



an ABHYAS TRUST initiative

# **POWER OF SEEING : THE URBAN RESPONSE**



**ABHYAS TRUST**

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# POWER OF SEEING : **THE URBAN RESPONSE**

**POWER OF SEEING : The Urban Response**  
is about connecting citizens – children, youth and adults – to

- a) their immediate urban environment,
- b) with each other, and
- c) the systems that make our cities functional,

with the aim for us to come together and collectively re-envision a body-centric city with sustainable systems that are organized keeping human convenience, safety and dignity at the center.



# POWER OF SEEING : **THE URBAN RESPONSE**

POWER OF SEEING is about taking responsibility and not pointing fingers



# POWER OF SEEING : **THE URBAN RESPONSE**

## **OUR BELIEFS**

- We ordinary citizens might not be able to take care of the denuding forests, but **we certainly can assure the health of the tree in front of our house.**
- We might not be able to help our rivers dying of water pollution, but **we certainly can take care of what goes into our drains, our bins, and the storm drains outside our house.**
- If we cannot take care of the depleting wildlife, **we can easily take responsibility for the stray animals in our lanes.**
- We might not be able to fight the overwhelming chaos in our streets but **we can choose to tenaciously attend upon ONE street element at a time in our neighbourhoods.**

# POWER OF SEEING : THE URBAN RESPONSE

## OUR MOTTO

ONE street element at a time,  
ONE street corner at a time,  
we hope to CHANGE OUR CITIES FOR THE BETTER!

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

**'Power of Seeing' facilitates active seeing + documentation of adopted street elements + organizing of collected information to mobilise CHANGE.**

*Active Seeing is a methodically facilitated exercise in sustained-observation of an adopted street element over a period of time*

# OUR PRIMARY OBSERVATIONS



**Our insides don't match our outsides**



**We do not look at or identify with the outside**



**We do not consider the human body as central point of reference when designing and planning our cities**

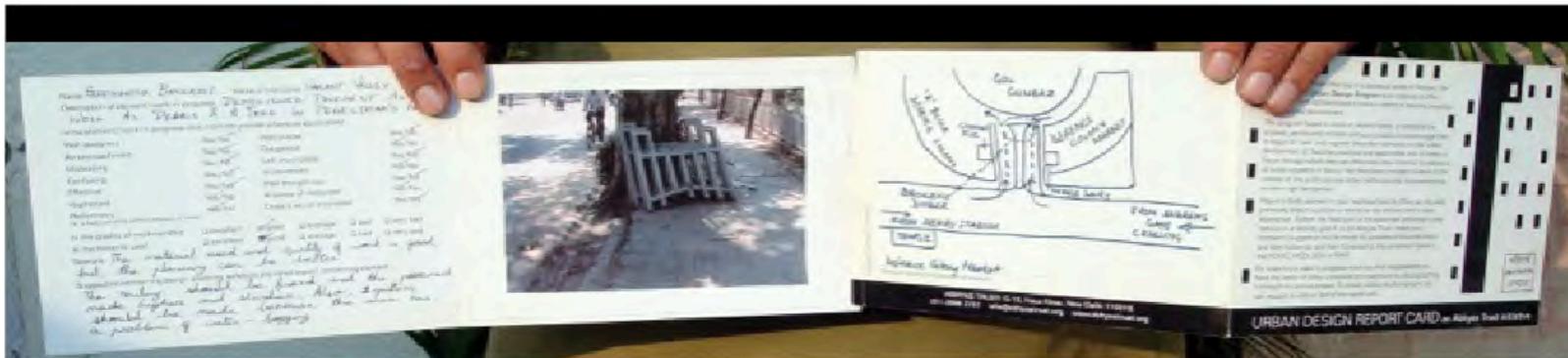
## OUR TWO PRONGED FOCUS : INSIDE / OUTSIDE

The Project is designed to educate, sensitize and facilitate children, youth & adults to:



- a. make responsible choices at home
- b. stay proactively connected to the outside through the exercise of active seeing and detailed observation

# THE POWER OF SEEING FORMULA



**SEE + DOCUMENT + ORGANISE = CHANGE**

The **Power of Seeing** Project is divided into three parts:

1. **SEE:** The first step is about sensitizing the young to begin to actively see and observe their environment and then choose and adopt one street element from their immediate environment
2. **DOCUMENT:** The second step involves methodically facilitating them to record a detailed written and pictorial case history of this chosen element, and
3. **ORGANIZE:** The third helps them to create a network across schools and localities to first share, compare and analyse their case histories and detect underlying patterns that are repeated all over the city and maybe across the country, and then to organize themselves to lobby for **CHANGE**.

## SAMPLE OF DOCUMENTATION : REPORTING ELEMENTS

Reporting one-of element that are dangerous and need to be corrected



A tree being strangled due to paving of ground very close around the base of the trunk leaving no room for air or water.

# SAMPLE OF DOCUMENTATION: CASE STUDY OF ONE MANHOLE





1 January 2006





1 February 2006





1 March 2006





1 April 2006





2 June 2006



2006 6 2



1 October 2006





1 November 2006





1 January 2007



2 March 2007





## 2 April 2007 : Submitted an RTI application

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AZ01076117      **Form 68 A**      AZ      1076117

रसीद नं. / Receipt No. : 3412842      दिनांक / Date : 02/04/2007

आवेदक संदर्भ सं. / Applicant's Ref. No. : 1058296      विभाग / Department : GENERAL

आवेदक / Applicant's Name : MR NAVTEJ S JOHAR      क्षेत्र / Zone : South Zone

पता / Address : ABHYAS TRUST, G-13, HAUZ KHAS, NEW DELHI, 11

Below mentioned amount received, will be credited to the concerned accounts :

लेखाशीर्ष / Head of A/c.	विषय / Particulars	राशि / Amount
	<b>Rite To Information Act</b>	
	<b>Rupees Ten only</b>	

राशि (शब्दों में) / Amount (in words) :      कुल / Total :

चैक/डी.डी.नं. / Cheque/DD No. :      बैंक / Bank :      शाखा / Branch :

**ADHOC collection:**  
**(RTI) RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT**

★ कम्प्यूटरीकृत रसीद, हस्ताक्षर आवश्यक नहीं। This is a computerised receipt, does not require authorised signature.  
★ चैक भुगतान स्वीकृत होने की स्थिति में। Cheques subject to realisation/authorisation.



16 July 2007





25 November 2007





12 December 2007





12 January 2008





15 January 2008





12 January 2008





18 March 2008



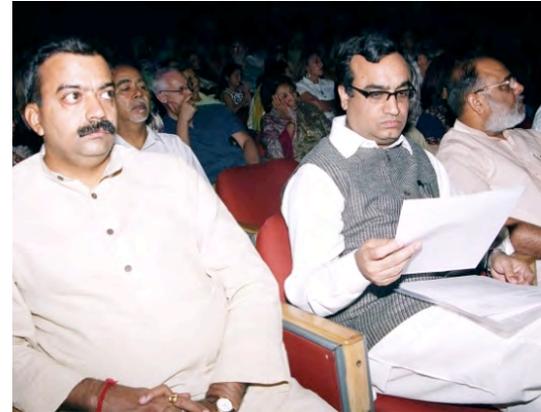


18 March 2008





# THE POWER OF SEEING: ACHIEVEMENTS



*Students as advocates of better urban design*

**HT Correspondent**  
New Delhi, April 20

"WE AS citizens can change the built environment around us by demanding better public facilities instead of turning a blind eye to the open manholes and broken footpaths."

This was the message from school students working under a urban design initiative started by well-known Bharatnatyam dancer and yoga expert Navtej Johar.

On occasion of the function to mark completion of one year of the Abhyas Trust, Union minister of state for urban development Ajay Maken said sensitising school students to their environment would go a long way in improving the cityscape.

"The students who will go on to become future engineers, architects and designers will be sensitive to the needs of the citizens. Sensitising students and citizens is the first step towards improving our public spaces," Maken said.

He said that it was not just the municipal authorities who are responsible for shoddy footpaths and sewers that dot the city. Citizens too are responsible when

**SANIL SAXENA/HT**  
Navtej Johar (left) and members of his troupe performing yoga dance at the function at India Habitat Centre.

his troupe and culminated with a presentation on urban design initiative.

Under the programme, students of the St. Mary's school, St. Thomas school and Vasanti Valley School will document broken pavements and manholes in their vicinity and the neglect shown by the civic agencies in fixing them.



# PROPOSED ACTION PLAN WITH CHILDREN : THE DOORS PROJECT - YEAR 1

## ACTIVITIES

## OUTCOME

1. Create interactive website and initiate social media

1. Interactive website
2. Online presence

2. Sensitizing and solution-based workshops conducted by experts (Design, Urban Planners, Policy Makers, Journalists, Change Makers etc.)

1. Transcript & Video document of all presentations and interaction of children with experts
2. A collection of creative solution-finding exercises, educational tools, toys & methodologies

3. Inter-school exchange of process, information, data and documentation

1. In-school and inter-school exhibitions & contests
2. A compilation of comparative studies, outcome and analysis based on information gathered by all schools

4. Mobilize children from across schools to create a network advocating common civic concerns

1. Sustainable forums of connecting like-minded students from various schools
2. An active network of young change agents

5. Generate informed writing, research & editorial based on the experience & findings of the project

1. A quarterly magazine, newsletter, and publications
2. Archives

6. Ideate, design and produce a motivational campaign

The Change Makers Campaign

7. Partner with municipal agencies

A directory of public amenities hot-line numbers

## ANNUAL FUND RAISING EVENT :

Seminars, talks, scholarships, performance-spectacle, exhibition, films, and launch of the Change Makers Campaign

# PROPOSED ACTION PLAN WITH CHILDREN :

## THE DOORS PROJECT - YEAR 2

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME
Continue workshops & related activities in existing & more schools	A deeper commitment & wider network of young change makers.
Assimilate, organize & edit video footage of workshops, excersies, results & solutions of year 1	Make 8 educational films
Conduct trial workshops with students to test educational tools, toys & methodologies.	Second draft of educational tools, toys & methodologies
Compile written & pictorial material to form a workbook cum manual for schools, comprising of articles, reports, solutions, methods, and hands-on exercises to find creative solutions	First draft of workbook to be included in school curriculum by end of year
Engage team of creative educationalists & designers to design educational tools & methodologies	Ready-for-production designs & artwork of educational tools & methodologies
Conduct workshops with the artistic community to create public art based on the project	10 installations / artwork in public spaces across the city
Connect with NGOs & other change makers worldwide in the field of education, environment & active citizenship	Network & directory of national & international organizations / individuals committed to the cause of sane & safe cities
<b>ANNUAL FUND RAISING EVENT :</b>	
Seminars, talks, scholarships, performance-spectacle, exhibition, films, public art tour, and launch the prototypes of educational tools, toys & methodologies	

# PROPOSED ACTION PLAN WITH CHILDREN : THE DOORS PROJECT - YEAR 3

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME
Continue workshops & related activities in existing & more schools	A formalized network of young change makers: connected, organized & proactive
Finalizing & production of the complete Educational Package: films, workbook, tools, toys, methodologies	A complete Educational Package ready to be included in the school curriculum
Conduct sensitizing workshops with school teachers & parents, equipping them to effectively use the devised tools & methodologies	A manual of guidelines for using educational tools & methodologies
Create, seek sponsorship & implement a promotional campaign for the Educational Package	Promotional Campaign: in print, TV, social media & outdoor advertising
Establish connection, lobby and partner with government educational bodies, such as NCERT & Ministry of Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. A manuscript documenting the entire process of the project</li><li>2. Inclusion of Educational Package in school curriculum</li></ol>
ANNUAL GALA EVENT for the Launch of the Educational Package: Seminars, talks, scholarships, performance-spectacle, exhibition, films, and launch of Educational Package in the curriculum	

# POS WITH CHILDREN : THE DOORS PROJECT

## **HOMEWORK ROOMS FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED**

**The Homework Rooms are designed for the underprivileged with the aim to**

- Facilitate their basic education in a fun and creative way,
- Inculcate the importance of design in their daily lives, and
- Offer them the dignity of organized spaces and methods of learning.

# PROPOSED ACTION PLAN WITH CHILDREN : HOMEWORK ROOMS FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED **3 YEAR PLAN**

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME
Recruit educationalists, facilitators & teacher and organize sensitizing workshops with the Homework Room team	A team of sensitized & equipped facilitators, teachers and assistants to independently run the Homework Rooms
Partner with NGO's & organizations working towards innovative & creative solutions in education, particularly, Science, Math & English	A working partnership & support of experts & specialists
Purchase & collect effective inquiry-based educational tools devised by organization worldwide.	A collection of effective educational tools for primary, middle and high school children
Partner with 5 Schools for setting up Homework rooms after hours.	5 operative Homework Rooms in different vicinities of the Capital
Document, review & revise the applied educational tools & methodologies & their outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A well detailed report of the project</li> <li>2. A set of refined educational tools &amp; methodologies for the first generation literate</li> </ol>
Invite experts to introduce design & creative solutions to further enhance the affectivity of our system	A collection of design and solution oriented educational products
<p>3 ANNUAL FUND RAISING EVENTS at the end of each year :</p> <p>Seminars, talks, scholarships, exhibition, and launch of the educational products for the first generation literate.</p>	

# PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

## COMMUNITY : YEAR 1

### Focus : Connecting to create network

1. Research, design and create an interactive website
2. Create accounts and initiate networking through Social media
3. Create the Power of Seeing Campaign to bring awareness about active citizenship
4. Involve student bodies in colleges and institutions
  - a) Debates and seminars
  - b) Poster competitions
  - c) Facilitate drives, e.g. Cleanliness and Waste Management
  - d) Street plays
  - e) Organize network of college students

# PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

## COMMUNITY : YEAR 1

5. Engage with the community through
  - a) Posters
  - b) Newsletters (print and online)
  - c) Videos
  - d) 360 degree campaign
6. Hold online contests
7. Tie up with NGOs and other citizen group initiatives
8. Engage with RWAs of finding practical and effective solutions
9. Engage neighbourhoods to become active in the upkeep of the colony
10. Start a Power of Seeing Newsletter
11. Create media partnerships to further the campaign
12. Manufacture, promote and retail Power of Seeing merchandise through fairs, online platforms, stalls etc.

# PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

## COMMUNITY : YEAR 2

### Focus : Engaging

1. Continue engaging more citizens through our existing online platforms
2. Colleges
  - a) Widen the network of college student bodies and engage them to further advocate the cause by involving more colleges
  - b) Make them agents of change to come out on to the streets and physically take care of the city
  - c) Facilitate to organize college students to start drives: cleanliness, waste-management, road safety etc.
  - d) Document the involvement of the college students
  - e) Work with the College of Art, Design and Architecture to focus on special urban design/living assignments and projects

# PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

## COMMUNITY : YEAR 2

3. Involve creative professions for making Public Art
4. Make short visual stories on urban elements to inform and motivate the community
5. Facilitate gathering and organizing of data collected by the community
6. Make a documentary film on the urban response: active citizenship
7. Organize a Community March and Events

# PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

## COMMUNITY : YEAR 3

### Focus : Consolidating & Organizing

1. Consolidating efforts and results of first two years
2. Colleges/Youth
  - a) Continue in widening the network of college students
  - b) Circulate the documented work of the college students towards the betterment of the city
  - c) Continue with the college students' drives
  - d) Continue to work with professional colleges and organize exhibition of selective creative work made by students

# PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

## COMMUNITY : YEAR 3

3. Neighborhoods
  - a) Create a reference manual and policy rule book for efficient smooth running of colonies
  - b) Work on a selected colony with the community and the RWAs in order to create an efficient colony prototype to be followed in all colonies of the city
  - c) Creating a prototype to be replicated in other communities
    - i. For other RWAs
    - ii. For more colleges
    - iii. For other cities and towns
4. Creating online maps of urban-scapes
  - a) Incorporating mapping into our existing website
  - b) Design and implement “Phone App”
5. Hold a BIGGER March

## PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

### AUTHORITIES : YEAR 1

1. Create a directory of concerned municipal agencies and their heads, contacts, addresses etc.
2. Initiate dialogue with them with proposal to become partners
3. Publicize government initiatives to better the city
4. Circulate information and phone numbers of nodal municipal agencies
5. Hold seminars
6. Create active interface between school children and the authorities
7. Create forums of connecting authorities with the community and the school children

## PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

### AUTHORITIES : YEAR 2

1. Involve the authorities in the Public Art initiative
2. Create active interface between school children and the community, particularly RWAs.
3. Create systems of sharing all documentation with the authorities
4. Propose to become consultants for the authorities
5. Engage the authorities in making the documentary film on The Urban Response: Active Citizenship
6. Seeking permissions for public art, events and marches

## PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

### AUTHORITIES : YEAR 3

1. Solicit permanent authorities representation in project
2. Make a informative and motivational documentary film highlighting “heroes” amongst the authorities
3. Share created prototypes with the authorities
4. Allowing the authorities a direct link to the Urban-Scapes map
5. Sensitizing workshops with teachers, principals, community heads, municipal heads, as their participation is critical in taking the project forward, resulting in three educational films for institution heads.

# PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

## COMMON ACTIVITIES

1. Newsletter
2. Quarterly Magazine
3. Website
4. Social Media
5. Exhibitions
6. Merchandise
7. POS Campaign
8. Seminars and Forums
9. Annual Events
10. Engage Media partners

# PROPOSED ACTION PLAN : **CHANGE MAKERS CAMPAIGN**



# PROPOSED ACTION PLAN : CHANGE MAKERS CAMPAIGN





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# **POWER OF SEEING : THE URBAN RESPONSE**