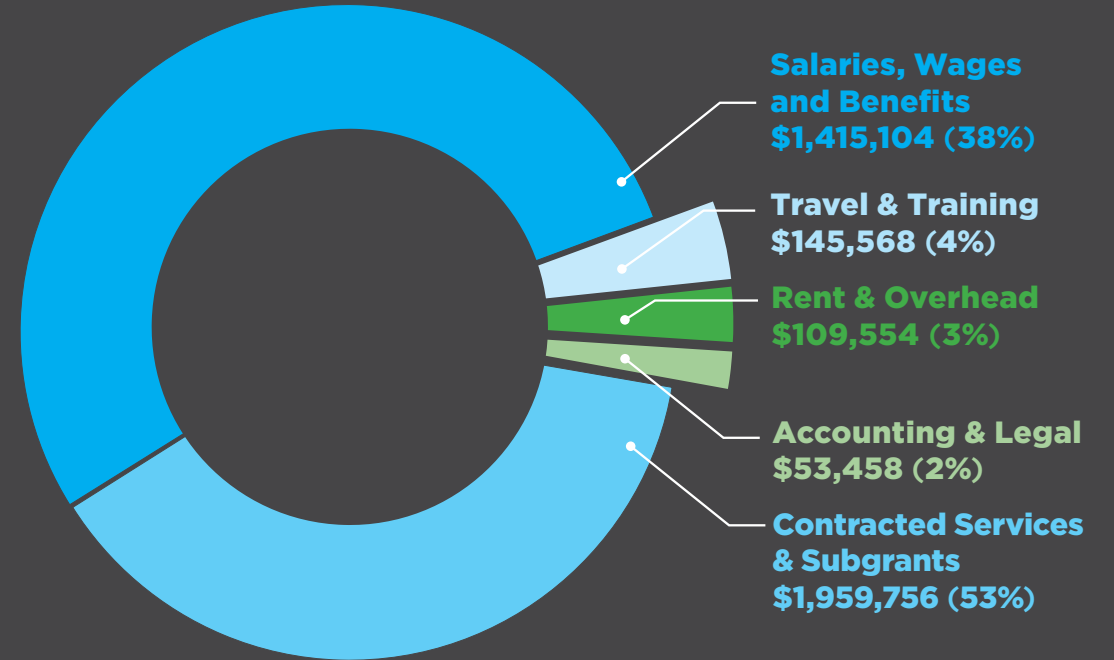
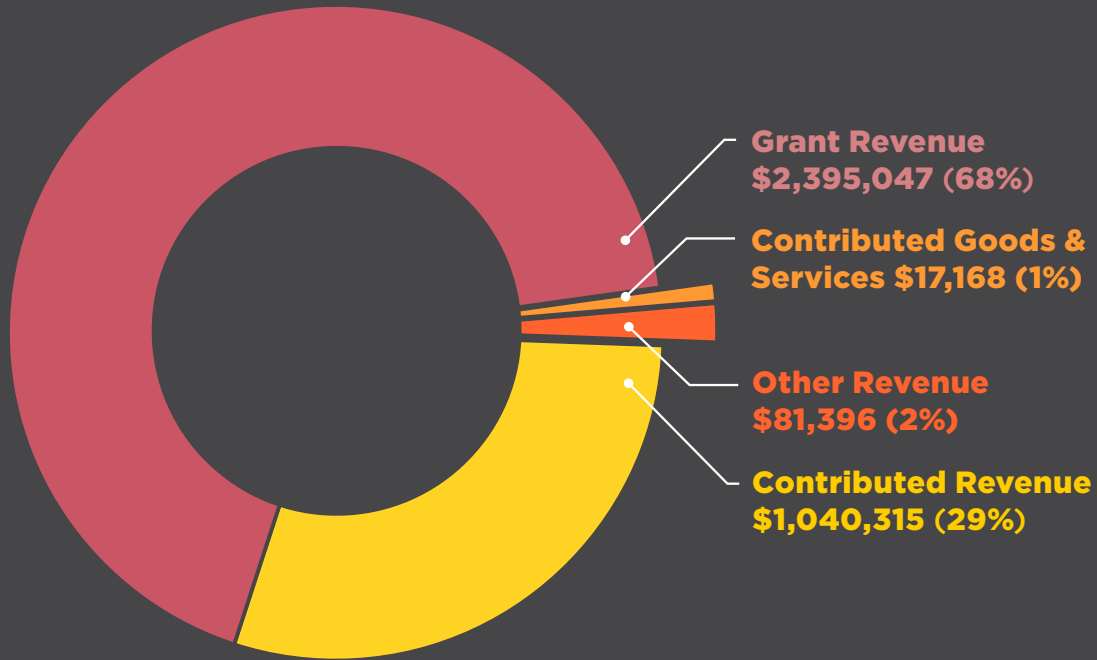
In addition to this personalized technical assistance, two virtual trainings were also developed to discuss **social media strategies and best practices for content creation** for nonprofit organizations. The trainings will continue throughout 2021 and culminate in the development of a comprehensive social media training program which can be utilized with partners around the globe.



# 2020 Financials

2020 REVENUE: \$3,533,926 US

2020 EXPENSES: \$3,683,440 US



Download our full 2020 Financial Report [here](#)



# Thank You!

## The Work of MPact Wouldn't Be Possible Without:

### MAJOR FUNDERS

Aidsfonds	FHI360	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands	UNAIDS
APLA Health	Frontline AIDS	PEPFAR	USAID
AVAC	Gilead	PITCH	VIIV Healthcare
Bridging The Gaps	The Global Fund	Robert Carr Fund	World Health Organization
Elton John AIDS Foundation	Lazy Bear Fund		

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Don Baxter <i>Australia</i>	Sean Howell <i>USA</i>	Daniar Orsekov <i>Kyrgyzstan</i>
Carlos García de León <i>Mexico</i>	John Kashiha <i>Tanzania</i>	Peter Perkowski <i>USA</i>
Najeeb Ahmad Fokeerbux <i>Mauritius</i>	Julian Boghos Kerboghossian <i>Lebanon</i>	Jorge Saavedra <i>Mexico</i>
Robyn Goldman <i>USA</i>	Othman Mellouk <i>Morocco</i>	Craig Thompson <i>USA</i>

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Don Baxter <i>Australia</i>	Devin Hursey <i>USA</i>	Julian Boghos Kerboghossian <i>Lebanon</i>
Othman Mellouk <i>Morocco</i>	Daniyar Orsekov <i>Kyrgyzstan</i>	Sergio Lopez <i>Paraguay</i>
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Najeeb Ahmad Fokeerbux <i>Mauritius</i>	Jorge Saavedra <i>Mexico</i>	Peter "Trevor" Mwaniki Njoroge <i>Kenya</i>

### STAFF

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George Ayala <i>Executive Director</i>	Nadia Rafif <i>Director of Policy</i>
Omar Baños <i>Senior Technical Advisor</i>	Mohan Sundararaj <i>Director of Public Health Programs &amp; Interim Executive Director</i>
Lily May Catanes <i>Director of Finance &amp; Operations</i>	Gregory Tartaglione <i>Sr. Communications Officer</i>
Angel Fabian <i>Advocacy Coordinator</i>	Johnny Tohme <i>Community Mobilization Manager</i>
Sherrie Hicks <i>Sr. Accountant</i>	
Stephen Leonelli <i>Sr. Policy Advisor</i>	



## Celebrating The Work of George Ayala

After over sixteen years of tireless dedication to MPact's mission and vision, Dr. George Ayala left his position as MPact's executive director in September of 2020.

George has been a key driver in building MPact to the influential network of experts and advocates that it is today. **George's clear-sighted vision, his steely determination, his fearless advocacy 'speaking truth to power', and his unwavering persistence and perseverance in achieving goals** are outstanding qualities that have under-pinned MPact's greatest successes.

As MPact moves into our next chapter under the executive leadership of **Dr. Andrew Spieldenner**, our staff, board, and steering committee are prepared to take our advocacy to new heights and to identify new approaches to serve the global gay community.



“I feel grateful, privileged and proud to have served a global movement of gay and bisexual men working to promote their health and human rights. After over a decade since its founding, MPact remains as vitally important as ever!”

–Dr. Ayala  
in his farewell message

**Thank you for supporting gay men around the world. Your contributions allow us to continue our work in over 60 countries.**

**Donate Now!**



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