



# ACTIVITY REPORT 2011 – 2013



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## ABOUT SWECHHA

Swechha is a movement - a consensus among people about the nature of society, its problems and possible ways to work towards a positive change. It was launched in the year 2000 as the 'We for Yamuna' campaign. Since then, we have evolved into a full-fledged youth organization engaged in the issues of environment and social development, using awareness, communication, training and advocacy as primary tools. Through the decade, Swechha has worked closely with more than 72 organizations nationally and internationally.

### VISION AND MISSION

Swechha is a movement, a consensus among people about the nature of society, its problems, and possible ways to work towards positive change. For us, change means a transformation in the attitude of the masses, their perceptions and the environment.

### GOVERNING BODY

1. Rajeev Singh, President
2. Priya Das, Vice president
3. Vimlendu Jha, Secretary
4. Sunny Verma, Treasurer
5. Farhad Vania, Member
6. Lopamudra Sanyal, Member
7. Arjun Khanna, Member
8. Kuriakose Verghese, Member
9. Kamlika Chandla, Member

### PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES

This report consists of Swechha's programmes and activities over the last three years (2011 – 2013), detailed under the following heads –

- Youth and Civil Society
- Children and Active Citizenship
- Events and Campaigns



## YOUTH AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Young people are the future leaders of society and have the power to change how development happens. 40% of India's population is under 35 – we believe the key lies in getting this massive human resource to understand the world and their role in it as agents of change. If youth take a stand together, civil society as a whole will listen and move forward. Swechha works with young people through innovative action projects that give young people the chance to be the change. A description of these is given below –

### CYON- Connecting Youth Organisations Nationwide

#### About the project

CYON- (Connecting Youth Organisations Nationwide) is a network that promises to bring together organizations that work with/for the youth or are youth led. They share a common platform to upscale each other's activities, collaborate and form a powerful voice for youth issues. It is a pioneering idea in India that aims at developing and enhancing the capacity and outreach of each member organization within the network. In other words, CYON provides a collective and consolidated space for all youth related initiatives, including NGOs, CBOs, social enterprises and campaigns. The project was implemented from 2010 – 2012.

#### Objectives –

- To comprehend and address emergent needs of youth organizations of the country.
- To increase collective outreach of youth initiatives
- To provide a platform for young NGOs/social groups or entrepreneurs to seek guidance in specific areas from established organizations.
- To encourage budding organizations to concretize their initiatives and expand their horizons.
- To facilitate networking amongst young and experienced organizations across the country and make sharing of resources and skills a free flowing entity.

#### Activities -

Needs assessment study – A study was conducted with youth organizations across the country to establish the need for a platform for such organizations. It helped plan and design the various aspects of the programme according to the needs expressed in the assessment.

Zonal workshops and training programs – 3 introductory and 3 zonal workshops were conducted in 3 cities to build a network amongst local youth organizations. These workshops helped the participants arrive at a common understanding of youth and the issues related to the youth. It also helped share resources and expertise and arrive at a common action plan. More than



120 organisations participated in these workshops and helped build strong linkages across the country.

**Mentor-protégé tie-ups** - The Mentor Protégé Programme aimed to build a system of sharing resources and expertise like skills, experience, knowledge, and advice during a period of 5-7 days. Members of CYON could seek guidance from another organisation with greater experience and expertise in a specific area. More than 30 such linkages were done over the duration of the project.

**Developing online platforms and communication material** – An interactive website and regular newsletters were used effectively to strengthen the linkages initiated through the workshops and training programmes. While the website encouraged people to share success stories and garner support for their work, the newsletter acknowledged and appreciated organizations by sharing their best practices and expertise. Both these platforms also encouraged continued dialogue on issues related to youth in the country.

**Outcome and outreach** –

- The network was launched through workshops in Bhopal, Bangalore and Shillong. The 3 introductory zonal workshops brought together 97 youth leaders representing 57 organisations.
- Capacity building workshops on themes such as gender, organizational development, new media and leadership were organized across Delhi, Bihar and Jharkhand. Close to 120 youth leaders representing more than 60 organisations participated in these workshops.
- 30 mentor-protégé tie ups were established as part of the network. Renowned organizations such as Center for Civil Society, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Dream a Dream foundation, Bachpan Bachao Aandolan and Hope Project mentored and trained several newly formed youth groups.

CYON proved to be a platform for youth organizations to collaborate, to support and to learn from each other. It initiated relationships, established partnerships and created a nationwide platform for organizations to strengthen and sustain these relationships.

## INFLUENCE

About the project

Influence is a nationwide youth programme on environmental leadership, active citizenship and volunteering that aims to build a new cadre of youth leaders, who will work to create a socially just and environmentally sustainable future. The program aims to consolidate the energies of youth of the country and to inculcate in them a culture of Volunteering. The Program engages young people in an attitudinal, structural, and cultural process whereby they gain the ability, authority, and agency to make decisions and implement change in their own lives and the development process of the society. The programme has been implemented since 2010.



## Objectives-

- To develop an understanding of issues concerning environmental and social sustainability in young people, that results in a snowball effect targeting youth, educational institutions and local communities alike.
- To identify and develop a relationship between oneself and the local and global development process.
- To engage, motivate and inspire young people to embrace civic and environmental responsibility.
- To equip young leaders with knowledge and skills so that they can contribute as active citizens.

## Activities –

Volunteer placements – Influence works closely with about 50 local and outstation organizations, institutions and movements every year to provide volunteering placements to young people looking for opportunities. The organizations are chosen after due diligence and the volunteers are placed after matching their skills and interests with the requirement of the organization.

Volunteer Management Workshop – Influence organizes 2-3 days residential workshop for the volunteer based organizations across the country with Volunteer Management as the central theme and additional focus on Understanding Youth, Building Volunteer Policies and Volunteer Management Processes. This is achieved through brainstorming sessions, simulation activities, sessions on Volunteer Mobilization, SWON analysis, games, sharing of success stories and interactive discussions. These workshops also aim at helping the participants establish their belief in volunteering and the need to harness the power it holds.

College workshops, capacity building workshops and volunteer meetings for the youth – Being a youth programme, Influence ensures constant engagement of young people through college workshops, capacity building workshops and volunteer meetings. These workshops aim at sensitizing youth on key local and global development ranging from education and poverty, to gender and environment. During these interactive sessions, volunteers undergo intensive training aimed at building their capacity to contribute adequately and efficiently as active citizens and leaders.

Green Fellowships – The Influence fellowships provide financial assistance and mentoring to innovative action oriented environmental ideas from young green leaders. Some outstanding projects have been supported by Influence in the past. These include Bio Gas plants, lake cleans up, solar lanterns, environmental film festivals, career counseling related to the environmental sector, community gardens and plantation drives. These fellowships directly engage young leaders in the planning and execution of impactful, innovative and sustainable green ideas.



Rural Exposure Camp – Today’s active citizens are tomorrow’s responsible leaders. In order to cultivate the spirit of leadership and responsibility in young people, Influence organizes travel based learning projects such as rural exposure camps with groups of youth volunteers. The volunteers embark on these unique journeys to gain first-hand experience of the real India and recognize the importance of mutual rural-urban co-existence with special focus on environmental and social justice. Constant engagement of volunteers in a variety of interactive activities not only helps them build a perspective on various developmental issues of the region but also to reflect upon their role as active citizens.

City level Campaigns - Every year Influence runs two city level campaigns which are spearheaded by youth volunteers from across the city. The socio- environmental campaigns focus on issues of development such as education, environment and political awareness. Over the last three years, volunteers have successfully carried out annual city level campaigns such as Right to Education, Oye Dilli (political awareness) and Spotted- War against Waste. These campaigns primarily operate at three levels- Awareness, Action and Advocacy.

Outcome and outreach –

- 10000 youth volunteers engaged every year through various components under Influence
- 100 volunteer mobilization drives organized in more than 50 colleges across Delhi
- 50 local and outstation partner organizations
- 2 annual city level campaigns spearheaded by over 100 volunteers every year
- Placement of over 200 volunteers with organizations across the country
- 10 fellowships awarded to innovative green ideas
- More than 150 volunteers have been part of the Influence rural exposure camps in Gujarat and Rajasthan
- Media stories about the program by CNN International, Times of India, Asian Age, Hindustan Times and Indian Express

The Programme has successfully created a platform for young people to volunteer and act on social, developmental and environmental issues. It has helped build capacities of young people by imparting skills and exposing them to a reality they are often unaware of. It has recognized leaders and given them opportunities to initiate action.

## INTERNATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE- YOUTH ACTION

About the project

VSO ICS was run by Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) as part of International Citizen Service (ICS), funded by the UK Department for International Development. The programme gave people in different countries a unique opportunity to work together, to develop and share valuable skills, and to make a practical contribution in local communities.



The selected volunteers took part in a 3 months long cross-cultural youth volunteering programme, where teams of up to 10 young people from the UK and 10 people from India aged 18-25 worked together with communities on a wide range of issues. ICS was taken up by Swechha in January 2012 for a period of one year. Swechha hosted 4 cycles of ICS from January 2012-April 2013. Around 65 international and national volunteers were placed with Swechha for 15 months.

#### Objectives –

- To identify and create global youth leaders by building their capacities in various fields through trainings, workshops and on- the -field work.
- To facilitate cross cultural learning amongst the youth volunteers from different parts of the world.
- To bring young people together on a common platform to facilitate community and self development.

#### Activities –

Pre placement activities and placements- All the national volunteers who were a part of the programme were carefully selected to ensure optimum community and self development. The volunteers were allotted projects based on their interests, skills and the requirement of the project concerned.

Workshops and trainings- All the national and international volunteers who were placed with the organization underwent several trainings such as in-country orientation, community orientation, mid phase review and final feedback. These trainings were innovative, creative and interactive in nature and were conducted with the aim to equip all the volunteers with the needed skills and information. These trainings also facilitated the purpose of monitoring and evaluation of the programme which further helped in planning the way forward.

Theme based activities- Swechha hosted 4 cycles of ICS from January 2012-April 2013 and directly engaged 65 young leaders from India and UK in the activities based on the following themes across Delhi and Jaipur-

- Education and environment
- Life skills and Active citizenship
- Youth and civil society

The volunteers were engaged in awareness raising, action research and trainings, facilitation of academic, non academic and creative sessions, organising large scale events and community action days. In each of the cycles hosted by Swechha, volunteers reached out to a minimum of 500 people directly while the indirect outreach has been more than 3000.





## Outcome and outreach –

- Placement of 65 national and international volunteers across Delhi and Jaipur
- Direct community outreach to more than 2000 people
- Indirect community outreach to more than 12000 people
- Workshops and trainings conducted for women sensitizing them about their health and hygiene for 6 months in 2 communities of Jaipur
- Development of a play area, garden and a waste management system in a MCD school in South Delhi
- Large scale community action days organised in 4 communities across Delhi and Jaipur. These included health camps, day long sessions on menstrual health and hygiene, installation of a wall magazine in the community and community clean ups.

This project helped identify young leaders in India and in the UK and facilitated a unique process of cross-cultural learning and community development. The project saw many of the selected volunteers transform into responsible and active citizens. The impact of the project on the communities in Delhi and Jaipur is manifold. Every intervention initiated or implemented by the young leaders in the communities, during the 4 cycles, positively impacted the organization and its beneficiaries.



## CHILDREN AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

Swechha believes that children and youth must be the targets of change today to be the instruments of change tomorrow. By engaging them in various innovative and experiential learning programmes on themes of environment and active citizenship, we have worked directly and indirectly with more than 100000 young school students over the last decade, through the following programmes.

### BRAKE EVEN

#### About Brake Even

Young learners today grapple with a wide array of academic disciplines at school. These disciplines, no doubt, broaden the cognitive and academic horizons of the youth, but overlook several other aspects of learning. Critical issues related to the environment are often not emphasized upon or understood thoroughly. While this understanding may not be tested in important examinations, it is required to tackle the global environmental crisis we face today. This is where Brake-Even steps in and offers a profound yet fun way to develop environmental stewardship amongst young people.

Brake-Even is Swechha's innovative short-term outreach programme for schools and other educational institutions eager to engage with issues related to the environment and citizenship.

#### Objectives

The aim of Brake Even is to bring about a consciousness amongst young people on the need for taking up responsibility for the environment. Its objectives are -

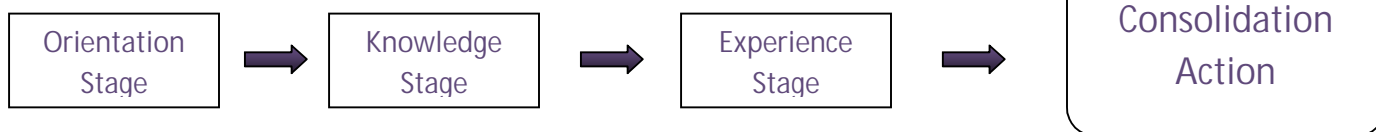
1. To break out of the monotony of text books and learn about critical environmental issues through games, exercises, worksheets and films.
2. To help students connect with and appreciate aspects of their natural and social environment.
3. To inspire students to take positive action and contribute as active global citizens and environmental stewards.
4. To give a wholesome learning experience to students through the combination of fun, action and learning.

#### Approach

Over the years, we have developed facilitation methods and pedagogic media which encourage hands-on learning, thereby urging young people to be a part of the solution after grasping the problem itself. Ours is a purely 'non-classroom based approach' - Br(e)aking Out of the monotony of textbooks!



Each module follows four steps, these are: Orientation, Knowledge, Experience and Consolidation/Action. Keeping it fun and exciting is integral to the Brake-Even philosophy.



### Activities

There are essentially 5 themes looked at in the modules through interactive sessions, simulations, films, field trips and discussions. Each of them looks at issues related to the theme, problems and the need for action.

1. Land – understanding biodiversity and threats to biodiversity
2. Water - our use and abuse of water, issues of pollution and access, conservation methods
3. Air - quality of air, pollution, climate change
4. Energy – renewable and non-renewable sources of energy, exploring alternatives
5. Waste - generation of waste, collection and disposal of waste, reducing and recycling

These modules are carried out through the following activities –

**Classroom workshops** – Interactive and activity-based these classroom sessions help the students develop an understanding of environmental and developmental issues in a simple yet structured manner. Innovative games, discussions and worksheets engage the children and inspire them to action.

**Film screenings** – Short films made by Swechha and other civil society organizations like Jivisha, Wasted, Dilli are screened in the school to create an awareness on developmental issues like water and waste. These films stimulate discussions on the issues and help the students raise questions and challenge beliefs and practices.

**Eco-walks** - Swechha's Eco walks take students out of their classrooms and bring them face-to-face with the problem. These half day excursions ensure that the children see themselves as a part of our fast-changing social and environmental landscape. The walks that are conducted by Swechha include the Yamuna Walk, the Ladfill Walk and others.

**Action Campaigns** – Modules end with an action plan or an action campaign which outlines steps that the students are taking to create awareness within the school community and inspire large-scale intervention and change. These campaigns allow for creative expression like street plays, posters, exhibitions and presentations.

### Outreach and Outcome

Given below is a table which summarises outreach of the programme –



Date	Schools	Intervention	Outreach
2011	5 schools	Eco-walks	250 students and teachers
July 2011 to June 2012	15 schools in Delhi/NCR	Workshops on Waste and Water supported by American Centre	700 students and teachers
Nov 2011	10 schools	Film Screenings at Project Y (Yamuna – Elbe Project)	500 students and teachers
March 2012	Bluebells School, New Delhi	Eco-walks for Grade 6	150 students and teachers
April 2012 to October 2012	St. Columbas' School, New Delhi	Modules on water, waste, energy and land for the Eco-club which culminated in an Eco-fest at the middle school Open Day	60 students and teachers 1000 parents and students
August 2012	GD Goenka, Gaziabad and Primary School, Mehrauli Modern School Barakhamba Road	Workshop on Waste  Module of waste	100 students and teachers  320 students and teachers
November 2012	Mayoor School, Noida	Workshop on Water	40 students and teachers
2012, 2013	Pathways World School, Noida	Eco-walks for Grade 5	80 students and teachers
2012, 2013	Pathways World School, Gurgaon	Eco-walks for Grade 6	80 students and teachers
2012, 2013	Organizational groups – SBT, Manzil, etc	Eco-walks	150 children and facilitators
2013	American Embassy School	Eco-walks	65 students and teachers
April 2013	Jamia Senior Secondary School	Module on water for Grade IX	150 students and teachers

The programme has hence, has a direct impact on more than 3500 students and teachers. The indirect impact is however much more as each group of participants then initiates awareness and action in their school and reaches out to the entire school.

The Brake Even programme is successful in

- Bringing critical environmental issues to the classroom
- Increasing understanding on these issues by integrating textbook and other knowledge
- Identifying a role for the self in these macro-issues
- Encouraging creative thought on the issues



- Inspiring action on these issues

Swechha has successfully conducted Brake Even with over 20 schools between 2011 - 2013 in Delhi, some of them being St. Columba's, Modern School, Delhi Public School, Apeejay School, Akshay Pratishthan and Spring Dale School. The Brake Even programme continues to be successfully carried out as a part of or to supplement school curriculum that tries to explore environmental and socio-developmental issues with young learners and school communities.

## BRIDGE THE GAP

### About the project

Our current education system and parenting focuses on consumption-based upbringing as a result of which development and larger issues of social responsibility and active citizenship have taken a back seat. The education imparted in schools today, often qualifies us for a good job but it fails to inculcate sensitivity towards issues that do not affect us directly. In addition, it does not impart the intelligence to understand and reflect upon the consequences of our actions on the poorest of the poor, the marginalized and the unheard sections of our society.

Against this backdrop, Swechha designed Bridge the Gap (BTG) - a unique curriculum that aims at narrowing the increasing gap between the children and the realities of the world around them. The curriculum aims at enabling young people to strike a connection with and between the natural world and the man-made world by equipping them with the necessary outlook and the skills needed to make this connection.

### Objectives

This curriculum aims to –

- Have a better understanding of the self and the 'other'
- Establish the relation between the local and the global - social, political, cultural and ecological - environment
- To have an understanding of the consequences of human actions on the environment
- To understand the needs and rights of present and future generations
- To develop self as well as social responsibility towards environmental issues
- To develop citizenship, stewardship and civic sense.

### Approach

An unconventional approach that stands on the pillars of exploration, experience and exposure will be adopted by us. This can be seen in the process given below -

#### ORIENTATION

Gaining an overview of and a perspective to Environment and Development





### KNOWLEDGE

Building an individual perspective and a strong understanding of the problems and their long-term solutions



### DISCOVERY

Learning by experience and case studies



### ACTION

Taking action based on new learning; locally within the school and globally

## Content

The three essential components of this curriculum are –

- Life Skills
- Environmental Education
- Active Citizenship

Various themes are addressed in the curriculum in each of these components. Some of these are-

1. Identity – Who am I? Who are we? – exploring the labels and stereotypes that we create in our society and what these do to the social fabric.
2. Problem-solving and decision-making – analyzing problems, understanding options and solutions, making the right choices, saying ‘no’
3. Conflict – resolution – analyzing conflicts, getting to the root of the conflict, resolving the conflict
4. Water – our use and abuse of water, issues of pollution and access, conservation methods, the state of rivers like the Yamuna.
5. Waste – generation of waste, collection and disposal of waste in Delhi, reducing and recycling
6. Land and biodiversity – threats to biodiversity, effects on green spaces
7. Urbanisation and city planning - the development model we follow - for whom, by whom, its relevance and sustainability
8. Leadership – understanding leadership roles and, communication skills
9. Active Citizenship

## Activities

The non-textbook approach focuses more on experiential learning as the course uses films, multimedia presentations, flash cards, journals and field trips as methods of teaching. The specific activities are described below –

Classroom workshops – Interactive and activity-based these classroom sessions help the students develop an understanding of environmental and developmental issues in a simple yet structured



manner. Innovative games, discussions and worksheets engage the children and inspire them to action.

Film screenings – Short films made by Swechha and other civil society organizations like Jijivisha, Wasted, Dilli are screened in the school to create an awareness on developmental issues like water and waste. These films stimulate discussions on the issues and help the students raise questions and challenge beliefs and practices.

Eco-walks - Swechha’s Eco walks take students out of their classrooms and bring them face-to-face with the problem. These half day excursions ensure that the children see themselves as a part of our fast-changing social and environmental landscape. The walks that are conducted by Swechha include the Yamuna Walk, the Ladfill Walk and others.

Action Campaigns – Modules end with an action plan or an action campaign which outlines steps that the students are taking to create awareness within the school community and inspire large-scale intervention and change. These campaigns allow for creative expression like street plays, posters, exhibitions and presentations. Students are also encouraged to participate in city-level campaigns on social or developmental issues.

Skill School – In order to integrate creative and vocational skills into the BTG, a weekend skill school was conceptualized to teach new skills to the young learners with help from experts and volunteers from colleges and corporates. Skills like computers, dance, art and theatre were a part of this school.

The curriculum inculcates a combination of themes and activities based on the participant group and their requirements. It could hence be designed to fit into the school curriculum over the academic year.

#### Outreach and Outcome

Given below is a table which summarises outreach of the programme –

Date	Schools	Intervention	Outreach
2010 - 2012	6 NDMC Schools	Year-long curriculum with classroom workshops, Saturday skill school, wall magazines, campaigns and technology-aided learning.	3000 students and teachers
2011, 2012, 2013	German School	Modules on socio-developmental issues as part of the geography curriculum with Grade IX - X	60 students and teachers
March 2012	Bluebells School	2 – day life skills module with Grade VII	130 students and teachers
July 2012	St. Columbas’ School	Leadership camp with elected leaders of	60 students



		the school	
October 2013	American Embassy School	Leadership camp with elected leaders of the school	50 students
October 2013 to Jan 2014	Modern School, Vasant Vihar	8 session curriculum with Grade VI	320 students

The programme has hence, has a direct impact on more than 3500 students and teachers. The indirect impact is however much more as each group of participants then initiates awareness and action in their school and reaches out to the entire school.

The Bridge the Gap programme helps to -

- Nurture empathy and social responsibility towards the other
- Link young people as active citizens to local and global socio-developmental issues
- Inculcate leadership as a value and a skill to practice in the schools and communities
- Build sensitive and pro-active school communities

Bridge the Gap has been conducted in some of the leading schools in the last decade. From 2010 to 2012 it was conducted in 6 NDMC schools with the support of Nokia Siemens Network. It has been successfully carried out in the German School and a few other private schools over the last few years. The BTG programme continues to be successfully carried out as a part of or to supplement school curriculum as it tries to inculcate life skills and citizenship amongst young learners and school communities.

## YAMUNA YATRA

About the project

The Yamuna is 1370 km in length and caters to the needs of approximately 60 million people along its course. The entire Yamuna flows through 7 different states till it merges with the Ganges River in Allahabad. In addition to its ecological value, the Yamuna has significant religious importance.

Despite its significance, the Yamuna has become a highly polluted river as it passes through cities downstream, particularly in and around Delhi. As states compete for limited water resources and water scarcity and quality become serious problems, the issues facing the Yamuna need immediate attention.

The Yamuna Yatra is a 12-day journey along the length of the river Yamuna exploring the ecological, social, and political dimensions of the river.

Objectives

Educational in nature, there are five main objectives of the Yatra:





- Learn the science of a river.
- Promote understanding of the riparian states and cities/towns.
- Inculcate environmental stewardship and build leadership capacities of the future caretakers of our planet.
- Exercise leadership qualities by conducting public awareness campaigns.
- Adventure and fun

## Activities

The Yatris will engage in a variety of interactive activities to complement and nurture their learning and experience along the journey. These would include:

- Endless folklore and tales told by the locals
- Interactions with communities along the banks, many of which are ancient hill tribes
- Workshops on Culture, Ecology, Identity
- Village Assessment Studies
- Environmental Audits and Action Projects
- Film Screenings
- Concerts and cultural celebrations by the river
- Yoga, meditation, dips in the pristine river
- Camping, Cook-Your-Own-Meal
- Treks, hikes, walks, swims

## Outreach and Outcome

Swechha has been conducting Yatras since 2004 with schools like Vasant Valley, German School and other youth groups. The Vasant Valley School has acknowledged the effectiveness of a travel based learning programme like the Yamuna Yatra and has made it a part of their curriculum for Grade XI. Swechha has conducted 5 Yatras between 2011 – 2013 for over 250 young people.

The Yatra serves as an eye-opener for children from urban situations on the river's effect on our lives and vice versa. It also helps them integrate all their theoretical learning about the reality of the river and the people who live along the river. It is a life-changing experience for most young people as it helps them question and stretch beyond their comfort zones while connecting with a larger world.

## GANGA YATRA

### About the project

The Ganga is 2,510 kms in length and is the longest river in India. It flows through one of the most densely populated areas along its course and its basin caters to a population of over 400 million



people. The entire river flows through 5 different states and through Bangladesh till it empties into the Bay of Bengal. In addition to its ecological value, the Ganga is the most sacred river for Hindus. Despite its significance, the Ganga becomes one of the most polluted rivers in the world as it passes through cities downstream.

The Ganga Yatra is a 4- 6 day journey along the length of the river Ganga exploring the ecological, social, and political dimensions of the river.

## Objectives

Educational in nature, there are five main objectives of the Yatra:

- Learn the science of a river.
- Promote understanding of the riparian states and cities/towns.
- Inculcate environmental stewardship and build leadership capacities of the future caretakers of our planet.
- Exercise leadership qualities by conducting public awareness campaigns.
- Adventure and fun

## Activities

The Yatris will engage in a variety of interactive activities to complement and nurture their learning and experience along the journey. It is a balanced mix of fun, adventure and learning keeping in mind that the participants are young school-going students. These would include:

- Endless folklore and tales told by the locals
- Interactions with communities along the banks, many of which are ancient hill tribes
- Workshops on Culture, Ecology, Identity
- Village Assessment Studies
- Environmental Audits and Action Projects
- Film Screenings
- Concerts and cultural celebrations by the river
- Yoga, meditation, dips in the pristine river
- Camping, Cook-Your-Own-Meal
- Rafting
- Treks, hikes, walks, swims
- Community work or river-clean up.

## Outreach and outcome

Swechha conceptualised and initiated the Ganga Yatra in 2012 with a group of young leaders. It has since conducted it for the Pathways World School, Aravali. About 150 young people have



experienced this journey which helped them capture images, words, worlds and thoughts, encounter people in varied circumstances and share their cultures and concerns.

The Yatra is a journey which takes young people on a journey of reflection and discovery. They reach their destination with enriched perspectives of respect, diversity, conservation and a resolve to make a positive change for the future.

## GRAM ANUBHAV

### About the project

Approximately 70% of India is comprised of villages. While there is an increasing shift towards cities, the majority of India still lives in rural areas. Though many of these villages lack basic requirements such as education and health care, these villages are culturally vibrant, ecologically rich and full of local knowledge. There is so much here that still remains unexplored and untouched. A lot can be learnt, changed and improved at the same time. Young people living in urban India are often unaware of the other India living in the villages of rural India. Living in a glittering world of shiny malls, sweeping flyovers and towering sky-scrapers, they are mostly oblivious to the potential and the problems that rural India has.

Gram Anubhav is a unique 4-day educational trip which takes high school students on a journey of exploration, reflection and action into rural India. It is an opportunity to experience and realize the other India. It allows students to explore the physical, social, economic and cultural aspects of an Indian village while integrating what they have learnt from textbooks and in classrooms.

### Objectives

The aim of Gram Anubhav is to expose young minds to the realities of rural India so that these future policy makers of the country become active and responsible citizens today.

- To explore the kaleidoscope of rural India
- To understand this kaleidoscope with an interdisciplinary approach
- To reflect on the self vis a vis the other
- To challenge existing perceptions and discover potential within the self
- To act on these influences and be the change

### Activities

Learning is facilitated through the creation of opportunities and the use of tools like -

1. Village walks and mapping – Village walks and maps are effective tools which use observation, interaction and analysis to understand a rural community.
2. Home visits/stays – Interactions and experiences such as these are instrumental in challenging perceptions and stereotypes.



3. Market studies – Interactions and field research in local markets to understand linkages between urban and rural India.
4. Interactions with practitioners – Understanding developmental work that happens in rural areas through interactions and visits is a crucial part of this exploration.
5. Workshops on life skills – Interactive games, activities and exercises help to develop skills and inculcate leadership in the young participants.
6. Introspection on the self and identification of the self as an actor of change.
7. Perspective building and assimilation of learning through creative presentations and sharing.

### Outreach and outcome

Swechha conceptualised Gram Anubhav in 2005 and has conducted it for some of leading schools of Delhi since. Since 2012, it has been made an integral part of the curriculum for Grade IX in Modern School, Barakhamba Road. More than 700 students and teachers have participated in this programme from the school and travelled to rural Rajasthan and Uttarakhand. In 2013, groups from the German School and St.Mary's School Dwarka also initiated the programme for their senior students. In 2013 Modern School, Vasant Vihar also made it a part of their curriculum for Grade IX and 200 students from the school travelled to rural Rajasthan.

Gram Anubhav is one of Swechha's successful travel-based learning programmes which encourages young urban students to become question their perceptions and beliefs while getting acquainted with a larger reality.

### PAGDANDI

Pagdandi is a community based non-formal alternative learning program for children and adolescents of Jagdamba Camp, a slum in south Delhi. Since its inception in 2009, Pagdandi's vision has been to supplement the formal education of these children, help them become socially empowered and increase their employability by developing their knowledge, skills, abilities and attitude. The initiative is largely led by volunteers and experts. It has been partially supported by KHD Humboldt Wedag and donations from individuals and institutions.

### Aim

The aim of Pagdandi is to develop and create young community leaders in Jagdamba Camp, through meaningful and interactive learning opportunities for education, empowerment and employability.

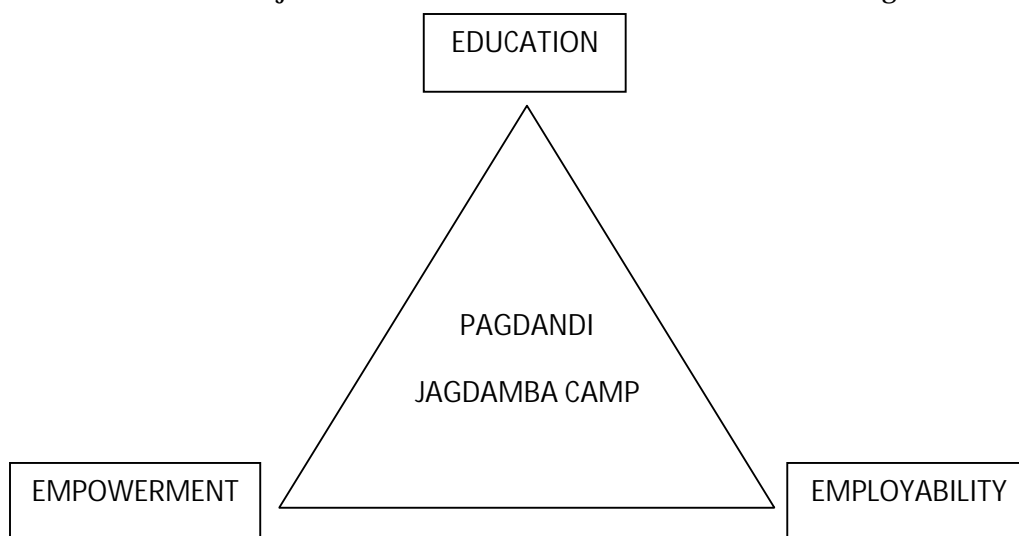
### Objectives

- To ensure access to education for all children and youth in Jagdamba Camp
- To empower children with life skills and values that are required to lead fulfilling and responsible lives

- To nurture creativity as a skill and innovation as an approach amongst the children
- To inculcate environmental stewardship and active citizenship amongst young people
- To build the capacities of adolescents and youth towards further education and employment
- To engage, motivate and inspire citizens, students and young adults towards civic responsibility and community action in the development process through volunteerism

### Broad themes and Activities

In order to achieve these objectives, three broad themes have evolved for Pagdandi.



### Activities (2011 – 2013)

#### Access to Education Campaign

##### 1. Campaign – Awareness, Admission and Advocacy

Every year Swechha runs the Right to Education Campaign to ensure awareness and action for the right to education. The campaign uses creative tools like street theatre, music and art to create awareness in communities, institutions and public places. Focused Group Discussions facilitate enquiries for admissions and bring to light other problems that parents and children face in Government schools. These are then acted upon by a team of volunteers. The volunteers send letters, visit schools and fight cases where necessary to facilitate admission of children who have been denied admission by school authorities. Since 2011, the Campaign has facilitated admission of more than 150 children into school. In 2013, the Campaign worked towards ensuring access to young people by facilitating admissions for about 15 young people into the Open Schooling system.



The Advocacy team plays a crucial role in liaising with government authorities like the DCPCR, DOE, the SDMC and others to raise questions and receive information about the implementation of the Act. Since 2011, complaints and RTIs have been used as effective tools by the campaigners.

## 2. Bridge classes

In order to help children who have been admitted to school, cope with academic pressures of age-appropriate admission volunteers run bridge classes on Mathematics, English, Hindi. These help the children learn new concepts and skills and prepare them for their classes.

## 3. Remedial support classes

In response to parents' and children's needs, remedial classes were initiated in the month of March 2012 to enhance skill-based learning of the languages, particularly English. Community teachers and volunteers conduct these classes for children in age and learning appropriate groups.

The classes emphasize constant interaction and activity rather than rote learning. Games, activities, worksheets and practical exercises are used effectively to build confidence and skill in English. A collaboration was also initiated with EnglishDost, Bluehat Education, Mumbai, a phone-based English Speaking programme to complement the same.

Experts in Mathematics and Science have also been brought in to conduct workshops using experiments, games, worksheets and exercises. These have helped to inculcate a scientific curiosity to help the children get over their fear of these two disciplines.

## 4. Functional Academics

Functional Academics were introduced for out-of-school adolescent girls in 2012 and in 2013 for women from Jagdamba Camp. A curriculum based on the NCERT guidelines has been developed for Hindi and Mathematics which has been taught by volunteers to both the groups.

## Creative Learning and Development

### 1. Creative workshops

Creativity is an approach and a skill we try to nurture in the children of Pagdandi. Since its inception, there have been creative workshops as a platform of creative learning and expression for the children. Music, theatre, art in different forms, dance, puppetry, pottery, hand-painting, photography, and other such skills have been brought to the children by experts and volunteers. The children also attend creative performances whenever possible to be able to appreciate music and dance in different forms. These workshops culminate in an Annual Festival held to showcase the children's skills and talents for the community and the public. The last two Festivals were theatrical extravaganzas which were applauded by a large audience and the media. In 2012, the children underwent a 2-month training in puppetry and circus arts by renowned artists, Dadi Pudumjee and Andreas Ceska and presented 'Sapno ki Pagdandi'. In 2013, the children underwent 4 months of intensive training in theatre and puppetry by experts from Dramabaaz Co. and presented 'The Lorax'.



## 2. Creative Camps in the vacations

Summer, winter and the spring breaks in school mean that while some children are travelling to their villages, many are here with a lot of free time. In order to constructively engage the children at this time, vacation camps are planned and carried out by staff, volunteers and experts. These are often a structured combination of creative skills, sports and life skills. Skills like photography, comic-book making, origami, art and craft, dance, music, creative writing have been a part of the camps. Cricket, football, outdoor games, yoga and taekwondo have also been conducted in the local parks by volunteers. The Camps end with a showcase for the community.

## 3. Exposure trips

Outings to places of educational and historical importance are conducted 2 – 3 times in the year. Children and volunteers have together gone to monuments, museums, planetarium, parks and the river Yamuna. These outings give children and volunteer a chance to interact and learn from each other while visiting a new space.

## 4. Kitaab Ghar

This interactive library, established in April 2010, has become an integral part of the Pagdandi learning process. Kitaab Ghar is a closed physical space inside the community that serves as a meeting place, reading room and story sharing space for the children. The library is open on all days and while children are encouraged to read and study, there are also specific story-telling sessions that happen here. These are conducted by volunteers. The space is slowly developing as a community space for reading, studying, meeting and discussion.

## Life Skills and Active Citizenship

### 1. Saturday-Sunday classes in the park

Twice a week interactive sessions were conducted by the volunteers in the local park. The purpose of these sessions was to equip the children with information, values, and skills needed in the world today. These sessions were designed by staff but conducted by volunteers using games, exercises, role-plays, music and other creative tools. These were conducted every week in 2011 and 2012.

### 2. Adolescent Empowerment Programme

This programme titled the Me to We programme was initiated in July 2012. It grew out of a need to understand and address the problems of adolescents while equipping them with a sense of identity and confidence along with the skills needed to be young leaders in their community. The programme works with focused groups, through a structured curriculum which looks at topics ranging from identity, gender, reproductive health to stress management and vocational guidance, using innovative games and tools. The adolescent boys and girls have their own groups called “Ekta” and “Secret” respectively. They meet weekly in their own groups and work together on campaigns.



The pre-teens (10 – 14 year olds) have come together to initiate the ‘Healthy Prithvi Eco Club’ to learn more about the environment and work together for it. The club was initiated in July 2013 and meets weekly.

### 3. Campaigns

The children are encouraged to take part in various local campaigns. These campaigns give them a chance to interact with other child leaders and also expose them social issues and initiatives. They have been a part of the Nine is Mine Campaign (<http://nineismine.in/home>) on different occasions. They have attended Bal Sunvayis and have interacted with children from all over Delhi on these occasions. About 15 children also participated in Aapki Sadak – an urban design project that raises issues related to alternative mobility solutions and pedestrianization in urban neighbourhoods of Delhi. (<http://aasthasinghchauhan.wordpress.com/projects/aapki-sadak/>). The children have also played an active role in Swechha’s campaigns for education (RTE) and against urban waste (Spotted! Stop it!). They are now initiating their own campaigns in the community.

### 4. Film Screenings

These are held once or twice a month for the children at the Centre (depending on other classes and events). Films covering a wide range of themes have been screened for the children with the help of volunteers on different occasions. The films are also used to stimulate discussion and learning with the children.

### 5. Sports and Martial Arts Trainings

Pagdandi has tried to bring to the children exposure to martial arts as a life skill and as a discipline. Experts in Karate and Taekwondo have conducted classes with the children since 2011. Sports and games are conducted during the vacations with student volunteers. Opportunities to take part in competitions and championships are also explored for the children.

## Employability Training

### 1. English Speaking

As Pagdandi expanded its outreach to adolescents and youth, it became important to equip the children with skills that will enhance their employability. Since 2012, English classes focusing more on skill proficiency are being conducted for the children.

### 2. Vocational Guidance

Sessions and workshops on issues related to study skills and vocational guidance have been introduced for the adolescents and youth. Collaborations are being initiated with experts in the field to conduct detailed assessments with the children.

### 3. Initiative for women’s financial empowerment

In July 2013, a women’s group was initiated to work towards women’s empowerment through literacy and financial empowerment. The group, named the Udaan Group has been having





functional academics sessions since along with confidence and awareness building through film screenings and interactions with experts.

#### Outreach and outcome

Pagdandi has reached out to more than 250 children since 2011 and has had an indirect impact on the entire community. While the numbers are important and help measure the extent of the project, the qualitative measure shows the impact this project has had on the community and on the children and youth who are a part of this project. In the last three years, Swechha's presence and credibility in the community has been strengthened. Its role in the education and development of the children is appreciated and acknowledged by the community. The project is able to see the children grow into responsible and active youth with leadership potential. The project receives support from a growing pool of volunteers, experts, organizations and corporates.

The project is now evolving into a dynamic initiative which will make these empowered young leaders not just the targets of change but also the agents of change for the community.



## EVENTS AND CAMPAIGNS

Swechha began as the “We for Yamuna” campaign in August 2000 for creating and spreading awareness about the pitiable state of Yamuna in Delhi. Since its inception, the campaign has been using innovative methods to attract the attention of the government, media and citizens for the cause of the river. Today, “We for Yamuna” is globally recognized as one of the strongest youth voices on the issue of Yamuna. It continues to be an integral part of Swechha’s work through Yamuna Walks, Yamuna Yatras and events that are conducted for the river. Two events conducted between 2011 and 2013 are detailed below -

### YAMUNOTSAV

#### About the project

Yamunotsav is Swechha’s annual event commemorating World Environment Day. This is when we unite with artists, students, environmentalists, media, civil society organizations, corporates and the rest of Delhi, and pledge to reclaim our environment. The event spreads environmental consciousness using music, art and unconventional innovative ideas.

#### Objectives

- To solicit support for Swechha’s work through musicians and artists
- To increase Swechha’s collective outreach
- To celebrate the spirit of environmental volunteering and action

#### Activities

Music concerts - Over the past three years, renowned musicians and bands such as Indian Ocean, Swarathma, Parikrama, Raghu Dixit, Jack in the Box and Mame Khan have performed for Swechha. These music concerts do not merely celebrate the spirit of volunteering but also help us increase our visibility among the young and the enthusiastic individuals of the city.

Volunteer sign ups - Yamunotsav represents a platform for like-minded individuals to come together and act upon issues of concern. Being Swechha’s annual mega event, Yamunotsav provides an opportunity to the interested people to enroll as volunteers.

Exhibition and sale of Green the Gap products - Green the Gap is Swechha’s fair trade arm that makes products using waste. Green the Gap empowers consumers to make responsible choices that will protect the planet. GTG products are exhibited and sold at Yamunotsav to spread awareness about the enterprise.



Environmental Campaigns - Swechha's environmental campaigns use this platform to reach out to more people with innovative ideas and tools. Interactive stalls, waste installations, sapling distribution and communication material are some of these.

Outcome and outreach –

- The event has featured some of the best individual musicians, artists and bands in the country. These include Raghu Dixit Project, Swanand Kirkire, Surojit Dev of Them Clones fame, Rahul Ram and Amit Kilam of Indian Ocean fame, Piyush Mishra, Bobby Cash, Valentine Shipley, Solar Punch, Menwhopause and Swarathma. It is an event eagerly awaited by music lovers and environmentalists in the city.
- Through the years, the event has received support from the British Council, American Center, Oxfam, Nokia Siemens Network and KHD
- Renowned media houses such as NDTV, Radio City and Hit 95 have been media partners for Yamunotsav
- In June 2013, Swechha launched India's first upcycled work space. Along with musical performances, the audience witnessed the country's first office space created using trash. The event was covered largely by print, electronic and online media.
- Since 2011, more than 3000 people have attended Yamunotsav.

The concert continues to create a public platform for the river Yamuna as part of Swechha's ongoing 'We for Yamuna' Campaign.

## YAMUNA CYCLOTHON

About the project

Yamuna Cyclothon gathered hundreds of likeminded individuals who came together as environmentally conscious citizens and cycled to express solidarity with the Yamuna. Yamuna Cyclothon sensitized participants towards issues surrounding the Yamuna and demonstrated the importance of cycling, recycling and upcycling as healthy environmental choices. The first ever Yamuna Cyclothon was held in January 2012.

Objectives

- To inspire people (children, youth and civil society) to volunteer.
- To sensitise people on environmental issues, particularly those surrounding the Yamuna.
- To draw media coverage in order to reach a broader audience.
- To increase Swechha's collective outreach and solicit support for the work that the organization does.



## Activities

### 1. Pre-event mobilisation

A series of pre-events raised awareness on the issues addressed by this initiative and attracted a large number of participants for the main event. 30 'smart mobs' which comprised of musical performances and a street play created and enacted by young volunteers, were held in schools, colleges and public venues in New Delhi (including Dilli Haat, Batra Cinemas, Lodhi Gardens and SDA market). A mini-Cyclothon, which gathered a group of people that cycled from Delhi University's North Campus to India Gate and back was held with the support of local cycling clubs.

### 2. The Event

The Yamuna Cyclothon started from St. Stephen's College, in Delhi University's North Campus. The cyclists followed a route especially designed to allow them to see – and smell – the river, crossing the Wazirabad barrage, riding alongside the banks of the river and stopping at Qudsiya Ghat to view the river up close. The cyclists then passed Loha Pul and returned to St. Stephen's College, between 9 and 11 am, where the Yamuna Cyclothon street play was, once again, performed for the participants.

## Outcome and outreach

Swechha organised the 1st ever Yamuna Cyclothon and successfully gathered hundreds of likeminded individuals. The event was supported by Hero Cycles and VSO India. It generated 18 media stories including print, television and radio. It initiated and strengthened collaborations with institutions, corporates and organizations which participated enthusiastically. The Cyclothon was captured in a film, 'Riding on High Alert' which continues to inspire audiences in schools, colleges and corporates.

Swechha has been organising public mega-events for the last decade or so. With each event, campaigns get strengthened, with increased participation and visibility. Swechha also partners with other organizations at similar events and initiatives.

In March 2013, Swechha partnered with WWF India to organize a Cyclothon in Central Delhi. As the volunteer partner, Swechha successfully mobilized cyclists from schools, colleges, corporates and cycling clubs across the city and ensured a huge turnout at the event. Since July 2013, Swechha has been the public interface partner for the Lila-Prism Lectures organized by the Lila Foundation to initiate thought, dialogue and discussion on various aspects of development as the pre-cursor to community action projects. Swechha has successfully publicized and mobilized participants and volunteers for these events.



## MONSOON WOODING CAMPAIGN

### About the project

Monsoon Wooding is Swechha's annual environmental campaign which aims at expansion of green spaces in the city through youth volunteers. This action-oriented campaign encourages communities to plant, protect and promote trees and to take onus of creating and maintaining green spaces. The sapling distribution and plantation that happens as a part of Monsoon Wooding is seasonal in nature but its impact is indeed perennial. It has been implemented every year since 2011.

### Objectives

- To protect and promote the green spaces in the city
- To mobilize communities to work together towards the protection of the environment
- To inculcate the spirit of environmental responsibility among the young people and the civil society

### Activities

- Green walks with experts
- Community identification and Awareness raising and cleanliness drives in communities across Delhi and NCR
- Sapling distribution in public spaces and events
- Large scale plantation drives across communities in Delhi and NCR
- Institutional collaborations with local partner organizations

### Outcome and outreach

- Over the past three years, more than 4000 saplings have been distributed and planted across communities in Delhi and NCR
- More than 1000 volunteers have worked with community members to ensure access to greener spaces
- Large scale awareness and cleanliness drives organized across communities
- Garnered support from schools, colleges, NGOs, RWAs, media and corporate houses
- Creation of Delhi's first urban mini forest using native species at St Mary's School, Dwarka. In July 2013, Swechha collaborated with Afforestt, a Bangalore based organization to create Delhi's first urban mini forest in St Mary's School, Dwarka. The forest was created over an area of 1000 sq ft using 300 saplings of 32 native species. The initiative was appreciated and covered by several national dailies



## ANNEXURE 1 Youth and Civil Society

### Influence

#### Photo links-

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.395164652895.178635.45017707895&type=3>  
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#### Photo links-

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### ICS

#### Photo links-

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10151362681637896.1073741828.45017707895&type=3>  
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## Children and Active Citizenship

### Pagdandi

#### Photo links-

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#### Photo links-

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## Yamunotsav

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