

ACTIVITY REPORT 2014-2015



ABOUT SWECHHA

Swechha is an organization dedicated to enabling ourselves and others around us to 'Be the Change', in making a visible difference to the Environment- both Physical and Social. *Our mission is to inspire, create and support - a just, equitable and sustainable society, for everyone and forever.*

Our genesis lay in the year 2000 as 'We for Yamuna' campaign, a collective response towards growing apathy towards one of the most polluted rivers of the world. Since then the organization has gathered popular and powerful voices for the support of this cause and has emerged as the loudest and strongest voice in India on the matter. Apart from this campaign, Swechha has grown over the decade to work on other issues of sustainable development and social change and has had considerable impact locally, nationally as well as internationally.

In the numerous things we do at Swechha, there are three key Focus Areas we address: (i) **Environment** and Citizenship; (ii) **Education** and Governance; and (iii) **Empowerment** and Enterprises.

GOVERNING BODY

1. Rajeev Singh, President
2. Vimlendu Jha, Secretary
3. Sunny Verma, Treasurer
4. Aruna Pandey, Member
5. Farhad Vania, Member
6. Lopamudra Sanyal, Member
7. Shilpi Singh, Member
8. Kuriakose Verghese, Member
9. Kamlika Chandla, Member

PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES

This report consists of Swechha's programmes and activities over the last one year (2014-15), detailed under the following heads –

- **Environment** and Citizenship
- **Education** and Governance



- **Empowerment** and Enterprises

Environment and Citizenship

We strongly believe that all of us need to Wake up and Act on the criminal ways in which our needs and growing wants are damaging and affecting the Environment, both Physical and Social. Whether it is a drying Yamuna, an overflowing Landfill, or a fast depleting green cover of the city, there is an urgent need for all of us to Know, Lean and Act on these concerns. **Climate Change** is a cumulative impact of several local and global environmental inactions or irresponsible actions. Given below are the details of the activities conducted under this head in 2013-14.

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 2 Yamuna Yatras for over 125 young leaders.

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.

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

In May 2014, over 50 volunteers worked tirelessly for 2 days to create an urban forest in Dhouj, Faridabad. Over 700 saplings of 45 species were planted using organic material.

Apart from the forest, 2014-15 saw the plantation of 800 more saplings across different schools, colleges and RWAs. More than 300 volunteers were a part of Monsoon Wooding 2014-15.

Education and Governance

Swechha believes that education needs to be holistic, contextual and empowering. Apart from the basic belief of 'Education for All', which remains one of the core campaigns of Swechha and its communities, we look at quality of education, capacity of educators and socio-political significance of educational institutions. We work with children (in-school, out of school), Teachers (Government as well as Pvt Institutions) and Managements on the issue. Education is one of the core prerequisites for active governance. Some of the activities conducted under this theme in 2013-14 are listed below-

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.

Key activities conducted during 2014-15 are detailed below-

PAGDANDI

Pagdandi is a non-formal learning programme, for the children of Jagdamba Camp. This is a slum community in South Delhi which is spread over an area of more than 240 acres and houses about 5000 households. Pagdandi was established in 2009. Its aim is to develop and create young community leaders in Jagdamba Camp, through meaningful and interactive learning opportunities for education, empowerment and employability. Activities carried out to achieve these have been described below -

A. Right to Education

Every year Swechha runs the Right to Education Campaign to ensure enrolment of children in schools. The campaign is being carried out through Awareness, Action and Advocacy interventions.

While the follow-up of the campaign of 2013 was conducted and adequate support was given to the students who had enrolled and were facing difficulties, the campaign for 2014 took on a different strategy. A simple questionnaire was designed to conduct a door-to-door survey to get an accurate picture of the demographic, educational and employment profile, of the community. A team of close to 40 volunteers helped map the community, conduct the pilot for 100 families and then conduct the complete survey of over 700 families. While the final report is attached along with this report, some of the key findings are given below -

- There are 700+ families who live in Jagdamba Camp
- The total population of individuals is 3,601 with 52 per cent (1,864 individuals) men and 48 per cent (1,737 individuals) women.
- The gender profile at the camp is imbalanced with a sex ratio of 933 females for every 1000 males.
- The predominant share of the population falls in the age group of 19 to 45 years.
- Close to 25% of the total population is illiterate and most of these are in the 25 to 45 age group.
- The education profile for the younger population (upto 25 years) is promising though not ideal with around 75 per cent enrolled in the formal education system. While most of these are in school or Open school, less than 1% are pursuing higher education.
- Close to 20% of these are children considered too young for school and are not in any form of pre-school intervention.
- There are 46 children in the age 6 to 14 years who are not in school.
- There are 81 adolescents in the age group 15 to 18 who have dropped out before completing Class 12.
- Around 15 per cent of the total population above the age 18 years is un-employed. Of this 34 per cent are unemployed-homemakers i.e. women within the age groups of 18 to 40 years who are neither engaged in any occupational activities, nor the primary caregiver at home.
- Around 13 per cent of the 2,187 adults in the camp are daily wage workers – doing skilled and unskilled work.
- Of the adult women, 37% are homemakers and 23.6% are at home/unemployed or unemployed homemakers. Gender stereotypes with regard to work are influenced by the same patriarchal beliefs as we see in society.
- The emergence of a group of people in the age group 6 to 65 which is not involved in educational or employment activity needs to be examined. Close to 60% of these are below 18 – the youth that needs to be constructively engaged in the pursuit of education and employability.

The findings are being used to better plan and design interventions like the RTE Campaign in the next year.

Alongside the survey, admissions were carried out by volunteers for children and young adults in the neighbourhood schools and National Institute Of Open Schooling. While admissions were facilitated for 19 children in the neighbourhood schools, 6 admissions were facilitated under the NIOS in class VIII and X.

B. Support to School

Remedial classes continue to be conducted by staff and volunteers. 52 classes were held for 40 children aged 7 to 11 in English. Over 50 classes were also conducted for children in the age 12 to 18 in specific subjects like Mathematics, Social Studies, Hindi, Political Science, Sociology and History.

A **Winter Camp** was held for 40 children, focusing on concepts and skills in Maths, Science, History and Literature using innovative tools and methods by volunteers and experts.

Kitaab Ghar sessions have been held over the year for more than 50 children, by staff and volunteers to encourage reading. An extension of this has been the Reading Days which have been held regularly since December. Reading Days are now a celebration of reading – everywhere and by everybody in the community. There are theme-based sessions in Kitaab Ghar, distribution of books to households and reading in the lanes of Jagdamba Camp. The response has been tremendous - more than 1000 children in Kitaab Ghar, more than 500 people read to in the streets and more than 600 books lent to households. 88 volunteers were a part of these events through the year.

C. Leadership and Life Skills Development

While sessions were held by volunteers and experts for different groups of children and adolescents, the Kid Powered Media facilitated Funky Boyz media club continued to work on the media skills of the boys. The club focused on photography, ad films and radio clips. 7 children were also a part of KPM's annual film by scripting and acting in the film. The film, 'Queens of Delhi' was released in September 2014 at a grand premiere attended by children, parents and supporters. 30 children and parents from Pagdandi attended the premiere. 15 of the children kickstarted the premiere with a performance of their street play on gender, 'Aakhir Kyun' which received a tremendous response from the packed audience.

A mini-camp was held in the summer vacations for 25 younger children by 4 volunteers in art and dance over 3 weeks. The children learnt basic techniques of drawing and colouring and a dance on popular film songs.

70 children were taken to Christmas celebrations at Father Agnel School and Select City Walk Mall.

50 children and 4 volunteers went for a **Nature Walk** to Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary on the occasion of International Biodiversity Day. They spent a ½ day learning about animals, insects and birds through a Nature Trail, films and quizzes. The children, especially the Eco-club children, came back energized and enthused after their Walk.

D. Preparedness for Employment

English-speaking and Computer literacy are two crucial skills associated with employability. While 75 classes were conducted for 30 adolescent boys and girls focusing on English speaking and comprehension, 30 adolescent girls worked with 15 students of the American Embassy School for a 16 session module on computer literacy, as part of a peer education project.

This year's Summer Camp also focused on Employability and was held for 40 young boys and girls in June.

ANNUAL EVENTS -

1. Summer School

40 children spent 60 hours over 25 days in June learning skills and exploring themes related to employability. The Summer School was a combination of interactive and activity-based sessions, workshops, interactions and exposure visits that built values, skills and preparedness for employment or entrepreneurship.

The themes discussed included -

- • Communication
- • Leadership and confidence building
- • Business and Entrepreneurship
- • Financial awareness
- • Sales and Marketing

The skills taught by volunteers and experts from People Tree and Victory Arts Foundation (Shiamak's) were -

- • Candle making
- • Jewellery design
- • Puppet making
- • Dance

Employment opportunities were also shared with the children by experts which included a woman cab driver from Azaad Foundation and a retired Army Officer. The School ended with a colourful showcase for family members and friends of the participants. This included a small exhibition of charts, jewellery, puppets and photographs along with a show with puppets, acts and dances. Ms. Anita Verma from KHD attended the showcase and encouraged the children.

2. Annual Festival

Since its inception in 2009, Pagdandi has organized 5 annual festivals engaging over 50-75 participants every year. The kids have learnt and performed circus arts, mime, puppetry and drama over the last two years. The shows have been witnessed by over 1500 people over the past few years.

The Festival was conceptualized as a travelling show this year, with elements of street theater, poetry and puppetry. Theatre training began in August for the children in 2 groups focusing on voice, movement and drama skills.

Ideation for the show was done with the children through a visualization exercise (see Annexure). The idea of freedom emerged through the exercise and was then developed into stories with the children through successive interactions and workshops. The show developed into a 25-minute performance in which numerous short stories weave themselves together into one unique narration of the oppressor, the oppressed, the spectator and the hero – Azaad Pinjrey.

Through the show, 41 children and adolescents (aged 7-18) from Jagdamba Camp, creatively expressed their “freedom to be.” The show has been conceptualized, scripted and directed by volunteers and experts of Swechha and the children.

Azaad Pinjrey travelled to different locations across the city to bring its audience face-to-face with everyday struggles, defeats and triumphs in the way of exercising true freedom. 4 public performances took place at Dilli Haat, Jantar Mantar and Select City Walk Mall between January 31st - February 8th 2015. The 5th show was performed exclusively for the employees of KHD in their premises. The show received tremendous response by audiences and promises to travel again.

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 Jjivisha, 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
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
May 2013	Pathways School Noida	Landfill Walk	80 students and teachers
October 2013	Pathways School, Gurgaon	Yamuna Walk	80 students and teachers
March 2014	American Embassy School, Delhi	Yamuna Walk	40 students and teachers
November 2014	Shikshantar School, Noida	Yamuna Walk	45 students and teachers
December 2014	Indian School, Delhi	Yamuna Walk	60 students and teachers
February 2015	Pathways School, Noida	Yamuna Walk	50 students and teachers
February 2015	Pathways School, Noida	Forest Walk	50 students and teachers
February 2015	German School	Development walk	8 students and teachers

The programme has hence, had a direct impact on over 800 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

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
2013, 2014, 2016	German School	Modules on socio-developmental issues as part of the geography curriculum with Grade IX - X	100 students and teachers
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, had a direct impact on more than 425 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.

Empowerment and Enterprises

ME to WE

Pagdandi Adolescent Empowerment Programme

RATIONALE

Adolescent girls and boys are the most vulnerable section in a community, in terms of access to information, opportunity and resources – more so in marginalized communities. They are bound by patriarchal attitudes, beliefs and expectations and therefore are the last in the priority of empowerment. As a result of this, they face emotional, physical, sexual and financial discrimination, also leading sometimes to abuse.

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

The Me to We programme grew out of a need to understand and address these problems at an individual as well as at a collective level, proposing a strong element of employability being a medium of empowerment – alongside interventions of education and life skills. The intervention is a more focused approach towards skill development and employment preparedness. It aims at working with a group of 100 adolescent girls from Jagdamba Camp community, one of the biggest slums in South Delhi.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To create confident young adolescents in the community who have a sense of purpose and identity
- 2) To equip them with information, education and life skills needed to question and negotiate existing and constantly changing social realities while emerging as young leaders
- 3) To build and strengthen skills and capacities for employment, entrepreneurship and financial independence

APPROACH

The programme uses a participatory and process-oriented approach to achieve its objectives. It builds learning along a continuum leading the individual from an understanding of the self vis-à-vis the other i.e Me to We. It empowers the individual to transform from being the target of change in their community to being a vehicle of change for their community. The program also has a bottom up approach whereby acknowledging the existing social, cultural and economic realities of these girls and therefore making collaborative efforts to solve problems, instead of conflict and confrontation.

ACTIVITIES AND INTERVENTIONS

- Support to school
- Life-skills workshops
- Leadership development
- Skill development – soft skills, creative skills, vocational skills
- Entrepreneurship Training
- Practicum based approach to setting individual or collective enterprises

From June 2014-July 2015, 50 adolescents (20 boys and 30 girls) were engaged in a full fledged empowerment programme supported by Empower. The project focused on employability for these adolescents through active engagement on issues of identity, social efficacy and resourcefulness. 20 adolescents from the programme were placed as interns

and employees with different organizations across the city. The second cycle of Empower's Me to We is scheduled to begin in August 2015.

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. The women's development programme has also led to setting up of following women run social enterprises.

- **Lunchbox 17-** Lunchbox-17 or LB17, a social enterprise started by Swechha in collaboration with the women chefs of Jagdamba Camp aims to provide fresh, healthy and economical lunchbox. Along with delicious food to the customers, LB17 provides hope to the aspirations of the young chefs by offering them a viable livelihood option. Through their unique culinary skills, these women are learning to run a business enterprise and striving to take control of their destinies, serving as role models for their communities. LB 17 was started in May 2014 and employed 3 women from Jagdamba camp along with 2-3 youth for delivery and operations. LB 17 has been appreciated and covered by prominent media houses such as Hindustan Times, Deccan Herald and The Hindu. One of the LB17 story can be accessed at http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/a-tiffin-service-that-serves-a-special-social-story/article6352636.ece?utm_source=RSS_Feed&utm_medium=RSS&utm_campaign=RSS_Syndication
- **MOM-** Mom, as the name suggests means a Mother. In Hindi, the word means wax which is used to make candles. Mom is a candle making enterprise spearheaded by the women of Jagdamba Camp. MOM is an initiative to create awareness through upcycling and employment through engaging women from one of the biggest slum communities of South Delhi. The women have been trained to make different forms

of candles by the experts over a span of 3 months. Re-use of waste such as glasses cut out from old bottles, old wax, used accessories etc leads to creation of innovative and high quality products. Along with a viable livelihood option, the women see this as an opportunity to learn a new skill and earn respect amongst their family and community members. The candles being made by the women are marketed through Green the Gap physical and online store.

Working in enterprises such as LB17 and MOM gives these women the confidence to step out of their confines and become self sustainable. These enterprises have not merely employed them but also given them the courage to explore the entrepreneur within them.

With the vision to help them identify and acknowledge their potential, Swechha organized **Young Women Social Entrepreneurship Development Programme (YWSEDP)** supported by **British Council**.

The programme comprised of 4 trainings and 7 events that were conducted over a span of 2 months. A total of 100 women were mobilized and engaged in this programme. The training helped them gain confidence and acquire both knowledge and skill. Different activities helped them learn about the theoretical as well as the practical aspects of running an enterprise. They were introduced to skills such as candle making and jewellery making which commenced the journey of entrepreneurship for them. During the training, they also got an opportunity to directly interact with successful social entrepreneurs. YWSEDP left the women feeling more confident about themselves and their skills. While some of them continue to be an intrinsic part of Swechha through LB 17 and MOM, some other women are keen to start their own enterprises.

Meanwhile, Swechha as an organization continues to work with and through the children, youth and women of Jagdamba camp to inspire and create sustainable stories of change.

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. The details of a mega event organized in December 2014 are given below-

International Volunteer Day 2014

On December 14th, 2014 thousands of individuals from Delhi-NCR came together on the banks of River Yamuna to be a part of International Volunteer Day 2014 (IVD). IVD 2014 was organised by Swechha with support from UNDP, UNV and Ministry of Youth Affairs and sports. NDTV was the official media partner for the event.

IVD 2014 succeeded in bringing attention to the pitiable state of the lifeline of the city, River Yamuna through a Cyclothon, Shramdaan (manual clean up), NGO mela and a music concert on the banks of the river. An annual event of Swechha, IVD 2014 was a celebration of the spirit of Volunteerism and Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan started by Government of India.

Objectives-

International Volunteer Day 2014 aimed to and succeeded in achieving the following:

- **Inspire youth to volunteer:** Over 500 participants signed up to volunteer with different NGOs across Delhi-NCR through NGO mela.
- **Sensitise the youth and civil society on the issue of Yamuna and their impact on the environment:** Participants who were interviewed during and after the event expressed their disappointment with the state of the river, as well as their wish to see and contribute for its improvement.
- **Draw media coverage in order to reach a broader audience:** Over 100 million people were reached through print and online media, as well as TV and radio [see below for more details].

Mobilization-

Participants from different fields across the city were mobilized by youth volunteers through a series of activities. These activities were interactive, engaging and informative in nature-

- A series of pre-events [see below for more details];
- Online platforms (including Swechha affiliated Twitter, website and Facebook accounts, , e-mailers, event portals and blogs);
- Online, print and electronic media [see below for more details];
- Promotional material (posters, banners)

Pre -events-

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. These included:

- Mobilization and awareness drives and mini Cyclothons in University of Delhi (both North and South Campus). Over 150 students signed up to volunteer for the event during these drives.
- A team of 12 participated in Raahgiri Day in CP and engaged people through one-to-one conversations and group activities. Over 140 people signed up to be a part of the event.
- Over 2000 posters of the event were distributed across schools, colleges, cultural centres and public areas across Delhi-NCR to spread the word
- Online campaigning through Facebook, Twitter, event listings and stories. The event was also supported by prominent individuals such as Sushant Singh Rajput, Bollywood actor who tweeted about the event twice.
- Mobilization of individual participants through phone calls, emailers and newsletters.
- IVD 2014 was featured in online event portals such as Delhievents.com and was also covered in print by The Pioneer (More details below)
- Media partnerships with prominent houses such as NDTV and Youth Ki Awaaz, India's largest online community media platform for young people resulted in extensive promotion of the event.

The Event-

December 14th, 2014- International Volunteer Day 2014 was an extremely intensive 10 hour event that promoted **civic engagement, democratic participation and media advocacy**. This event gave an opportunity to individuals, groups and government bodies to come together on a common platform and create a positive social and environmental impact.

Given below is a schedule of the activities-

YAMUNA CYCLOTHON

Over 300 cyclists cycled along the banks of the river through Delhi University from 7 AM onwards. The cyclists covered a trail of about 18-20 Kms. The registration of cyclists started at 6 AM. While many people got their own cycles, Swechha provided cycles to about 200 individuals. Cyclothon was joined by school and college students, cycling clubs and individuals from corporate houses. The cyclists followed a route especially designed to allow them to see and smell the river.

YAMUNA CLEAN UP

Upon their return, the cyclists were joined by volunteers and participants from diverse backgrounds- social, economic and educational- who cleaned up a section of the banks of the Yamuna at Kudsia Ghat. Yamuna Shramdaan (clean up) which was joined by more than 3000 people was a simple yet effective way to illustrate to the citizenry their complicity in polluting the river, and ways by which they can reduce its abuse further. In a first of its kind event, IVD 2014 witnessed constant arrival of large groups for over 2 hours to volunteer for the river.

NGO MELA AND VOLUNTEER SIGN UP

IVD event provided an ideal space for volunteers from different backgrounds and interests to sign-up with various NGOs and civil society groups and work with them in future. Over 15 NGOs working on diverse issues of environment, education, gender and sexual and reproductive health etc had put up stalls on the venue. Both the volunteers and the NGOs saw this as an interesting opportunity to directly interact with each other and together work on issues of social and environmental development in future.

MUSIC ON THE BANKS- PERFORMANCES BY SWARATHMA, TRITHA AND MAME KHAN FEAT. THE TRIO

The afternoon of December 14th witnessed the magic of music on the banks as prominent bands and artists of the country performed. The music concert was an effective way to expand the outreach of the event as well as draw the attention of the youth to the issue of Yamuna in an engaging manner. Performances by Mame Khan (a leading folk singer of Rajasthan), Swarathma (a celebrated indo-western band of the country) and Tritha (an internationally acclaimed artist) added positive energy and momentum to the efforts of the volunteers who were engaged in the Cyclothon and the clean up.

ANNEXURE 1

Photo links-

https://www.facebook.com/SwechhaIndia/photos_stream

Media links-

<http://www.htsyndication.com/htsportal/article/Meet-the-river-givers/6251774>

(Also appeared in Print- Hindustan Times)

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/Delhis-young-pitch-in-to-clean-up-Yamuna-banks/articleshow/45517113.cms>

(Also appeared in Print- The Times of India)

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/delhi/volunteers-clean-up-yamuna-with-un-backing/18284.html>

<http://southasia.oneworld.net/news/wherestanding-on-the-yamunas-bank-in-delhi-kids-ask-2018where-is-the-river-2019#.Vj0FasBA>

<http://www.munsif.tv/articles/2014/12/15/delhi%E2%80%99s-young-pitch-clean-yamuna-banks>

<http://www.rupeerains.in/on-the-banks-of-yamuna-in-delhi-kids-ask-where-is-the-river/>

<http://southasia.oneworld.net/manage-site/photo-story/delhi-girls-clean-up-yamuna2019s-kudsia-wharf>

<https://littleblackbookdelhi.com/lunchbox-17-home-delivery-meals/>

<http://www.platform-mag.com/lifestyle/delhi-dabbawaalas.html?para=2>

<http://www.youthkiawaaz.com/2014/06/lb-17-delivers-tiffin-livelihood-women-marginalized-communities/>

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/a-tiffin-service-that-serves-a-special-social-story/article6352636.ece>