

FROM CARS TO CYCLES - THE PERFECT CHOICE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This project encourages and engages people through cycle days and open street events to appreciate and use non-motorised transport.

Keywords:
Car Free Day, Open Street Events, Cycle Day, Sustainable Mobility, Air Pollution

Project Partner:
Evangelical Social Action Forum (ESAF)

Location: Bangalore and ,
Karnataka, Thrissur in Kerala,
India

Duration: 10/2013 - ongoing

Target Issue and Target Group

According to the World Health Organization, more than seven million premature deaths occur every year due to air pollution, three million of which are due to outdoor air quality. India has four of the ten cities in the world with the worst air pollution. As India grapples with the growing number of vehicles and the pollution and other associated troubles they create, many cities have started thinking about ways to reduce the pollution level. In Bangalore and Kerala we introduced Cycle Days and Open Street Events to engage with the local community and to show residents the advantages of sustainable transport.



To date more than 130 Cycle Days have been held, and each event welcomes on average 1000 participants.

Strategies Employed within Project

Campaigns - Cycle Day Campaign, Open Street Events and Car Free Days.

Awareness and publicity through print and social media.

Building partnerships, capacity building with stakeholders, and identifying core community partners.

Project Reach


The project engaged 25 neighbourhoods in Bangalore and Kerala and reached tens of thousands of people since October 2013.


- Cycle Days – we organized 134 cycle days with an average 1,000 people in attendance.
- Open street events – we organized two open street events with 12,000 people in attendance.
- Car Free Day in Kerala – we organized one event with 2000 people in attendance.



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Preliminary Results

- Many people have started cycling again and after the event they continue using bicycles for shorter trips.
- The number of people using cycles for short errands has increased. According to local bicycle vendors the sale of bicycles has increased after the Cycle Day events.
- Increase in number of people/communities who approach Cycle Day organisers to organise Cycle Days in different neighbourhoods.
- The monthly event (last Sunday of the month) has become a weekly event with 25 neighbourhood partners who organise cycle days in their locality.
- Three communities have scaled up their event and have succeeded in getting government departments to undertake research on traffic calming measures and NMT infrastructure in the community.
- Two communities have started working through educational institutions to encourage the younger generation to walk and cycle to school.
- Open street events have led to many more new government departments to join hands to promote the concept to other cities as well.
- The perception survey done during open street events was used to allocate budget for many departments to organise similar events in other parts of the state.
- Print and online media covering of the event has raised awareness among the general population.

Impact

- Increase in social interaction among the community members.
- Increase in number of people being physically active.
- Increase in the number of active transportation initiatives organized by the government.
- The pollution level in each neighbourhood has declined at least one day a week.
- Increased economic contribution of bicycles.

Take-away Messages from the Project:

- Engaging government departments from the beginning of projects is crucial for long-term partnerships.
- Raising awareness for community members through door-to-door outreach along with adequate media publicity is required for reaching the community in large numbers.
- Engaging local businesses and activity partners in specific neighbourhood cycle day events helps to strengthen partnerships and long-term collaboration.
- Creating a critical mass is essential for any infrastructure projects to be initiated/implemented by government departments.


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