Introduction

The Humsafar Trust was set up in April 1994 by leading gay activist Ashok Row Kavi in Mumbai Metro and surrounding areas. After much networking and advocacy with the Mumbai Municipal Corporation for over a year and a half it became the first openly Gay Community Based Organisation to be allotted space in a Municipal building at Vakola, Santacruz along with two more self-identified homosexual men who desired to reach out to the gay (East) Mumbai in October 1995.

The Drop In Centre and Counselling services

The Trust began its activities by inviting gay men and lesbian women to attend its workshops on Fridays at its drop in centre in Santacruz. The Friday workshops addressed various issues like coming out to self and family, dealing with relationships, dealing with legal issues of gay men, tackling problems with cheaters and hustlers, health and human rights related issues. A team of 6 self identified homosexual men were trained to be street counsellors responding to the needs of gay men calling the voice mail helpline service set up by the trust. The drop in centre saw various workshops on issues of HIV/AIDS and soon it became evident that the trust will have to work aggressively on the health of the community.

The Start Up of Programs : 1998 – 2004

In 1998 the Humsafar Trust (HST) had its first grant from the Directorate of Health Services in Mumbai to do a sex mapping study in Mumbai. The small grant of Rs.57,000/- was utilised to mobilise community members from all over the city and sex mapping of over 100 sites was completed in less than six months.

In January 1999, the HST started its sensitisation programme with various public hospitals in Mumbai. The first positive results came when Dr. Hema Jerajani of LTMG Sion Hospital agreed to examine MSM clients in their hospital OPD. She also sent her resident doctors to HST to get them sensitised on MSM issues. The doctors from LTMG began their friendly visits to the HST centre and very soon it was agreed that HST would set up its own in-house ICTC.

A lot of support was garnered from various quarters and with unflinching support of LTMG hospital, MDACS and Mumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) helped start the ICTC on 26th June 1999. The Humsafar clinics have been described as model clinics following all international norms of quality services by FHI.

Mumbai District Aids Control Society (MDACS) awarded the first pilot project to ‘Motivate Safer Sex among Gay men and MSM at Selected Sites in Mumbai Metro’ in April 1999 and was scaled up in 2000. In February 2001, USAID / FHI under its Impact programme up scaled the project which led to systematic and structured growth of HST.

In April 2002 the Humsafar Trust also initiated a project to work with Hijra community in Malavani, Mumbai which houses close to 2,000 hijra’s. This initiative of Humsafar trust was managed by a Tg group Sakhi Char Chowghi which is now being independently funded since April 2007.

In April 2002 Goa State AIDS Control Society helped initiate a MSM project on five select sites in Goa. In April 2005 the scope of the project has been increased to 10 sites in Goa State. In October 2007 Humsafar set up a new CBO Humsaath Trust in Goa and handed over the project to the newly formed CBO.
The Humsafar Trust Initiatives

Health Initiatives

- 2005: The Avert Society –MSACS with funding from USAID started a MSM - TI project with The Humsafar Trust in Kalyan - Thane region of Maharashtra state
- 2005: FHI and FPAI collaboration with funding from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation set up a project with male sex workers TI project on 18 hotspots in Mumbai.
- 2005: A model clinic to provide STI treatment, HIV testing facility and referrals for HIV treatment is set up in Kalyan (Thane District) in July 2005. This project is being funded by HIVOS/EU/SIAAP
- 2006: The USAID-FHI supported project IMPACT-YAARANA came to an end on 30th September 2006 as the term of IMPACT ended. The project was taken over by USAID-Avert from 1st October 2006 (combined 9th year)
- 2009: Avert Society –MSACS with funding from USAID started a MSM - TI project with The Humsafar Trust in Bhiwandi - Thane region of Maharashtra state
- 2013: MDACS supported Six Targeted Interventions for prevention, care, support and treatment for MSM and TG in Mumbai Metro (1999 – 2013)
- 2013: GFATM Round 9 supported Vihaan Project: Creating care and support model for people living with HIV

Advocacy Initiatives

- 2007: Produced feature film “68 Pages” documenting experiences of a counsellor working with marginalised communities
- 2008: Produced “Bridges of Hope” a documentary documenting voices and concerns of MSM and TG community
- 2008: A regional level advocacy project in collaboration with SIDA – RFSU and 14 partners from India, Bangla Desh, Nepal and Sri Lanka to increase rights and health based issues of LGBT community (Period 2009 – 2012)
- 2009: Produced “Yehi Hai...Right way” a condom demonstration film for MSM and Tg
- 2009: “Badlav ki kalpana” a project commissioned by UNDP to produce two documentaries “Breaking Free” and “Bolo” documenting the LGBT movement in India in the last 20 years, support Bombay Dost magazine for 3 years and conduct national level consultation to strategise next steps after the Delhi High Court judgment.
- 2009: Produced 7 Gay, MSM and Tg friendly posters for John Hopkins University – Bloomberg school of communication
2009: A national consultation with 108 LGBT leaders to take the Delhi High court judgment forward supported by SIDA RFSU

2010: Kashish Mumbai International Queer Film Festival 2010

2010: Ek Madhavbaug: Chetan Datar’s poignant Marathi play about a son coming out to his mother has its first Hindi performance at PVR-Juhu by Actor Mona Ambegaonkar. The Play will have 24 performances for corporate houses and educational institutions and 12 performances at Prithvi and NCPA in 2011

2010: Aa Muskuraa: A film on building communication skills of ICTC counsellors

2010: HIVOS / SIAAP supported advocacy project as follow up to SARVOJANA EU project.

2010: SIDA /RFSU supported project to conduct sensitization workshops with five leading stakeholders.

2010: Co-produced feature film “I AM OMAR” in collaboration with Anti Clock films and ONIR, a film that brings to light harassment faced by gay community

2010: Documenting six successful HIV interventions in India with MSM and Tg community commissioned by UNDP

2010: ‘EnGayging lives’ a film produced by Humsafar Trust for students of Sophia college to discuss issues related with gay relationships ( won jury award at Kashish film festival )

2011: Road Map for LGBT Friendly laws: World Bank – Amaltas

2011: SIDA RFSU: Enhancing LGBT awareness through Ek Madhavbaug in 12 corporate and educational institutions

2012: SIDA RFSU: Enhancing LGBT awareness through Ek Madhavbaug with 12 performances in 6 cities with police, health care providers and various stakeholders.

2013: SANCHAR: GFATM R-9 supported for developing a recommended language manual for improved reporting in media on sexual minority issues

Research Initiatives

2006: A research project to study and describe the social and sexual networks of MSM and Tgs in India. This study was carried out in 5 states and 8 cities and presented to government of India.

2006: A research project to study the dynamics of MSM in Maharashtra State. The study was carried out in two cities and supported by USAID-Avert Society

2006: A research project in collaboration with Fenway Community Health (Boston) to study the mental health issues of MSM in Mumbai Metro
2006: Setting up of Humsafar Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approving all research projects. The IRB is registered with NIH and has Federal Wide Assurance Certificate.

2009: A research project with Married MSM supported by NIH in collaboration with Fenway community health, Boston.

2009: A research project to look into HPV prevalence among MSM supported by NIH in collaboration with UCSF.

2009: A research project to look into STI treatment compliance among MSM supported by BMGF and FHI.

2009: Tracking study of Humsafar, 6th follow up study on its baseline study of 2000.

2009: Developing health messages in collaboration with University of Illinois, Chicago.

2010: CIHR: A study to understand vaccine preparedness in India.

2011: SHAKTI: Intervention with health care providers to work better with TG - ICMR.


2011: Stigma Study with ICMR to study stigma levels among MSM and Tg populations.

2012: ISHKonnect: Internet Based HIV prevention for Indian MSM.


2012: Male Sex workers: Protected or at risk: what are the factors influencing sexual behaviour and sexual health outcomes of men selling sex in mumbai.

2012: ICRW study: Understanding stigma at systematic and individual level to overcome barriers to HIV related health seeking behaviour among MSM.

2012: Team Grant: CHVI Team in Social and Behavioral Research on HIV Vaccines.


**Capacity Building Initiatives**

- 2006: A project to provide capacity building to 25 MSM and Tg organisations from all over India and develop a national advocacy strategy document for MSM and Tgs and help develop a strategy for NACO (National AIDS Control Organisation) to start up and upscale projects with MSM and Tg community. This year long project is funded by DFID-PMO.

- 2009: “Sashakt” A project commissioned by UNDP to Pilot GFATM Round 9 proposal with Alliance India and three more partners from Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.
The Humsafar Trust Profile | 2013

- 2010: Global Fund Round 9: A capacity building and training project in 5 states and 53 partners
- 2011: INFOSEM UNDP Secretariat
- 2011: GFATM Round 9 TRAINING Project
- 2013: SAHYOG: Comprehensive HIV prevention, care, support and treatment among MSM and Transgender Population in Mumbai

HST Initiatives

- HST has nurtured a support group ‘UMANG’ (Joy) for LBT persons and a youth LGBT group ‘YAARIYAN’ (Friendships)
- HST is convener member of Integrated Network for Sexual Minorities (INFOSEM) the only national level network of sexual minorities that has 196 community based organisations representing Lesbian, Gay, Kothi, MSM, bisexual and Transgender communities as members.
- HST has nurtured ‘Gaurav’ a CBO of Male Sex Workers, ‘Kinnar Kasturi’ and ‘Kinnar Asmita’ that represent TG and Hijra community, ‘Sanjeevani’ for MSM and TG living with HIV.
- HST has a Centre for Excellence (CEFE) that has Research, Capacity building and Advocacy as its main area of work.

Snapshots of HST

- Outreach programme has reached out to more than 100,000 new Gay, MSM and Tgs with nearly 300,000 regular contacts in Mumbai in the last 12 years
- Outreach program distributes over 700,000 condoms every year at more than 148 sites in Mumbai, 33 sites in Thane District by a relentless and hardworking team of 150 outreach workers and peer educators
- Number of clients tested for HIV has crossed 35,000 in the last 12 years
- Number of clients examined and drugs provided for STI’s crossed 60,000 in the last ten years
- Collaborations with LTMG Hospital, KEM Hospital, JJ Hospital apart from its own ICTC.
- ICTC at the HST centre remains open on all six days a week (2pm to 8pm) with four qualified Doctors and Two Lab Technicians attending to MSM clients in the clinic
- A clinical psychologist working full time along with a team of 9 community counsellors and 4 health facilitators trained over a period of three years by the head of the counselling unit.
- A nutritionist working on the program providing nutritional counselling assistance
- A nutritive supplement program to provide nutritional supplement to PLHA’s
- A team of 14 outreach workers trained as Committed Community Health Workers (CCHW) to provide care and support to PLHA
• A psychiatrist to look in the stress levels and other emotional disorders amongst community.
• Organise advocacy workshops for Doctors, Police department, Lawyers, Government bodies, political parties, media, student community to sensitize them on Gay, MSM and TG issues
• Organise one training programme every quarterly to upgrade skills of its staff and provides facilities to the staff to enhance their skills by taking job-related courses
• Provides technical assistance and capacity building to 53 CBOs in five states of Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.
• Continues to be part of the struggle against petitions filed in the Supreme Court challenging the Delhi High court Judgment that decriminalized consensual sex between two same sex consenting adults.
• Believes in working from within the public health systems and does continuous networking with various public hospitals in Mumbai Metro.
• Sentinel surveillance site for the National Aids Control Organisation (NACO) for the last eight years
• Has done 6 baseline studies with MSM tracking their sexual behaviour on four key indicators.
• Documented as Best Practices Model by UNICEF in 2003 and had an outcome assessment for its IMPACT project with USAID
• Convened INFOSEM (Integrated Network for Sexual Minorities) to bring together likeminded LGBT groups to work issues on sexuality, health and human rights
• Nurtured a MSM-PLHA group Sanjeevani
• Nurtured YAARIYAN a youth LGBT support group in Mumbai
• Nurtured UMANG – a support group for LBT persons

The Board

Ashok Row Kavi
The Chairman of the Humsafar Trust is part of the national core committee to provide recommendations to the NACO on its National AIDS control programs, Prime Ministers Council on HIV AIDS to represent the needs and views of the Indian Gay community, Consultant – UNAIDS and holds the sexual minorities Desk at UNAIDS Delhi office.

Suhail Abbasi
Suhail Abbasi is a creative professional with over 15 years of experience across films, television and print. He has been formally trained in Applied Arts from Sir J.J. School of Arts and holds a post-graduate degree (Master of Design) in Visual Communication from IIT Bombay. After accomplishing his academics, he chose the area of Direction and for about eight years he worked with some of the leading directors of the Hindi film industry. He has learnt the intricacies of film making and has worked in the areas of script writing, dialogue writing and film direction. For over 13 years, Suhail Abbasi has worked with Sony Entertainment Television Network he has headed the Creative Development and Programming Departments and has successfully developed several trend setting shows and have helped launch various business initiatives in the international market. Suhail has been a Founder Trustee of The Humsafar Trust, he is also on the Advisory Board of BOMBAY DOST and a member of IRB (Institutional Review Board) of The Humsafar Trust.
**Vivek Anand**

Vivek Anand studied at the prestigious NMIMS business school – class of 1991 in Bombay. He set up a film production house along with Sridhar Rangayan and worked as executive producer on over 40 Ad films/ corporate films and Documentaries and also is a writer of 11 Tele films that his company produced. He started working as volunteer with Humsafar Trust in 1995 and soon became a community counselor and spoke to around 1,500 gay men, MSM and Tgs in the next five years. In 2001, he started working part time with Humsafar Trust managing its existing project and developing new proposals. In August 2002 he was appointed as Chief Executive Officer and currently manages all its projects that include Interventions, research, advocacy and capacity building of MSM and Tg groups in the country. He is also responsible for setting of Centre for Excellence (CEFE), Institutional Review Board ( Ethics Review committee of HST ), Community Advisory Board, Project Management Unit, Governing Board and Executive council for Humsafar Trust. He worked on developing software for tracking the existing projects of Humsafar on over 150 indicators.

**Pallav Patankar**

Pallav Patankar is associated with “The Humsafar Trust” since its inception He has served as an administrator for an interim period in the The Humsafar Trust Drop In Centre. He has an undergraduate degree in Life Sciences and Biochemistry(St. Xaviers College , Mumbai ) , followed by a National Level Masters degree in Biotechnology from Madurai Kamraj University. He worked with Lupin Laboratories in the Biotechnology division as a Product Manager, co-ordinating the development of India’s first HIV Elisa Kit. He co-ordinated the kit trials across various State Health Centers to generate sensitivity specificity data for the product. He proceeded to receive a business degree from S.P.Jain Institute of Management and Research specialising in International Business. He has worked on developing sustainability models for HIV positive children, documentation of community action amongst MSM/TG communities and is currently working on the documentation of the best practices model of Target intervention amongst MSM and TG populations. He has an 8 year corporate experience, as a marketing professional in international business and has worked in areas of sales, marketing and strategic product sourcing. He also heads the marketing and sales of Bombay Dost the only gay magazine published in India.

**Humsafar Support**

- UNDP / UNAIDS
- NACO - MDACS
- GFATM Round 9 – India HIV AIDS Alliance
- GFATM Round 4 – India HIV AIDS Alliance
- MAC AIDS FUND
- FHI360
- International HIV AIDS Alliance Secretariat (LO Support)
- University of Toronto - CIHR
- National Institute of Health (NIH) and Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronyms</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immune Virus</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
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<td>HST</td>
<td>Humsafar Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTMG</td>
<td>Lokmanya Tilak Memorial General Hospital</td>
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<td>OPD</td>
<td>Out Patient Department</td>
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<td>MDACS</td>
<td>Mumbai District AIDS Control Society</td>
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<td>ICTC</td>
<td>Integrated Counselling and Testing Center</td>
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<td>TG</td>
<td>Transgender</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMC</td>
<td>Bombay Municipal Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>FHI</td>
<td>Family Health International</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSM</td>
<td>Men having Sex with Men</td>
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<td>MSACS</td>
<td>Maharastra State AIDS Control Society</td>
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<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organisation</td>
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<td>TI</td>
<td>Targeted Intervention</td>
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<td>FPAI</td>
<td>Family Planning Association of India</td>
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<td>STI</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Infection</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>SIAAP</td>
<td>South India AIDS Action Program</td>
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<td>NACO</td>
<td>National AIDS Control Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFID – PMO</td>
<td>Department for International Development-Project Management Office</td>
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<td>IRB</td>
<td>Institutional Review Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIDA</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Agency</td>
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<td>RFSU</td>
<td>Riksforbandet For Sexual Upplysning</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBT</td>
<td>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgenders</td>
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<td>GFATM</td>
<td>Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIH</td>
<td>National Institute of Health</td>
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<td>UCSF</td>
<td>University of California San Francisco</td>
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<td>BMGF</td>
<td>Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation</td>
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<td>KEM</td>
<td>King Edward Memorial</td>
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<td>People Living with HIV and AIDS</td>
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<td>Committed Community Health Workers</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<td>INFOSEM</td>
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