



Sahiyo U.S. 2022 Virtual Activist Retreat

June 3rd - June 5th

sahiyo
United Against Female Genital Cutting

Sahiyo Activist Retreat

2022

From June 3rd to June 5th, Sahiyo hosted their 5th annual Activists' Retreat virtually over Zoom. During this retreat, 16 registrants had the opportunity to learn more about female genital cutting (FGC), discuss its impact and consequences with others, listen to speakers address activism and healing related to FGC, forge community connections to further their activism, and build a more collective movement.



A Brief History

2018-2022

Sahiyo held their first-ever U.S.-based Activist Retreat from January 19-21, 2018 in Brooklyn, New York.

The retreat brought together nine participants and two facilitators to discuss activism around FGC, or “khatna,” and other issues pertaining to the Dawoodi Bohra community.

Retreat Goals for 2022

Sahiyo is a transnational organization with the mission to empower Asian communities to end FGC and create positive social change through dialogue, education, and collaboration based on community involvement.

Sahiyo understands it takes many to bring about social change and, as a result, they work with individuals, organizations, and coalitions collaboratively. They also recognize that many advocates speaking out against FGC have been working in isolation from each other.

The Sahiyo Activist Retreat aims to continue to work towards building a network of U.S.-based Bohra activists by:

- strengthening relationships with one another,
- sharing best practices,
- providing tools for activists to utilize in their anti-FGC advocacy work moving forward,
- discussing both challenges and opportunities they have found in advocating against FGC.

Participants Quotes

“I am not alone. And that was wonderful to realize. I feel seen.”

“I think this is a fantastic platform to not only bring awareness of the FGC practice that is occurring in the Dawoodi Bohra Community, but truly a retreat that allows everyone to feel safe... I felt Sahiyo did an incredible job of just creating that safe space for everyone.”

“The best part of the retreat was having this platform where I can say anything without being judged. Sahiyo was an awesome platform in allowing people that are of the Dawoodi Bohra culture to truly speak their inner thoughts without being judged.”

Workshops & Sessions

The Bohra Movement to End FGC

This session provided an overview of the Bohra movement to end FGC over the years and highlighted the importance of survivors & community members taking the lead in ending FGC.

Self-Care for FGC Activists

Triggers and burnout are common experiences for activists. During this workshop, Sahiyo discussed psychological frameworks to better understand what happens in the mind and body when activist burn out and how to prevent it.

Storytelling Workshop

This session explored conversations around FGC via storytelling, and provided participants with additional resources to help in sharing their story.

Community Identity Mapping

This interactive activity used reflective prompts to help explore the individual, unique, and multi-layered identities within the Bohra community.

Participant Experience

At the end of our retreat, participants were asked to fill out a post-event survey on their experiences. Nine of the 16 registrants filled it out.

- 78% felt personal goals had been fulfilled through the retreat
- 89% would participate in another Activist Retreat
- 100% agreed the retreat achieved its goals and missions.

Overall, participants reflected that the Storytelling session with Amy Hill and the Community Identity Mapping Session were their favorite sessions.

They also shared that interacting with others, building community, and making connections was a major success of the program.

Who was there?

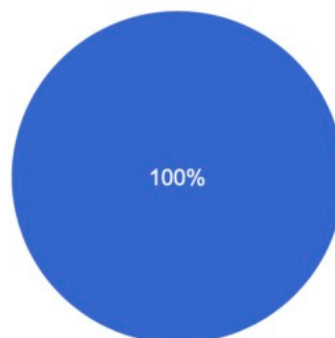
100% identified as Asian.

**78% identified as women,
11% as men, and
11% as gender queer/non-binary.**

**78% live in United States
22% lived in United Kingdom.**

Was the Sahiyo Activists Retreat clear about its goals and mission?

9 responses



- Yes
- No
- Not sure

*To Learn More
About Sahiyo's
Activist Retreats
Visit:
[sahiyo.org/programs2/sahiyo-
activists-
retreat.html](https://sahiyo.org/programs2/sahiyo-activists-retreat.html)*

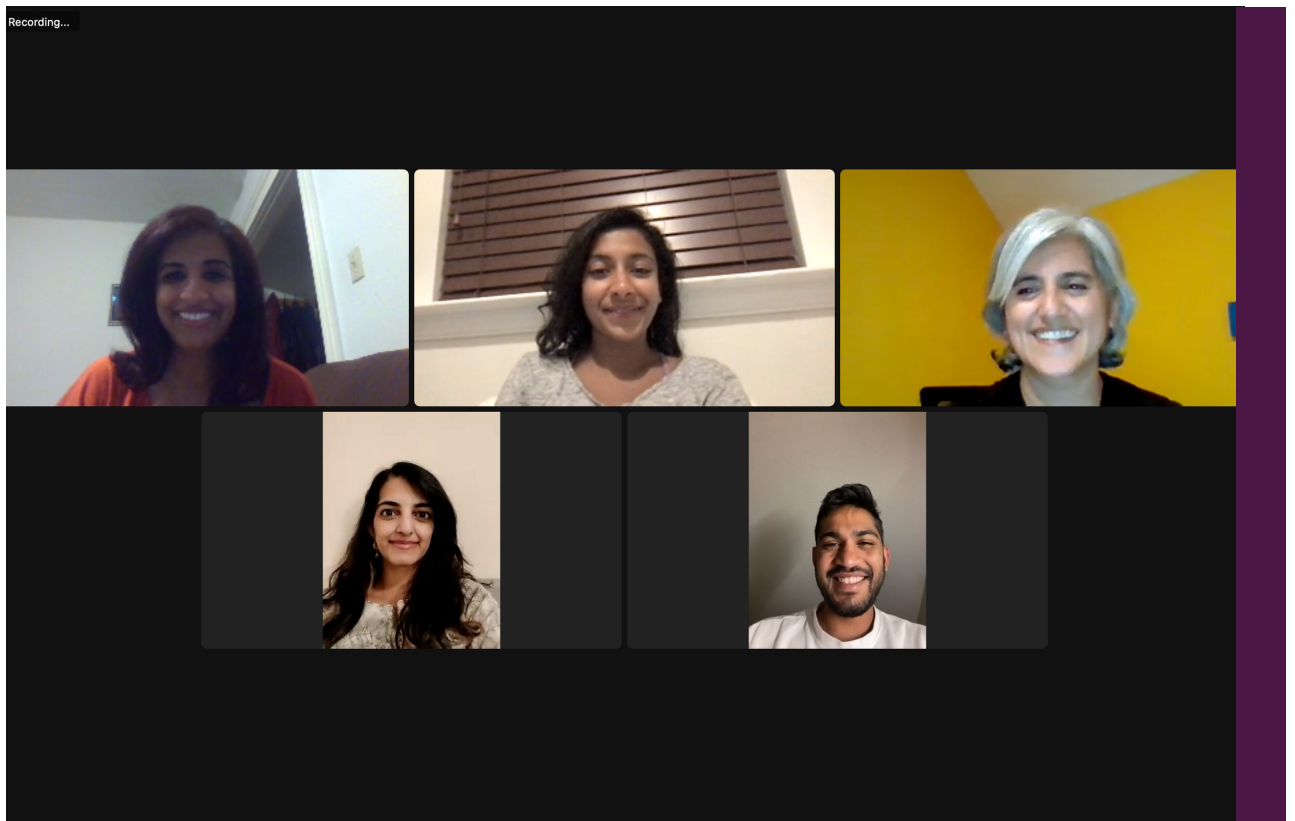
Looking Forward

Given its ongoing success, Sahiyo is committed to continuing this program in 2023 and beyond.

Example group goals established during Action Planning session:

- Participate in future Sahiyo events and stay engaged in the movement to abandon FGC;
- Use my voice to share my story, inspire others, and continue to heal;
- Implement better medical education on FGC;
- Reach out to organizations to create more resources for survivors;
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Thank you to all those who made the 2022 Retreat a success!



From left: Mariya Taher, Zahra Qaiyumi, Zehra Patwa, Amena Ali, and Taha Husain. The planning board consists of Sahiyo Team members and attendees of past retreats who work together for over six months each year to plan future retreats.

With thanks from our planning board!