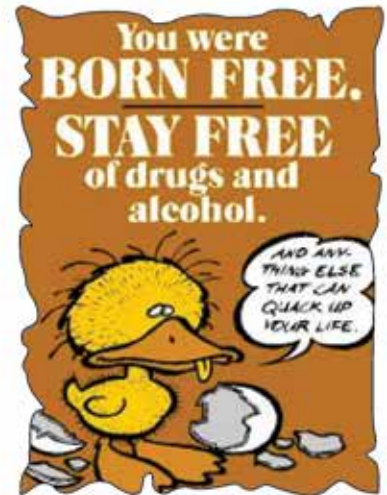




Volunteer  
for a   
Better India



United We March ~ A National Youth Summit & Mass Media Grand Finale

2nd - 3rd February 2013, Delhi





H.H. Sri Sri Ravishankar  
Founder  
The Art of Living

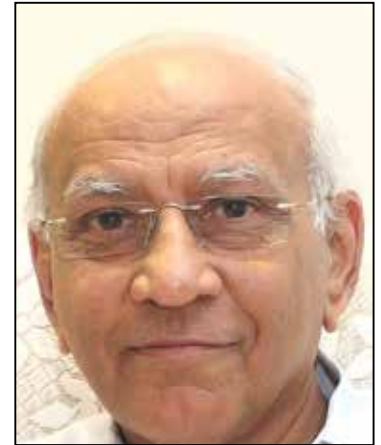
# Contents

1.	Executive Summary	4
2.	Partner's Letters of Support	6
3.	Conception to Manifestation ~ Stages of Development	16
	▲ All partner meetings	16
	▲ Pre-event curtain raiser	16
	▲ Main events	16
	United We March ~ A National Youth Summit	17
	Background	17
	Plenary session details	17
	Breakaway workshops details	21
	Partners meeting with His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar	
	My Acts	25
	Feedback from interviews of dignitaries/participants	29
	Mass Media Grand Finale	30
	Background	30
	Press meet	30
	Grand finale highlights	31
	Oath ceremony	42
	Art of Living & UNICEF India's partnership launch	43
4.	Beyond the Event	43
	▲ Participants feedback	43
	▲ Media coverage	48
	▲ Way forward ~ state youth summits	50
5.	Annexure	
	▲ 'My Acts'	51
	▲ Sample FAQs & fact sheets from the breakaway workshop	51
	▲ The organizing team	58
	▲ List of dignitaries	59
	▲ Summit agenda	60
6.	Moments Relived	61

## Executive Summary

As an independent developing nation, a republic for more than half a century, India has been engaged in successful efforts to attain development and growth in various areas.

However, there are many areas in which the country has been experiencing an array of social challenges such as corruption, safety of girls, declining child sex ratio and SRH, drugs & alcohol abuse, HIV/AIDS, MDGs and rural entrepreneurship. Some of these issues have their roots in our colonial past whilst others related to demographic changes, socio-political conditions and cultural processes.



*Yezdi Batliwala*

70% of India's population is below the age of 35 years! Thus India has the largest youth population in the world that is poised to increase further in the coming decade. Being the youngest nation with a demographic dividend appearing to be a reality, it is indeed vital to utilize this demographic dividend and channelize the youth and their creative energies for nation-building. This pool of youth population needs to be engaged in the mainstream development of India.

The Youth have been accorded attention since inception of the planning process, but the approach appears to have been sectoral, incremental in nature and often overlapping, rather than anchored on a comprehensive strategy. All these point to the need for a focused strategy in a multi-sectoral, multi-dimensional and integrated manner. It makes a compulsive case for taking bold new steps.

India needs inspiring and empowering leadership – at all levels – to transform the current response of the growing concerns of the country, giving momentum to new, fresh and effective approaches to tackle these critical concerns and take definitive action steps, and become inspiring role models. Leaders are needed who model a strong, proactive, collaborative and compassionate response.

Efforts have been made in the past to rekindle the spirit of patriotism amongst the countrymen and bring back India's lost glory. Now it is time that we, the citizens, volunteer to shoulder responsibilities and be a part of the solution. Volunteering is a passion kindled by "humanness". It is action on the ground.

Volunteer for Better India (VBI) call for every citizen to make things better and to give a better society to the coming generation. VBI is a call to give one hour of your precious time to address things that you feel need to be set right. It is the call of the hour not to blame our society, but to plunge into action.

VBI is a beginning of a realization, deep within all of us that our nation and its pride are of utmost importance to each one of its citizens.

VBI is symbolized by its strength which portrays India as a nation stimulated by unparalleled growth driven by young and fresh ideas and spearheading a revolution that is going to set examples for generations to come. It offers a platform to every Indian to channelize talents, voice opinions and emerge as a leader, and moreover a responsible citizen.

## Volunteer for Better India - Our Partners

VBI has partnered with expert agencies such as Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Heroes Project, International Network of Religious Leaders Living with HIV & AIDS (INERELA+), Indian Interfaith Coalition on HIV & AIDS (IICA), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Family Planning Association of India (FPA India), National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre (NDDTC, AIMS), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Millennium Campaign (UNMC), The

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Global Compact Network India (UNGCN) & DRISHTEE on HIV and AIDS, the Declining Child Sex-Ratio, Sexual - Reproductive Health and Rights, Drugs and Alcohol, Corruption, Millennium Development Goals, Safety for Girls and Entrepreneurial Opportunities.

## Volunteer for Better India - Partnership Rationale

Founded in 1981 by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, The Art of Living is a Not-for-Profit, Volunteer based, Educational and Humanitarian NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation) engaged in stress-management and service initiatives. The organization operates globally in 152 countries.

The organisation's programs are guided by Sri Sri's philosophy of peace: "Unless we have a stress-free mind and a violence-free society, we cannot achieve World Peace." To help individuals get rid of stress and experience inner peace, The Art of Living offers stress-elimination programs which include breathing techniques, meditation and yoga.

Through a unique system of specialised agencies with global reach, the UN system as a whole not only coordinates, but also plays an integral operational role in emergency relief efforts, working in close collaboration with national governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the private sector, and affected populations on a plethora of social development issues.

The United Nations works to save lives and improve the economic and social condition of people around the world.

*The Art of Living has the volunteer force and an undying passion to serve whilst our partner agencies have the technical expertise on various issues. The partnerships under VBI is a humble joint attempt to reach out to masses on various issues in the most technically correct and appropriate manner.*

Under the specific collaboration of The Art of Living with expert agencies viz.: UNAIDS, HEROES Project, INERELA+, IICA, UNFPA, FPA India, NDDTC-AIIMS, UNODC, UNMC, UNICEF, UNGCN & DRISHTEE, on the above stated issues, two events were successfully held in the capital city of New Delhi:

- ▲ **National Youth Summit – "United We March" on Feb 02 2013 hosted by Delhi Technological University**
- ▲ **Mass Media Grand Finale event on Feb 03 held at Ramlila Maidan grounds.**

This report is a humble effort to capture the various events, starting from pre event to the post event impact under the larger aegis of Volunteer for Better India, Delhi, that paved the way across the nation for like wise initiatives. The various sections in this report will unfurl the mark of the Volunteer for Better India.

I wish to congratulate all our esteemed partners as well as thousands of volunteers from The Art of Living and various stake holders that could make this possible.

In service



Yezdi Batliwala

Chairman

Vyakti Vikas Kendra, India

## Partner's Letters of Support



**UNODC**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

*Statement by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Regional Office for South Asia, Representative Ms Cristina Albertin on 'Volunteer for a Better India' Campaign*



*Released on: January 16, 2013*

In recent times, all over the world societies have become more aware about the impact that corruption has on their lives. In particular the youth has been increasingly raising their voice questioning corrupt practices and at the same time asking questions, on what they can do themselves to fight corruption in their day to day lives and thus contribute to a better society.

There is no doubt that standing up to corruption is a daunting task which challenges one's patience and goodwill. Nevertheless, there is no other way to counteract and eventually eradicate corruption than through a conscious and vigilant mindset and responsible action of the civil society, to which each and every citizen belongs.

It is the duty of each one of us to be aware, to sensitize and educate ourselves and our community about all the direct and indirect forms and impact of corruption and to take action when we see corruption happening. Each of us must also be aware of and comply with the laws regarding corrupt practices that exist in our country.

Acting against corruption begins also at an individual level. It means making the right choice, even if it comes at a cost. If you are waiting for your turn in line and you do not bribe your way to the front of the queue, you have fought and won a small battle against corruption. You become a model for others who - as yourself - believe that a change is possible. It might seem a small act maybe even perceived as a sacrifice, but it is a building block to the long-term vision of a corruption-free society.

We need to move towards a future where corruption is not allowed to flourish and eat away the badly needed resources for development, growth, justice and safety. No country in the world can yet claim to be free of corruption, but we can work towards creating a society that is vigilant, responsive and that adopts a zero tolerance towards it.



Cristina Albertin  
Representative



Your Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar ji,

We take pride in partnering with you in the programme “ Volunteer for A Better India”. With this initiative, we are embarking on preparing thousands of dedicated youths as ‘volunteer for A better India’. Let us hope that with their full strength, involvement and support we would be able to make India vibrant, healthy and corruption-free. Let us rejoice on this great occasion.

The combined strength of youth is a valuable asset for India’s development. The responsibility for change, progress and innovation often lies on them. It is sad that we often forget to understand this perspective correctly. We need to motivate our youth and enthuse them to be responsible citizens, and set goals for them to achieve national priorities. If we do not do this, we are afraid, we will be failing in our duties towards our nation. The youth have a major role to play in the nation building process.

On this very occasion, I take this opportunity to give a clarion call to all concerned to make sexual and reproductive health services youth-friendly and gender-sensitive. The young people have the right to seek services that are youth friendly and gender sensitive. It should take into account the rights of young people to confidentiality, respect, and informed consent, while considering the rights and responsibilities of parents. It should be so framed to be gender sensitive and should take into account the specific pressures, needs and preferences of girls and young women.

Youth-friendly and gender-sensitive approaches can make a lot of difference in their lives. They are essential for increasing the access to such services. This approach can help in delaying the initiation of sexual intercourse among the sexually active young people and can also lead to increased abstinence from sex and in the use of condoms.

When the services are unfriendly towards youth and gender-insensitive, they are either unable to use them or remain inaccessible to such services. It should be well remembered that such services are also needed to promote international commitments and statements on youth-friendly and gender-sensitive sexual and reproductive health services.

It is also essential that we involve the youth in a more wider way in bringing about changes in the attitude of community towards women. We feel that here again the youth of India can play a pivotal role. We also feel that our action would be incomplete if the youth of India is not involved in it.

With best wishes for the success of the programme,



Vishwanath Koliwad  
(Secretary General)



Statement by United Nations Population Fund, Representative, India and Bhutan  
Ms. Frederika Meijer, on 'Volunteer for a Better India' Campaign

*Released on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2013*

Today we stand at the cross roads of time. The global challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as well as those confronting India are unprecedented- both in magnitude and complexity. Among the many travails facing India, gender discrimination is one that is deeply entrenched in society. The history of gender prejudice is steeped in patriarchy and manifested in multiple ways in everyday life. It is seen in subjugation at homes as well as harassment on the streets. It is as eminent in malpractices of gender-biased sex selection and gender-based violence as it is evident through dowry, child marriage and 'honor' killings. The numbers tell the story. The 1991 Census reported a child sex ratio of 945 girls per 1000 boys. This declined to 927 during 2001 and stands at 914 as per the 2011 Census. Personal and public spaces are replete with instances of a society – unequal.

Gender discrimination thrives on a culture of acceptance and apathy. It is time to break the silence. It is time to challenge gender stereotypes and redefine existing norms. Atrocities against girls and women must be denounced in words and action, by society as well as the establishment. Eliminating gender bias involves social, legal, developmental, political, and administrative measures.

Gender is after all a social construct. The roles that men and women play in society are not biologically determined -- they are socially determined, changing and changeable. Society has much to offer to strengthen equality or adversely affect it. Aspirations must not be subsumed by traditional relations. It is as much a matter of choice as it is that of right. Freedom to access opportunities and pursue dreams must be claimed by young girls and young boys - alike. Popular culture must reinforce these messages.

Our take today will determine the contours of tomorrow. This freedom of choice lends itself to a certain responsibility. 'Volunteer for a better India' is a clear call to action to create a world -where choices are not marred by compulsion; volunteerism not subsumed by apathy; and where the potential of a young person is not contained but fulfilled. It must be remembered that gender equality is first and foremost a human right that constitutes the cornerstone of development. An unequal culture prevents society from reaching its full potential.

India is heading towards becoming the youngest nation. This cohort must be empowered to realize their entitlements and take responsible decisions. As young India takes centre stage in global leadership it is time to rekindle the age old tradition of giving and serving. It is time for every young person to introspect and find an answer to what one can offer to society rather than expecting from it. It is time to initiate inconvenient conversations- in personal and public spaces. It is time to transcend words. It is time to create a world of equals.

Frederika Meijer  
Representative, India and Bhutan,  
United Nations Population Fund





## Global Compact Network India



Statement by UN Global Compact Network India, Executive Director, Pooran Chandra Pandey, on  
'Volunteer for a Better India', Campaign

Released on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2013,

It has been widely recognised that 21<sup>st</sup> century's development agenda will emphasise on the issues of sustainability and inclusive growth. Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21 recognise that issues involving sustainable development are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens. However, the facilitation of this development will only be possible when all the crucial sectors including society and economy shall come together.

The drivers for this sustainable development will be characterised with new fangled innovations, encouraging social entrepreneurship, enhancing green technologies, and most importantly generating information and public awareness widely among people to involve them in participatory and green governance. India is already on this path; today we are witnessing that the government can only achieve the development targets through strong cooperation and participation of multi stakeholders. In this respect, Global Compact Network India (GCNI), the Indian arm of UNGC and a global a platform for businesses, civil organizations, public sectors aids in aligning stakeholders' practices towards the Ten Universally accepted principles of UNGC in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti – Corruption.

The Indian model of entrepreneurship is enshrined in the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi that led to the establishment of a strong *village enterprise* and the set up of cottage industries. The '*charkha*' and '*khaadi*' were not merely by - products of this village economy, but emerged as strong symbols of self reliance and sustainability overtime. Similarly, the informal economy of India is the largest unorganized sectors in the country, consisting of unincorporated private enterprises owned by individuals or households engaged in the sale and production of goods and services.

The informal sector is also one of the largest enterprises in India with more than 86% of the workers comprising the urban workforce and more than 70% prevalent in rural areas. The significant aspect in the context of entrepreneurship lies in knowing that these informal workers are one of the most visible sustainable entrepreneurs operating around in our cities. Yet both the above sectors namely rural and urban are faced with many challenges and an urgent attention towards technical advancement such as in waste management, uplifting their existing working conditions, offering design solutions, enhancing managerial, sale skills and providing education to them and to their families are urgently required.

At GCNI, we realise that the formal sector of our country has a lot to offer to the informal sector as together with strong commitments, new innovative technologies responsible business practices, it can aid in the generation of new age entrepreneurs in the country, leading towards a self reliant and a sustainable culture and society. It is in this regard that over time, GCNI and its partner companies have involved themselves in supporting sustainable entrepreneurs, channelizing their skills through the aid of experts and advisors in the formal sectors.

Our message to the young students, budding techies and eventually future business entrepreneurs, pledged to *Volunteer for a Better India*, is that by offering innovative ideas and technical expertise in social sustainable realms, they are not only extending their support but more crucially empowering the largest unorganized and marginalised sections of India in a meaningful manner.

It is only in the hands of the youth today, who can perhaps better understand, as to what aspects of a "Better India" they aspire to achieve for the posterity.



Pooran Chandra Pandey  
Executive Director  
Global Compact Network India

Mailing Address : SCOPE Complex, Core-5, 6th Floor (UNGC Office), Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003 (India)  
Phone : 011-24306487, Telefax : 011-24368269 E-mail : gcsociety@gmail.com, gcniindia@gmail.com  
Please visit us at : [www.globalcompactindia.org](http://www.globalcompactindia.org)



**Statement by UNICEF Representative for India, Louis-Georges Arsenault  
for Volunteer for a Better India Campaign**

India has a huge advantage of being a 'young nation' with adolescents accounting for a quarter of the country's population. Adolescents hold the key to India's future and its social and economic progress. If provided with an enabling and nurturing environment and the space for participation, they hold the key to break the country out of the vicious cycle of poverty and inequity.

As India's adolescents and young people stand at crossroads between childhood and adulthood, so does the nation. The country stands between the crossroads of either nurturing young people's potential to transform society or losing out on a generation that can bring about change.

Adolescence is an age of vulnerability. It is during adolescence that inequity and poverty often manifest starkly: children who are marginalized or poor are less likely to transition to secondary education and are more likely to experience violence, abuse and exploitation. One of the biggest challenges facing the country is the social norms related with young girls and women. Given the traditional mind-sets on the issue of gender, women have lower socio economic status, often have little value and are subjected to gender based violence. This needs to change. We need to ensure that girls and women become equal stakeholders in society and feel valued and safe. We also need to ensure that our young people have safe spaces for getting together in communities and participating in decision making. India's progress will depend on our ability to harness the potential of the country's young people.

Due to investments in early childhood, the lives of many young children have been saved and in many cases improved significantly through access to primary education, proper nutrition, hygiene, sanitation, safe water and critical vaccines and medicines. We cannot risk losing on gains with these children as they become adolescents, and must complement improvements for young children with stronger investments and actions in support of adolescents' health, education, protection and participation.

The Government of India has already recognized the importance of advancing policies and programmes for adolescent girls. The initiation of the SABLA scheme, providing a holistic package of services for adolescent girls, is a huge step forward.

All of us have a collective responsibility in ensuring that adolescence and youth becomes an age of opportunity for the nation. We need to come together and invest in adolescents and young people by creating a supportive environment for adolescents, and fostering forums for youth participation. Fulfilling our commitments to children and young people, as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other human rights instruments is the appropriate way ahead. Together, we can get the next generation of leaders ready with the motivation, skills and courage to move India forward.



Louis-Georges Arsenault  
UNICEF Representative for India

15 January 2013



**Statement by UNAIDS Country Coordinator, Oussama Tawil  
on “Volunteer for Better India” Campaign**

Released on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**Putting young people at the centre of the response to HIV**

In the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS adopted by the UN General Assembly in June 2011, world leaders set bold targets for the AIDS response to be reached by 2015. These include reducing sexual transmission of HIV by 50%; providing treatment for 15 million people living with HIV, and eliminate stigma and discrimination against people living with and affected by HIV. The Declaration called on all countries to support the active involvement and leadership of young people in the global, regional and national responses.

Despite significant progress, every day 2400 young people aged 15 to 24 are infected with HIV around the globe, which represents 40% of all new infections among adults. Many young people living with HIV still do not have access to treatment and only 34% of all young people have correct and comprehensive knowledge about HIV and how to protect themselves. Young women are particularly vulnerable, accounting for 64% of new infections among young people worldwide.

India represents the World’s largest population of young people and 30% of people living with HIV in India are youth. Recent epidemiology data from UNAIDS indicates that young people are leading the HIV prevention revolution by taking action to protect themselves from HIV.

Active youth leadership in the AIDS response is critical to ensure that policy, programming, and funding decisions are closely aligned to young people’s realities, making results more effective. This will enable young people to engage in the HIV prevention revolution, claim their human rights, including sexual and reproductive rights and end stigma and discrimination – which will help in achieving targets outlined in Political Declaration and the UNAIDS vision of Zero new HIV infections, Zero discrimination, and Zero AIDS-related deaths.

F PALMS MARK  
T YIHAR,  
LH-000000,

111 4000000  
0 00000000  
UNAIDS.ORG/IN

Oussama Tawil  
Country Coordinator  
UNAIDS India

Uniting the world against AIDS

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

Statement by United Nations for Millennium Campaign, Regional Director, Asia and Pacific  
Minar Pimple, on "Volunteer for a Better India" Campaign

Released on January 17, 2013



"The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have made a huge impact in the lives of billions, but a lot remains to be done to eradicate extreme poverty. Accelerated delivery of the MDGs, especially for left behind social groups, is a precondition for a credible post-2015 development agenda. Our task is to focus on how inequalities are hampering MDG progress and to demand accountability so that our legislators and elected leaders are equipped to build a more sustainable and just future. The UN General Assembly has initiated a global process with member states to define the future development agenda through inclusive broad-based consultations. The post-2015 development framework intends to build on the principles of the Millennium Declaration, critical learnings from the MDGs and will be supported by the four pillars of development (economic, social, environmental, peace & security). It will also reflect current development challenges (such as trade, infrastructure, climate change, the environment, energy, gender equality, jobs) that have emerged since the MDGs were adopted in 2000. A more equitable, prosperous and sustainable world lies within our reach. The youth will play a key role in bringing about this transformational change relevant to all people and societies, and for both present and future generations and I encourage them to participate in this process of social transformation."

Yours sincerely,



Minar Pimple  
Regional Director, Asia and the Pacific  
UN Millennium Campaign

UN Millennium Campaign – Asia and the Pacific  
UN Buildings, Rajadamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok, Th ailand  
Tel: + 66 (0) 2304 9100 ext. 1678 Fax: + 66 (0) 2280 2700  
[www.EndPoverty2015.org](http://www.EndPoverty2015.org)





February 2, 2013

On World AIDS Day 2012, Heroes Project organised an event at a popular Bombay mall to honour Aastha Parivaar, an amazing confederation of sex workers created to access HIV prevention and care for their community. Some of Aastha Parivaar's biggest supporters have been young people – including students from top colleges who have compiled a best-selling book of short stories based on the sex workers' lives. For the students that experience was life-changing – expanding their horizons, making them less judgmental and more compassionate.

The day after World AIDS Day, Bombay witnessed TEDxGateway, an event that brought together some of the best social development entrepreneurs. Speakers moved the audience with stories of diverse achievements – from fighting corruption to fighting for the rights of the most vulnerable. The majority of the audience was made up of young people. Even if a few of them were inspired to devote even part of their lives to social service, our country is in for a better future.

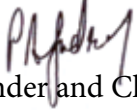
Despite all the challenges we face as a nation, we should see the glass as half-full, not half-empty, primarily because the majority of our population is so young – because of which we have a real chance to move away from cynicism to an environment where new ideas, new thinking and a deeper compassion can come together to work magic. But tapping into this potential needs many stakeholders across many issues, including young people themselves. This is the approach that Volunteer for a Better India is adopting, and Heroes Project is thrilled to be part of this vital endeavour.

Heroes Project was founded some 15 years ago at a time when HIV was even more stigmatized than today. Fear, ignorance, neglect – all of these have contributed to the global HIV epidemic – and they have contributed to ours. Vulnerable populations are viewed by many in our society as less than human. The sheer inhumanity of this moralizing attitude – especially in a country that considers itself “spiritual” – is breathtaking. Even today people living with HIV are so horribly treated that declaring one's status can effectively end life as one knows it. People lose their jobs, their families, and, often, their will to live. Yes,

India has made strides in curtailing its epidemic but stigma remains a huge challenge, dangerously so at a time when HIV is escalating rapidly among young people. There are many reasons for this – chief among them being a near-total lack of sex education, ignorance that we must counter very quickly. For those schools and colleges that will join the initiative being launched today, we call upon them to ensure that our young people get the knowledge that they deserve.

We at Heroes Project hope that the seed that we collectively plant will take root, bloom with knowledge, and yield fruits of understanding and compassion. For unless we approach the HIV challenge with true understanding and true compassion we cannot hope to make a significant dent in the epidemic – in India or around the world.

Parmeshwar Godrej



Founder and Chairperson, Heroes Project

---

Heroes AIDS Project

Godrej Ind Ltd, Gate No.2, Pirojshanagar, Off Eastern Express Highway, Vikhroli (E), Mumbai – 400079.  
Tel: +91 22 25186041/42 Fax: +91 22 25186043 [www.heroesprojectindia.org](http://www.heroesprojectindia.org)



*A message from Satyan Mishra, Co-Founder & Managing Director of Drishtee, who is an Ashoka Foundation Fellow :*

The world today finds itself caught between the devil and the deep sea. The decline in the capitalist system and the mistrust on the community owned models, has left us with little choice. Change is being sought across the Globe. No system of Governance is being spared the sword. Upheavals are happening or brewing against autocratic, military and democratic forms of Governance almost simultaneously in different countries in every major continent. People are seeking change, knowing that they do not have much to choose from.

Revolutions have happened once majority of people galvanize against a common enemy or cause. But today, in most democratic countries such as India, the increasing frustrations are unable to precipitate as we are unable to distinguish between the cause and its effect. While issue of corruption has turned the stomach of every city dweller, it has had little impact in villages. Similarly, apart from sympathy, issues related to poverty are seldom a major drawing room discussion agenda in the metros.

In our bid to centralize resources, wealth and above all power, we have ended up diluting the issues, which are critical for a community's survival. There is little option but to re look at the Panchayat model of self Governance as advocated by the Mahatma. But no one can help those who cannot help themselves. Villages in India are becoming unsustainable bit by bit, day by day. They and their sympathizers like us can blame the world, the cities, the resource polarization and of course the Government, corporate and everyone else for the plight of these bottom 10% of the world's population. Or else, they can sit together and plan to turn the tide in their favour. Instead of crying over what is lost, they can garner what is left of their massive resource base and harness it for their own benefit.

But there is a problem. Today the villagers unlike in their golden past, are not structured well enough to turn around as a single unit. Therefore, to realise the dream of a sustainable village, they need to start small and with a little bit of external help. They are in need of a friend with a heart as big and as clean as theirs. They seek in this friend the skill of putting their ideas into a plan and to develop linkages to seek support from external stakeholders.

They need the support of youth of the country to stand on their feet before they reclaim their position of strength and surplus. Major revolutions have happened in the history under youth leadership. Today once again a revolution is needed but a silent one. The youth still needs to play a significant role but that of a catalyst. We invite all of you to take a step towards a long lasting sustainable change.

15<sup>th</sup> Jan 2013

India Interfaith Network on HIV and AIDS and INERELA + are proud to associate them with such a movement that aims to build a new India. We are also glad to focus on empowering Young Leadership with the spirit of volunteerism through the lens of Human Values. Through our workshop and a number of events during this festival, we hope to develop and empower young leaders towards a better understanding of the current medical, social, economic and governance issues, and empower them to take the reins of leadership tomorrow. And to do this, they will need to remove the seeds of stigma and discrimination behind.

Although our primary focus is on HIV/AIDS and the issues surrounding the Virus, critical and topical issues are being touched in and through this festival. In this 'celebration', Young Leaders will re-look at the values of the Nation and take responsibility for themselves and their own communities through a deeper understanding of the Human values that tie us together, in a spirit of volunteerism. We accompany this program in the knowledge that faith and faith leaders still play a great role in shaping the destiny of this nation and India continues to keep a sacred space for its sons and daughters who attempt to achieve the highest goals

We hope and pray that this will be landmark event that will lay the foundation for such activities by other organizations in the future.



**Dr. Asavari Herwadkar MD.**  
**Coordinator,**  
**INERELA+ Asia Pacific/ Treasurer IICA**



**Fr. Philip Kuruville**  
**Coordinator,**  
**INERELA+ Asia Pacific/ Secretary IICA**

**INERELA HEAD OFFICE:** INERELA+ 3rd Floor 19 Girton Road Park Town Johannesburg 2193 South Africa  
Telephone: +27 11 484 0088 +27 11 484 0088 Fax: +27 11 484 4422, [www.inerela.org](http://www.inerela.org)

**INERELA+ Asia Pacific Office:** Ojus Medical Institute, Tulip Star, Juhu Tara Road, Juhu, Mumbai – 400 049  
Tel: +91 022 6510 3018 Telefax: +91 22 2614 9777  
Email: [faith.ojus@gmail.com](mailto:faith.ojus@gmail.com), Website: [www.omi.org.in](http://www.omi.org.in)

## Conception to Manifestation ~ Stages of Development

### All partner meetings

A few radical thinkers put their heads together and explored options and possibilities to enable the spirit of volunteerism to penetrate the youth across the country, addressing the growing concerns that eat our nation away. Education, drugs and alcohol addiction, women's and children's safety, corruption, HIV and AIDS are just a few of the issues that came to these minds.

After much discussion, these thinkers partnered with eleven expert agencies who already execute exemplary projects at a global scale providing relief and aid towards social and economic development.

Many deliberations, phone calls and discussions followed as bringing all of them on one platform are a skilful undertaking.

After six meetings with the partner agencies over the last six months, the final meeting with the partners on January 11, 2013 at the FPA India office brought clarity and gave the youth summit as well as the mass media grand finale a systematic framework.

Minute details were also discussed regarding logistics, minute-to-minute description of the event, and which partner would enable which breakaway workshop. Action plans for the next few days were also streamlined and all partners agreed upon all the points discussed.

Although it seemed like a very new and a far-reaching idea at the moment, all partners saw how things were taking a concrete shape and thus had more confidence in the success of this event. They were more than happy to join the initiative and support this cause.

### Pre-event curtain raiser

The Curtain Raiser Event was held on Dec 5, 2011 at the India International Center. The Volunteer for Better India initiative was formally launched with a lamp lighting ceremony jointly by HH Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and our partner representatives Mr. Roy Wadia from Heroes Project, Fr. Philip Kuruvilla from INERELA+ & IICA, Ms. Sarita Jadav from UNAIDS, Ms. Frederika Meijer from UNFPA, Ms. Bindiya Nimala from FPA India, Ms. Cristina Albertin from UNODC, Mr. Minar Pimple from UNMC, Mr. Satyan Mishra from Drishtee, Ms. Manisha Mishra from UNICEF. The Curtain Raiser was a two part event wherein the first segment was focused on unfurling VBI initiative and the partners spoke about their mandates.

The second segment was in commemoration of 9th December-International Day against Corruption and Ms. Cristina Albertin, Representative for the UNODC Regional Office for South Asia deliver the Opening address which was followed by an informal interactive session with the youth.



### Main events

The initiative spread across India in no time and very soon we had enthusiastic volunteers pan India who wanted to be a part of it but had no direction or starting point. "Volunteer for a Better India" was born in August 2012.



To involve the youth through the expert partner associations brought the much needed credentials and necessary knowledge, tools so as to equip the youngsters with practical tools to make a change. The Summit and the Grand Finale event shaped up beautifully and before we knew it, all the state coordinators were approaching elite universities and colleges to facilitate state participation in this event, with passion and zeal.

Additionally under VBI initiative, a number of events such as Street plays (Nukkad Nataks), Flash mobs, workshops etc had already commenced from November 2012 and gradually picked up pace till Feb 2013. The aim of these initiatives was to empower young leaders towards a better understanding on current social, economic and governance issues thereby enabling them to shoulder responsibilities.

*United We March ~ A National Youth Summit : 2nd February 2013, Delhi Technological University, Delhi*

### Background

Under the VBI initiative, along with the specific collaboration of The Art of Living with the expert partner agencies, students from across the country came together to participate in United We March ~ A National Youth Summit; a grand and unique event where 11 expert agencies of international repute and presence addressed the vital and primary concerns of the country on one platform and forum; the first of its kind.

The Premise for the Summit was sensitization of the young leaders under the overarching spirit of human values to address issues relating to HIV and AIDS, the Declining Child Sex-Ratio, Sexual - Reproductive Health and Rights, Drugs & Alcohol, Corruption, Millennium Development Goals, Safety for Girls and Entrepreneurial Opportunities.

The summit commenced with a joint plenary session followed by a deeper orientation through highly interactive, youth friendly breakaway workshops, all independent yet parallel, each on the key issues. Each of the workshops was facilitated by the various VBI partners and culminated in a joint valedictory session.

More than 1200 student delegates, from prestigious and elite institutes across 15 states of India, leading academicians and youth NGO/ societal leaders came together on one common platform aiming to empower young leaders towards a better understanding on current social, economic and governance issues thereby enabling them to shoulder responsibility as responsible citizens.

The expert partner agencies provided the technical know-how aiming to equip the future volunteers with necessary knowledge so they can impact and bring about the change in society and contribute towards the nation's success. Certificates of participation were given to all participants which would be of symbolic support as the young leaders embark on their careers.

### Plenary session details

Dr. Richa Chopra, senior faculty member of The Art of Living set the tone of the Summit and welcomed all dignitaries on the dais, Professor P B Sharma, Honorable Vice Chancellor of Delhi Technological University (DTU), the 11 expert partner agencies, more than 1200 participants from 15 states of India, and faculty members from reputed universities across India; and concluded by thanking DTU for being a gracious host to this auspicious and wonderful event.



A short film on Volunteer for a Better India was viewed by audience members; for deeper understanding and internalization of the Summit, to absorb the motive behind the initiative and the common vision that brought us together. The movie is available for online viewing [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ln\\_vJPHFOjg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ln_vJPHFOjg). A film aimed to enable like mindedness amongst each one present – that our country needs to be uplifted in all spheres and to discuss what measures one can take within an individual capacity towards this noble cause.

The Summit was officiated by a lamp lighting ceremony, collectively endorsed by Honorable Vice Chancellor, Prof. PB Sharma, the 11 expert partner agencies and 4 youth summit participants representing the 4 zones of India, signifying a collective and united vision towards a better, safer and more unified India.

Ms. Atika Dhandia, co-coordinator of the VBI initiative and senior faculty member of The Art of Living, set the tone for VBI, highlighting the growth curve of VBI from a mere concept to nationwide campaign and movement and the various activities under the VBI umbrella over a 6 month period, including:

- ▲ *More than 1000 presentations of the Street Play of VBI over the last 3 months in New Delhi alone, which touches upon all the relevant concerns of VBI and attempts to sensitize the public towards the Mega Grand Finale event on February 03 at Ramlila grounds.*
- ▲ *The development of The Art of Living Legal Cell, which acts as a mediator between the common man and the Indian Legal system, providing legal aid and advice, counseling workshops on legal systems and protocols to the general public, and also free services to the poor and needy.*
- ▲ *The launch of The Art of Living helpline for people with violent tendencies, which was launched in Feb 2013 and has been receiving an approximate number of 25 calls per day, approximately 200 calls in total. 50 teachers of The Art of Living have devoted their time and effort towards this helpline as counselors, receiving positive feedback from people across the city since its inception.*



Additional future plans of VBI in New Delhi and NCR areas which looked extremely promising and exciting also included partnerships with multiple stakeholder associations, e.g. 17000 doctors of Delhi Medical Association and the Indian Medical Association will launch “Do Ravivar Samaj ke Naam” (Two Sundays in service to society); the doctors giving 2 Sunday’s free service to society, the ex-servicemen fraternity also partnering with VBI towards furthering the V BI movement etc.

Each of the partner agencies briefly introduced their respective breakaway workshops, supported by short videos/ presentations. They shared with the audience the theme and concept of their workshop, motivating the participants towards the breakaway workshops, aiming to spread the vision of their areas of expertise amongst all those present:



**Mr. Roy Wadia, UNAIDS, Heroes Project, INERELA+, IICA**  
**'Getting to Zero'!**

Zero new infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS-related deaths!

Roy Wadia is the Executive Director of Heroes Project, based in Bombay but working at a national level on HIV communications and advocacy.

Mr. Wadia captured the essence of HIV and its effects on social economic habits/culture within India, how India is ranked number 3 in the world with the number of people living with HIV, how people infected and affected with HIV are discriminated, not accepted and how it is a mind shift rather than just a fix-it medical solution. In this challenging and interactive workshop, participants will learn how to protect themselves from HIV, but equally important, how to better understand and respect people infected with and affected by HIV through the prism of empathy, compassion and dignity.

**Mr. Venkatesh Srinivasan, UNFPA, FPA India**  
**'Spot It to Stop It'!**

Bridging the Gender Gap!

Mr. Venkatesh Srinivasan is a public health professional with close to 25 years of experience in designing, facilitating and monitoring Reproductive Health interventions.

India's patriarchal society which is also largely supported by the complex nexus of socio-economic and political factors nurture and promote gender discrimination. Mr. Srinivasan focused on the how these are evident in everyday life including the declining child sex ratio in India, which reflects both pre-natal and post-birth discrimination against girls. Discrimination against women and girls is also perpetuated through denial of reproductive health choices and rights. Individuals, especially the youth play an important role in exercising and protecting reproductive and sexual health choices.

**Mr. Deepak Yadav, AIIMS**

**'High on Life'!**

Away from Drugs & Alcohol!

Deepak Yadav is working as Sr. Social Scientist at National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre, & WHO collaborating centre, AIIMS, New Delhi.

Mr. Yadav encouraged the youth to engage in this workshop as it deals with the issues that surround the youth of today. The vision of this workshop is to develop youth leaders who are informed and capacitated to be the agents of change for substance use scenario in the society. In this skill building interactive workshop, participants will be interacting with national level experts and will be introduced to e-technologies for substance use issues.

**Dr. Suruchi Pant, UNODC**

**'Know It to Fight It'!**

Myths & Facts About Corruption!

Since 2002, Dr. Suruchi Pant has managed various projects on anti human trafficking, migrant smuggling and drugs and HIV prevention. She is currently responsible for the overall program management and oversight of ongoing programs at UNODC.

Dr. Pant urged the youth to join them in their discussion towards corruption as it is a vital concern in today's society. She went onto explain that this session would enable participants to learn about what acts are corruption, what are the areas of our life in which corruption permeates, broad discussion on some of the Indian laws on anti-corruption that youth must know and some ideas on what each individual can do in their own life to address corruption.

**Mr. Hindol Sengupta, UNMC**

**'World We Want'!**

The Millennium Development Goals & Priorities Beyond 2015!

Hindol Sengupta is the author of 'The Liberals' on living through 20 years of Indian economic liberalization. He is also Senior Editor at Fortune in India.

Mr. Sengupta elaborated on two types of democracies that exist: measured and experienced; although we vote for a new government every five years (measured democracy), we do not feel connected with the people we voted (lack of experienced democracy) which has led to many marches, rallies, campaigns, expression on social media – all talking about the discontent with the government in power. The "World We Want" breakaway session would cover all these vital aspects and many more.

In conclusion, a short movie on the Millennium Development Goals, elaborating on each of the 8 goals, which need to be achieved by 2015, was shared with the audience.

**Ms. Caroline den Dulk, UNICEF India**

**'Girls Every Where, Safe Every Where'!**

Safety for Girls is Their Right!

As Chief Communication, Caroline den Dulk currently leads the Public and Policy work for UNICEF in India, engaging with civil society, young people, the media and corporate sector. As a leader of change, she has been at the forefront of a major change initiative for the UN in Vietnam from 2000-2006, leading the merger of communications teams of five different UN agencies into one organizational unit.

Ms. den Dulk began by expressing her delight to be amidst such vibrant youth, and was especially happy

to see girls and boys interacting equally on the same platform, a phenomenon that is changing in India and around the world. She elaborated that her workshop would focus on how we can change the position of girls in society, how we can address early marriages, how we can enable women to complete their education, how we can make them feel safe everywhere, and how we can enable a better Bill to be passed.

In conclusion, UNICEF shared a short video, where their youth icon, Ms. Priyanka Chopra, a well known celebrity spoke about supporting women's dreams and aspirations; that wearing a blue ribbon would symbolize their support towards the cause of UNICEF, and shared a web link to support the same.

**Mr. Satyan Mishra, DRISHTEE**

**'Vill to Lead'!**

Entrepreneurship for Young India & A New World!

Satyan, an MBA in International Business from Delhi School of Economics, has more than 12 years of entrepreneurial journey. He is one of the co-founders of Drishtee, a rural social enterprise and firmly believes in his dream of 'creating sustainable villages through local ownership and entrepreneurship'.

Finding it impossible to believe that so many youth had gathered to volunteer, Mr. Mishra was in deep gratitude to the organizers of the event for providing him the platform to speak about Drishtee. Using pictorial representation through a powerpoint presentation, Mr. Mishra's words revolved around the concept of entrepreneurship, that the past has witnessed and applauded innovative thinking and that is what created entrepreneurs that we see around us, some of them who are also selfless. He was hopeful to see more energetic youth volunteering in the villages of India where indeed innovation and entrepreneurship opportunities lie.

The Plenary Session concluded on a high note with a congratulations extended to all state delegates, for their enthusiasm, commitment and participation. Although in the past, many conferences had been organized with one or two key issues as prime focus, this was the first time multiple expert agencies, multiple stakeholders and multiple states were coming together on one platform to address seven key issues.

The participants and partner agencies then set to proceed towards their respective breakaway session venues.

### Breakaway workshops details

**Workshop 1: UNAIDS, HEROES Project, INERELA+, IICA  
'Getting to Zero'!**

Zero new infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS-related deaths!

Venue: Exposition Hall

**BRIEF SYNOPSIS:** The entire workshop was led with an openness and honesty, necessary for the participants to also broach the subject with a similar like-mindedness in order to break out of a stereotypical thought process. Mr. Roy Wadia from Heroes Project led most part of the workshop and shared interesting experiences from his past workshops on HIV/ AIDS. Popular myths were shattered and clarified as notions on safe sex, HIV and AIDS prevention that exist amongst the youth



today were found to be naïve and baseless. Discussions also revolved around adaptation to safer sexual behavior to achieve zero infections and how one must stay updated on latest medical technology and information on HIV and AIDS prevention. The highlight of the workshop was a short talk given by Mr. Gautam Yadav, a young HIV+ boy, who shared with the participants his journey from an HIV+ affected person to becoming a volunteer with UNAIDS. His speech was moving and inspiring to many present there, who were perhaps interacting with an HIV+ person for the first time. Mr. Yadav's ease and natural disposition made him approachable to the participating youth members, and facilitated the participants to peek inside themselves and question what discrimination stands for, how it affects them and what kind of "My Act" they would like to take up.

## Workshop 2: UNFPA, FPA India

### 'Spot It to Stop It'!

Bridging the Gender Gap!

Venue: Senate Hall

**BRIEF SYNOPSIS:** This workshop brought to light the inequality of females as a global phenomenon, a phenomenon triggered largely through mainstream media which has the largest penetration and affect on people's minds and perceptions. Such portrayals only intensify gender inequality and belittle the power of the female gender, in India and across the world. This workshop also had FPA India doing a street play on "Sexuality, Sexual education, women empowerment through education, women's rights on her own physical body" etc. which attracted the whole audience and was highly appreciated by one and all in one voice – of its quality, presentation, and on the strength of the theme. There were also sporadic questions from the audience to clarify their own doubts on the subjects mentioned and made the session lively. In addition, many facts and figures of the ratio of male v/s female were shared, social stigma shown towards women in our country, the numerous barriers women face on the streets of India and how all of it has led to the increase of gender based violence in recent times.



## Workshop 3: NDDTC, AIIMS

### 'High on Life'!

Away from Drugs & Alcohol!

Venue: Smart Classroom 1

**BRIEF SYNOPSIS:** This interactive workshop was guided wonderfully by the staff members of AIIMS addressing vital concerns of the reasons one takes any addictive substance and what effects those substances have on the physical, mental and psychological aspects of a person. Participants were urged and steered towards gauging the psychological and mental factors that provoke alcoholism and addiction to drugs. Many insights on the damaging effects of alcohol and drugs were revealed to the participants and what kind of measures the participants could avail, at their individual level finally culminated in their "My Act". They all left with



more knowledge and facts about the harmful effects of alcohol and drugs, along with their own corrective measures towards curbing this addiction; thereby only increasing their morale and confidence levels. The My Act that came out of this Workshop was shared in the Valedictory Session.

#### **Workshop 4: UNODC**

##### **'Know It to Fight It!'**

Myths & Facts About Corruption!

Venue: DSM Classroom

**BRIEF SYNOPSIS:** This workshop spoke about democracy, the kinds of democracy that exist today, how it trickles down to the common man and the effects it has to society at large. There were many deliberations and deep insight into what corruption is and how it affects the youth and common man today, fashionable myths like "corruption is equal to bribery" were shattered, the participants were taken on a journey of many interactive discussions to understand that corruption is a thought, the seed germinating in our own minds, taking us in the opposite direction to human values of peace, harmony, honesty, belongingness etc. and that each one of us is responsible for our actions as well as inactions towards



corruption. Participants' knowledge and concern towards the political system was very encouraging. Lack of awareness of the laws and ignorance of one's duties amongst the general public, especially the youth, incorrect prioritization of political duty over moral duty amongst the servants of the "system", lack of citizen's duty are just few of the missing links towards curbing corruption.

#### **Session 5: UNMC**

##### **'World We Want!'**

The Millennium Development Goals & Priorities Beyond 2015!

Venue: Seminar Hall (ECE Dept.)

**BRIEF SYNOPSIS:** The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) where 180 nations committed towards a global change in eight spheres towards social and economic reform and growth was the basis of this workshop. Participants were guided and informed on how MDGs in India have been utilized for personal political gains, how the democratic system of India has been twisted to portray a semi-correct picture to the UN and how funds and finances are misused, mis-utilised and misrepresented amongst the upper class sections of society. UNMC admits that there is no easy answer to bring about a radical change as this issue has been grappling this country for many years. Democratic change is one fundamental method to alter the situation which can



benefit the various levels of the castes and sub-castes, majority of them residing in rural parts of India. Democratic duties of citizens towards a better India and the need to create more awareness amongst the general public were some of the conclusions of this workshop. The lack of awareness amongst citizens that India is not a rich country and that the lifestyle model most people aim or adapt to, is not benefitting the country or the people. Participants were encouraged to equip themselves with more information, especially with the speeches of the Annual Budget of the recent years.

## Workshop 6: UNICEF

### 'Girls Every Where, Safe Every Where'!

Safety for Girls is Their Right!

Venue: Edusat Hall

**BRIEF SYNOPSIS:** One of the most sought after workshops out of the seven sessions, "Girls Everywhere, Safe Everywhere" saw immense participation and vital discussion and deliberations on how the country can be made safer for women and children, was the central premises of this workshop. Participants were educated on general women safety where discussions hovered on the safe and unsafe places, and who are the people who target women and children, and what one can do to stop violence towards them. Participants were encouraged to give feedback to pertinent questions that related to women and children safety and the crux of the discussion was an eye opener for many. Many female participants present in the audience did not shy away from posing their questions and participated actively in this workshop. Overall this workshop was an empowering workshop for all participants and each one walked out of the session with the determination to make our society safer for women and children.



## Workshop 7: UNGCNI, DRISHTEE

### 'Vill to Lead'!

Entrepreneurship for Young India & A New World!

Venue: Smart Classroom 2

**BRIEF SYNOPSIS:** This workshop was an eye opener for many aspiring and ambitious youngsters. The usual trend of most ambitious university students aims towards attaining a professional degree, usually an MBA degree from reputed universities, preferably of international repute after which one seeks employment in high end companies, where offices are located at prime locations within metropolitan cities of India. DRISHTEE lent many facts and figures of employment opportunities in rural parts of India where business models can be run successfully and how the usual trend of an MBA graduate working in his dream job is becoming a faded reality. Participants were keeping abreast with everything being said and were writing furiously on their notepads. They seemed like did not want to miss even one word of this workshop and thoroughly enjoyed the session.



### Partners meeting with His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

As the Breakaway workshops were close to their end, the partner agencies, faculty members from various reputed universities from across India had a brief interaction with His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, in the back stage area, pre-allocated for this purpose.



He spent time with the dignitaries including partner agencies discussing the larger vision of VBI, their contribution and support and how we all, as one team could foster mobilization of the youth towards creating more responsible and volunteer driven citizens.



Whilst conversing with Honorable Vice Chancellor of Delhi Technological University, Professor P.B. Sharma, His Holiness browsed through some of the achievements of Delhi Technological University and was very happy to see that both organizations were on the same wave length. His Holiness was delighted and thankful to Professor Sharma to join hands with VBI and looked forward to his continues support to guide the youth towards creating more responsible and accountable leaders.

### My Acts

The Valedictory Session witnessed a changed audience as the participants returned with a renewed spirit, each with a firm determination to make a difference in society.

As the Session began, the spirit of VBI was reiterated and the participants were guided towards a broader vision to create a better India; that they need not limit their involvement relevant to the breakaway workshop session they attended. They had the choice to get involved in multiple concerns under the VBI initiative. For the same, they could refer to the website – [www.vfabi.org](http://www.vfabi.org). FAQs relevant to all the workshops would also be uploaded on the website by Feb 03 2013; for better absorption and to create larger awareness in the future. (Refer to Annexure Section)

### The Guests of Honour on the dais were:

- Mr. Manoj Gopalkrishna – MD of Becton Dickinson India. Mr. Gopalkrishna, over the last 20 years of work in India's health sector, has worked closely with governments, international agencies and private sector in implementation of family planning and HIV prevention. He is also a management

graduate from Wharton School of Business.

- Dr. H. Chaturvedi – Founding member and President of Education Promotion Society of India. Dr. Chaturvedi is also Director of Birla Institute of Management and Technical Institution. He has more than 35 years of experience in teaching research and administration.
- Dr. Vandana Shiva – Founder of Navdanya. Dr. Shiva is the mind behind Navdanya, the organic food chain that has expanded across the country in a short span of time.
- His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar – Founder, The Art of Living Foundation
- Professor PB Sharma - Vice Chancellor, Delhi Technological University.



His Holiness felicitated all dignitaries present on the stage and Honorable Vice Chancellor, Prof. Sharma felicitated His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

The Valedictory Session saw our distinguished partners share tangible “My Acts” from their respective breakaway workshop sessions with the audience:

**1. “Getting to Zero”, UNAIDS, HEROES Project, INERELA+, IICA**

Mr. Roy Wadia from Heroes Project presented the My Acts on behalf of the “Getting to Zero” Breakaway workshop. These included:

- Empower yourself and your friends! Get all the facts about HIV and how to protect yourselves!
- Support the removal of social and legal barriers that violate human rights! Help young people and vulnerable groups more easily access HIV prevention, treatment and care!
- Help campaign for better services, including access to medicines, counseling, and other support needs! People living with HIV can live normal and healthy lives!

## 2. “Spot It to Stop It”, UNFPA, FPA India

Mr. Venkatesh Srinivasan from UNFPA presented the My Acts on behalf of the “Spot It to Stop It” group. The My Act was:

- Spot gender discrimination in popular spaces to stop it in personal and public spaces

## 3. “High on Life”, AIIMS

Mr. Deepak Yadav from AIIMS presented the My Act for the “High on Life” Breakaway session which included:

- Alcohol is a major public health burden.
- Major cause for crime and unrest.
- Need to act now. By helping people come out of it.

## 4. “Know It to Fight It”, UNODC

“Know It to Fight It” My Acts were displayed and they included the following:

- Be a role model for others to follow.
- Be the change you want to see.

## 5. “World we want”, UNMC,

- Vote for the changes that make a difference in our world.

## 6. “Girls Everywhere, Safe Everywhere”, UNICEF

Ms. Dora Giusti from UNICEF India presented the My Act on behalf of the “Girls everywhere, Safe Everywhere” Breakaway workshop and it included:

- I will speak up when I see any act of violence or abuse against a child, girl or woman.
- I commit to girls being treated equally as boys and to encouraging others to do the same.

## 7. “Vill to Lead”, UNGCNI, DRISHTEE

Mr. Satyan Mishra from Drishtee presented the My Act for the “Vill to Lead” session which included:

- To Start or support a sustainable enterprise, which directly serves rural communities.
- To be the catalyst for initiating a positive change needed to reorganize a village.
- To buy and use the products produced by Rural India.
- To build sustainable leadership for those at the bottom of the pyramid by promoting social innovations and responsible business practices.

- To develop or support businesses to ensure greater environmental responsibility, and encourage the development of environmentally friendly technologies

**A collective commitment of the 1200 participants towards the “My Acts” as a Volunteer for Better India**

- Empower yourself and your friends and Support the removal of social and legal barriers.
- Spot gender discrimination in popular spaces to stop it in personal and public spaces
- Comprehensive Sexuality Education is a basic Human Right of all Young People
- Lets Reach out : Organize HANGOUTS and inspire them to Push the Button
- Be a Role model for others to follow. Be the change you want to see.
- MY World: A Global Survey for Citizens AND Vote Now! Make a Difference
- I will speak up when I see any act of violence or abuse against a child, girl or woman
- To buy and use the products produced by Rural India.

His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar shared a few words of wisdom with the audience. He congratulated the participants and commended their enthusiasm and vibrant energy. He reinforced that the youth can make a difference to the society and encouraged them to dream and move ahead with enthusiasm despite difficulties and criticism. His experience of his visit to Tihar Jail that very morning shed pertinent and vital knowledge that encouraged us to alter our views towards criminals, how our food habits affects the states of our minds, and that we must nurture compassion in our hearts to bring about this massive revolution of VBI. With mentors like Prof Sharma and Prof Chaturvedi, His Holiness was confident that the youth would find holistic education and direction under their guidance.



Professor Sharma also shared his gratitude towards His Holiness’s presence and was looking forward to working with the VBI initiative and forwarding the message of VBI across the youth. His 8 year old grandson expressed his desire to make himself heard and Prof Sharma shared his grandson’s views. There were 3 main points:

- Honesty is the best policy – a policy that our forefathers followed and the youth need to follow.
- Discipline is the greatest strength – the greatest strength of India must come from discipline.
- Technology is the best friend in this world to achieve this noble objective.

The issues covered under the Youth Summit were simple yet vital to bring about action oriented change. Prof Sharma was confident that VBI would be a success with Gurudev’s blessings.

Dr. Vandana Shiva shared her life experiences and the motivating factors which led to the birth of Navdanya. Her energetic speech motivated many young minds to think out of the box reinforcing their faith in their dreams, aspirations



and committed zeal.

### *Feedback from interviews of dignitaries/ participants*

Participants shared wonderful experiences, finding a shift their own thought processes, patterns of the mind and more strongly about their subject topics. Each one felt more empowered, more informed with facts, figures and are better equipped to make a difference to the people around them. They were grateful for this very unique platform and were glad they could participate in this Summit because this Summit would enable them to become future leaders, armed with the spirit of volunteerism, a positive spirit and technical knowledge from the Breakaway Workshop Session.

All the partners were extremely happy and thankful to The Art of Living for organizing this wonderful Summit where they got the opportunity to interact with the youngsters from across India to empower them towards the critical issues that grip the nation today.



## Mass Media Grand Finale 3rd February, Ram Lila Maidan, Delhi

*"It's the apathy of the good people which has brought us to this state. Let the youth and citizens come forward and pledge 1 Hour to the Nation and Volunteer for a Better India."*

- His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

### Background

Volunteer for Better India (VBI) is a project that aims to make a positive difference to Delhi & the National Capital Region and India as a whole. It is a Citizen's Action Plan. "Give one hour to the nation every day," was the call given by His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, in order to bring about a positive change in India through the spirit of volunteerism and selfless service. This initiative invited people to give one hour to the nation.

### Press meet

His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar along with the partner agencies collectively attended a Press meet a few hours before the mega event. He introduced the concept of VBI and the motive behind the gathering, to enable more responsible citizens, a more aware and compassionate society, where each one gives only one hour towards the nation. Elaborating on each of the concept of VBI, the partnership with United Nations, He emphasized the need to harness the anger that is visible in the youth of today, towards the key areas of concern prevailing in our country; to enable those youth to find the right direction which is action oriented and volunteer based. Each of the partners also shared their areas of expertise, their views and, their like-mindedness with AOL on the VFABI campaign, and what they envision through the success of this campaign. UNFPA recently signed a five year agreement with the Indian Government towards address the gender inequality concerns.



### People present on the dais:

- His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar
- Mr. Roy Wadia, Executive Director of Heroes Project
- Fr.Philip Kuruvilla, Secretary, INERELA+ / IICA
- Mr. Oussama Tawil, Country coordinator UNAIDS
- Ms. Sujata Natarajan, President, Family Planning Association of India
- Ms. Frederika Meijer, Representative, India and Bhutan, UNFPA
- Ms. Cristina Albertin, Representative, UNODC Regional Office for South Asia
- Louise Georges Arsenault, Country Representative, UNICEF India
- Mr. Minar Pimple, Regional Director of Asia and Pacific, UNMC
- Mr. Satyan Mishra, DRISHTEE



- Dr. Sonali Jhanjee, NDDTC, AIIMS

The President of Delhi Medical Association, representing more than 16000 doctors who had launched an initiative under the VBI banner, where they committed to provide free service on 2 Sundays to the general public, was also present and expressed their delight at being part of this massive initiative.

Wonderful initiatives including more than 1000 initiatives successfully delivered in Delhi NCR over the last 3 months, the recent launch of the Art of Living Legal Cell were also briefly touched upon. The aim of this legal cell would be to act as a mediator between the common man and the Indian Legal system, providing legal aid and advice, counseling workshops on legal systems and protocols to the general public, and also free services to the poor and needy.

### *Grand finale highlights*

Thousands of people, organizations and international agencies, urban and slum dwellers, school and college students, people from the corporate and business community, NGOs, RWAs, hospitals and leaders joined His Holiness for the launch of 'Volunteer for a better India' at Ramlila Grounds on February 3, 2013.

Many youth organizations participated, including

- Rotaract,
- IYCN,
- Youth For Justice,
- Swami Vivekanada Youth Movement,
- Chinmaya Yuva Kendra (Youth wing of Chinmaya Mission),
- Kendriya Arya Yuvak Parishad (Youth wing of Arya Samaj) and
- All India Marwari Yuva Manch.

Over 3,000 schools and people from more than 17 slums participated in this event, which also consisted of songs propagating love for the nation.

More than 300 Art of Living devotees added the patriotic flavor to the evening as they sang many devotional songs, both popular and traditional. They had been undergoing regular training under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Chitra Roy, a senior faculty of The Art of Living and a sensational singer herself. The event opened with a prayer to Lord Ganesha, Ganesh Stuti sung by Ms. Chitra Roy herself.

A few noteworthy singers also participated in this event, including a special performance by Mr. Diwakar, the visually challenged boy with a golden voice who also features on Indian television. His song "Hai Preet Jahan Ki Reet Sada" (a popular devotional song) set the tone of patriotism amongst all who were present as well as webcast viewers in over 80 countries. A few volunteers hailing from Kashmir presented a folk Kashmiri song as an impromptu act, which was a refreshing treat. They spoke of the universal language of love that binds us together and has caused multiple castes, religions to come together for one common cause, one dream, vision and mission statement.

Addressing the gathering, His Holiness said "For fulfilling our needs we need to take responsibility. This initiative will discuss the ways in which one can take responsibility and improve society. This is a call to create an India that is clean, safe and strong." To combat the problems and social ills facing society today, 'Volunteer for Better India' (VBI) encouraged citizens to take responsibility to create a better, safer, just and unified India. Under this initiative, citizens were inspired to give one hour to the nation through any service activity including a range of themes - Women's Safety, Voice against Corruption, Declining Child Sex Ratio, Child Rights, HIV and AIDS, Millennium Development Goals, Village Entrepreneurial Opportunities, Adolescent Sexual & Reproductive Health & Rights, Drugs & Alcohol, Environment,



*Ram Lila Maidan - Mass Media Grand  
Finale, Feb. 3rd, 2013.....*





nca

Gate 3

Volunteer for a Better India

Volunteer for a Better India

Gate 3

Education, Senior Citizens and Good Governance.

His Holiness urged every citizen of India to be a volunteer for the country. He said that problems arise because good people are apathetic, and that transformation occurs in society through the transformation of individuals. Under 'Volunteer for a Better India' more than one thousand projects have already been taken up in schools, colleges, slums and villages, through workshops, street plays (nukkad nataks), medical camps, education camps, awareness drives, special courses etc. Volunteers of the Art of Living continue to work towards spreading this message of volunteerism and selfless service to one and all.

The Art of Living has also launched a helpline for people with violent tendencies, as part of the VBI initiative. Calls have already started coming on a regular basis and people are receiving counseling from special teachers of the Art of Living, which in turn helps them to control their violent tendencies. The Art of Living Legal Cell is also lending its free services through this helpline. They would provide free legal awareness, advice and mediation services through this helpline. A helpline for school children and their parents is also associated with this initiative.

**The helpline number is +91 113072 2222.**

In the latter part of the event, His Holiness along with Shri Arvind Singh Mewar, The Maharana of Udaipur unveiled a special painting of Maharana Pratap Singh. A few words commemorating the extraordinary and eternal hero were shared with the audience – the legendary hero fought against all odds with minimum resources available, to save his motherland. He received military and combat training at an early age and at the tender age of 14, he was sent to command an army sent against Durganpur.



The VBI Souvenir was also launched by His Holiness. Everyone observed two minutes of silence for our courageous armed forces soldiers, who sacrificed their lives to protect our nation. The event concluded with an echo of Vande Mataram in the hearts of all those who were present and those watching in 80 countries.

Joining His Holiness on the dais were multiple stakeholders; a plethora of visionaries, internationally renowned agencies with a resource base of thousands and a network spread across the globe. Each of the stakeholders conveyed their gratitude to His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and The Art of Living for initiating this wonderful endeavor, and were extremely positive about the outcome, as they could envision the beginning of a better country, with actively responsible youth, and a country where a revolution of Spirituality would emerge from and where human values would be the highest priority.

**Excerpts of stakeholders' speeches:** Stakeholders briefly spoke about their association with VBI and their contribution towards the betterment of India:

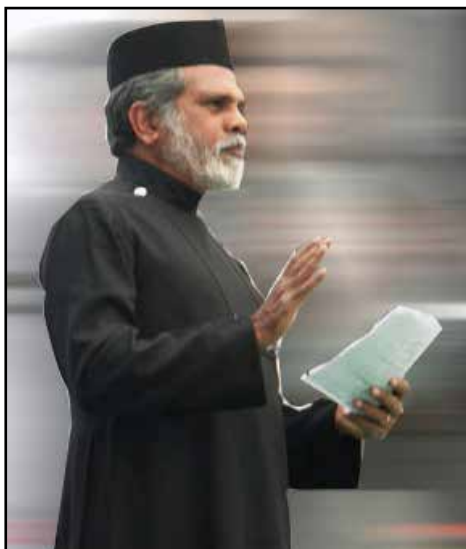


“We rely on young people to be active members in the response, in general and in their own lives...”

*Oussama Tawil, Country Coordinator,  
UNAIDS India*

“We promise before you that through this Volunteering for a Better India, FPA India will touch every part of the country to take youth along with us to empower themselves and to empower those around them”

*Ms. Sujata Natarajan, President,  
Family Planning Association of India*



“Never forget that our country believes in Satyamev Jayate – Truth Triumphs All”

*Fr. Philip Kuruvilla, Secretary,  
INERELA+ / IICA*

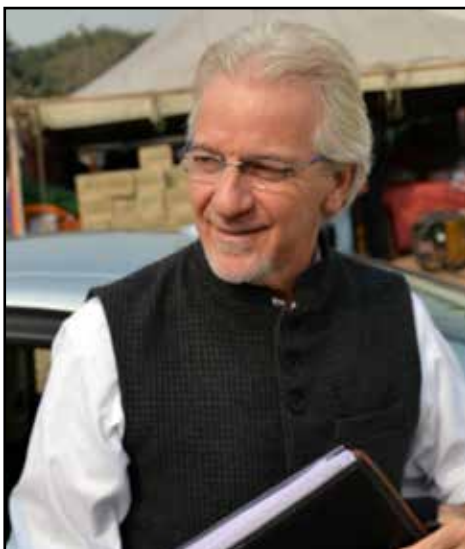


“It is my dream that in the future, India would become a Spiritual Superpower...and that is where India is going... under the leadership of Guruji”

*Maulana Wahiduddin Khan,  
Founder, CPS International*

“Volunteer for a Better India is a clear call to action to create a world where choices are not marred with compulsion...potential of all young people stands not contained but fulfilled”

*Ms. Frederika Meijer,  
Representative, India and Bhutan, UNFPA*



“The future of India is the children... these are not just words, this is the reality”

*Louis-Georges Arsenault,  
Country Representative, UNICEF India*



– “Across the world, the voices of the youth are getting louder and bolder... asking for self respect and decisive action from governing agencies”

*Minar Pimple, Regional Director of Asia and Pacific, UNMC*

“Until recently, across the world, corruption was tolerated and unaddressed...but now there is a change... You have realized that you can do something...that don't have to wait for others to act... blame the government or wait for the government to act”

*Ms. Cristina Albertin, Representative, UNODC Regional Office for South Asia*



“Volunteer for a better India is a very very critical link in the whole chain which Global Compact in India is going to advance to”

*Pooran Pandey, Executive Director, UNGCNI*



“Villages are an integral part of our lives...if we invest time in the villages, there will be a shift in the villages and inside you”

*Satyan Mishra,  
Co-Founder, Drishtee*

“Can you recognize someone with HIV? Does anyone in your family have HIV? HIV is everywhere... Even though I lost someone in my family to HIV, I now have a new family around the world”

*Roy Wadia, Executive Director,  
Heroes Project*



“Don’t discriminate anyone because if we lend our support to people who are infected with HIV, they will find confidence and not commit suicides”

*Gautam Yadav  
PLHIV*

“Under the initiative of volunteer for a better India, let our nation be prosperous, happy and healthy”

Dr. Harish Gupta, President,  
Delhi Medical Association

“In the last one year, there has been a lot of anger amongst the youth...we have to turn that anger into creative energy”

Mr. Shashi Munjal, Co-Chairman,  
PAN IIT Alumni India

“Amongst our ten lacks members and 6000 offices pan India, we plan to bring out at least one volunteer from every office in India”

Mr. Shiv Gopal Mishra,  
General Secretary of Railway Mazdoor Union

“Service and worship have to work together – that’s when they complete..... In volunteer for a better India, there is an inbuilt message that we become better people... we have advanced in science, but have we become better people?”

Mr. Shatrughan Jiwnani  
from Bahai Community

“24 lacks ex service men, 3 lacks widows, and 14 lacks of armed forces are all a part of this initiative...for Guruji to utilize for the nation”

Major General Satbir Singh, Vice Chairman,  
All India Ex Service Men movement

*Ram Lila Maidan ~  
Rendering of Vande Mataram*







## Oath ceremony

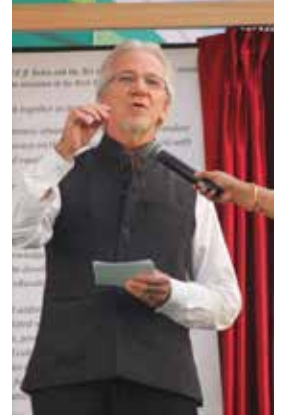
Swami Swatantranand ji, led the oath taking ceremony and everyone present took the solemn oath pertaining to the issues of VBI:

1. We will remove ignorance and bring about 100% literacy.
2. We will stand up against corruption. We will neither take bribes nor give bribes.
3. We will honour women and not allow female foeticide.
4. Poverty in our country is because of addictions. We will wipe out addictions to alcohol, tobacco, and drugs.
5. We will stand up against any religious and social injustice.
6. We will care for the environment and switch to chemical free farming to keep the future generations disease-free.
7. We promise to care and share and together build a violence-free, stress-free India.
8. I understand it's my sacred duty to vote & I will definitely vote.



## Art of Living & UNICEF India's partnership launch

The Art of Living & UNICEF India also signed a five year agreement & unveiled a pledge at the event represented by Sri Sri & Louis-Georges Arsenault pledge to support the girl child. They pledged to “raise awareness of the rights of girls”, “promote protective environment for girls”, “develop knowledge and change attitudes”, “identify and address the root causes underlying discriminatory practices related to girls”.



## Beyond the Event

### Participant's feedback

VBI Youth summit was not restricted to an event but was the start of a movement, inspiring, empowering each one of the nation to take their 'My Act's' on the issues, their small steps...in their own way as individuals or institutionally... Hereby we present stories, narratives, impact, germination...through articles, press meets, souvenir and state summits...

### Article

*“The renowned spiritualist and the founder of The Art of Living, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar launched ‘Volunteer for a better India’ in Delhi earlier this month. The program aims to address the key issues which society is fighting today including illiteracy, corruption and addiction and encourages every Indian to give up one hour of their day to assist these causes.*

*After the anti-corruption movement, this is the biggest gathering of volunteers for a social cause. The launch event at Ramlila Maidan attracted about 1.5 lacs people and the movement was launched simultaneously across the country in major cities like Mumbai and Bangalore.*

*Addressing the gathering, Mr Shankar said “We can't work amidst corruption. People – especially women, children, artists, dalits, minority communities and others – don't feel secure in the country. We need to get to the root of the problem and fix it.”*

*“Anger is essential to wake us up. But if we are angry without the right attitude and action plan, anger will burn us. It needs to be channeled. You give one hour every day for the country's betterment. Don't give this one hour from your study time but from your entertainment time,” he added.*

*The Delhi Medical Association is one of the first to come forward to join hands with the movement. President, Dr. Harish Gupta said, “15,000 Doctors of Delhi Medical Association have pledged to dedicate two Sundays a year for free consultation under the program, we are also looking forward to implement the same at the national level. This would make a big change in terms of health in the country.”*

*The project, initiated by Art of Living, is in partnership with several agencies of the UNO like UNODC, UNFPA, UNGCNI, UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNMC and other NGOs like FPA India, Heroes Project, DRISHTEE, INERELA + (Asia Pacific) & IICA, which are all working within different humanitarian spheres. The aim is not only to serve but also to create a new wave of volunteerism and advocacy to bring about an on-ground change and combat issues challenging society in a concerted effort towards nation building.*

Dubbed 'Volunteer for Better India' (VBI), the movement aims to bring people together to address the critical issues affecting India like HIV and AIDS, the declining child sex ratio, sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as various issues affecting youth, environmental sustainability, drug and substance abuse, inequality in education and entrepreneurial opportunities, corruption and child protection issues.

In line with the movement, Mr Shankar has also launched three helplines, one to counsel people with violent tendencies, another for legal aid and awareness and a third one to assist and counsel school children and their parents especially during the exams to handle the pressure. "The helplines will be launched across the country to help men and women facing domestic violence, addiction to alcohol and other issues so that they are not motivated to commit a crime," Mr Shankar added."

- written by a participant from Karnataka on his blog  
<http://in.reset.to/blog/creating-better-india-one-hour-time>

## Experiences

"I attained the National Youth Summit, 2013. Both the programmes were tremendous in my life which had made me to realize my individual responsibilities towards our community. On the first day of our workshop on 2nd Feb, 13 we got a very big platform and a friendly sharing environment by some young youth and Sri. Sri. Ravi Shankar Ji, UNICEF and many others. We had hours of talk on the various facts on the present issue of India i.e. Corruption. It seems to be very hard to remove it from the society as it has taken the shape of root for any work to get completed but we can take the necessary steps to prevent future generation from getting corrupted with well planned actions and steps and taking our self firstly the oath not to get corrupted in our daily life, I would like to share herewith our experience while returning from Delhi on 5th Feb, 13 by NE Express. We the six guys were in waiting list, so it was a problem for us to complete the journey, we said the TT of the train that we are the participants of "Volunteer For a Better India" coming from Delhi. We requested him, if he could provide us seats ,at least one or two will be enough for our journey, we will manage by adjusting among our groups, the TT asked for extra Rs. 200 for per set for which he was not going to provide us any money receipt, we agreed among each of us that being a participants of "Volunteer For a Better India" we should not become a part of corruption and we came to Ghy by adjusting anyhow and we are thankful to other passengers who offered us their birth for hours.

Again, on the second day of our workshop on 3rd Feb, 13 at Ramlila Maidan we got a very inspirational and motivation hours in the presence of many young youth, Sri.Sri. Ravi Sankar Ji, UNICEF, and others. We took the oath to give at least one hour of our day to the Nation."....."

**Ravikumar Choudhary,**  
Dispur College,  
B. COM. PART-III

\*\*\*\*\*

"Be the Change you want to be in the world" – Mahatma Gandhi

Inspired by the words of the Father of the Nation and wanting a change in the society and the country as a whole the young students of India joined hands together in the youth summit held at the Delhi Technological University (DTU), New Delhi on the 2nd February to discuss the various problems that is haunting the country. The summit brought together 1800 youths and delegates from different parts of India to create awareness on the above issues. The national youth summit was organized by the Art of Living, as part of its Volunteer for a Better India initiative. Joining hands with the Art of Living is the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Heroes Project, UNAIDS, INERELA, IICA, UNFPA, FPA India, UNICEF etc.

Lot of good and unforgettable moments have made our experience very rich and valuable, during the two days youth

summit. First of all, the entire journey has given us new learning moments and new knowledge. From the gathering of youth people who wanted a change in the system; it made us learn that “The country has a lot of problems” and these problems are because good people are apathetic. So the youth of the country having youthful blood must take charge to change the structure.

Another striking feature that has taught us a great lesson during the youth summit is that we don't want India to become a place, where people live with fear and bitterness; where people dread to travel. Gandhiji once said that, “there can be no real freedom in a country unless a woman can walk freely at midnight”. This dream of Gandhiji is what every young people in the country dreamt about. The sense of the whole humanity as one family to be able to build an ethical and just society.... a society where no crimes, corruption & discrimination based on gender, caste, religion, region etc., is possible... a society where women are safe and secure from the womb to the tomb.

During the sharing session we were taken up by the courage of two youths who spoke up against the stigma of the society. (i) A young boy infected by HIV AIDS and the discrimination he had to face in the society. He knows and wants that he should be accepted as anyone else in the society. A real courage indeed. (ii) A young girl who went against her family because she wants her own freedom. Dressing like a boy and behaving like one was what she wanted and no one can stop her from being so. A heroine to be saluted.

Another point to be noted is the willingness to do something for the betterment of the rural India, is what was experienced in another sharing session. The interests and the belief expressed by the various participant groups, was indeed heartening. The session has really helped in understanding the different aspects of the society and has helped in creating a very wonderful network of Leaders who can really make some difference to the greater society with their Vill to Lead.

Every young people in India have role models and what we saw was something amazing for us. The presence of Guruji Sri Sri Ravi Shankar in the midst of young people and the way the young people look at the spiritual leader was something to be appreciated. It conveys that we can win the hearts of the young people with gentleness and loving kindness.....”

**Bivan Rodrigues Mukhim**  
Don Bosco Institute of Management  
P.O. Joypur, Kharghuli, Guwahati, Assam  
&  
**Bikash Gogoi**  
Asst. Professor  
Don Bosco Institute of Management  
P.O. Joypur, Kharghuli, Guwahati, Assam.

\*\*\*\*\*

“My visit to the summit was successful as it fulfilled all my expectations and intentions behind the same. Fortunately I got to attend the workshop “Know It To Fight It” which dealt with the myths and facts about corruption. The workshop was very much interesting as all the day to day life situations and happenings were opening shared and discussed there. The workshop really ignited our soul and awakened the patriotic feeling within us.

Now I would like to share some of the main knowledge points which I learnt in the workshop.

#### KNOWLEDGE POINTS:

1. Corruption refers to doing things in the wrong way or not doing things in the right way in which it is ought to be done.

2. Causes of corruption are:
  - a) Lack of Patience
  - b) Tendency of demanding more than one's requirement.
  - c) Lack of spirituality and general morality.
  - d) Habit of feeling pride in breaking the laws.
  - e) Unawareness about laws.

3. Conclusion:

Thus Corruption issue can be solved by inculcating spirituality in each individual and making common man aware about the laws."

**Lohit Garg,**  
Royal Group of Institution,  
Guwahati, Assam.

\*\*\*\*\*

*"I have always pondered the challenges of the society such as corruption , poverty , gender discrimination etc . I used to blame others and thought that it is not my responsibility to work for the betterment of the country. But this summit brought about a change in me . I realised that since I am a citizen of this nation, I am equally responsible for whatever happens around me. Every person is equally responsible. We should all join hands and work together and volunteer for a better India. Our growth will lead to the growth of the entire nation. By volunteering one hour everyday or four hours every weekend we can bring change in our nation. I sincerely thank all the colleges present in the seminar. I express my overwhelming gratitude towards The Art of Living Foundation."*

**Kushal Agrawal,**  
Royal Group of Institution,  
Guwahati, Assam.

\*\*\*\*\*

*"When I went to Delhi to join the National Youth Summit under your kind disposal then I hardly imagined that VBI is a call of every citizen to make things better and to give a better society to the coming generation. It is a beginning of a realization, deep within all of us that our nation and its pride are of utmost importance to each one of its citizens. So it is our duty to open an Art of Living unit in every school and college and it spread to North-East accordingly. The state Government should also introduce a lesson regarding the same."*

**Hemant Kalita,**  
Asst Prof.  
Paschim Guwahati College.

\*\*\*\*\*

*On the return of the delegation from Delhi successfully, a press meet was held in the local press club, on the February 11, 2013. It was attended and covered by various local press houses, printing in English, Hindi and Assamese. The participants shared the experiences, insights and plan of action, they gathered from the summit.*

*Inspired by the media coverage an educational institution, Don Bosco Institute of Management and a government agency Sport Authority of Assam, had communicated their eagerness and willingness to support our organisation in creating a similar environment we had created on the 2nd and 3rd of February 2013 in Delhi, here in Guwahati,*

*for the youth of North East to participate, learn, experience, get inspired and practice as their preceding fellow-youth did in Delhi and had returned. With all your blessing, it surely has kindled hope, the journey has just started. I would like to quote a few lines from the poem Stopping by the Woods by Robert Frost, on behalf of all the enthusiastic and vibrant youth and all our participating members of AOL.*

**Savita Bhutani & Team (Dr. Sangeeta Dhar, Prabjyot Bedi & Madhusudhan Siotia).**  
State Teacher Co-ordinator (Assam), The Art of Living

*way forward ~ state youth summits*

Media coverage







The National Summit would be replicated at State levels, to enable deeper penetration and more empowerment amongst the youth. The state summits would be held at one of the best premier educational institutions of that state, mobilize decision maker youth from various educational institutions of that state, covering deeper district levels, where the partner agencies would conduct their respective workshops in the same manner as conducted through the National Youth summit at Delhi. Four states have committed towards State Summits this year:

1. Punjab (July 20, 2013)
2. Gujarat (Aug 10, 2013)
3. Uttar Pradesh (Sep 28, 2013)
4. Kerala (Nov 2, 2013)

*Annexure*

## "My Acts"

My Act which were the conclusive action plan from the breakaway workshop sessions can be viewed online, on the VBI website: [http://www.VFABI.org/community/public/theme\\_activity/download.php?filename=YOUTH%20Summit%20-%20My%20Act.ppt](http://www.VFABI.org/community/public/theme_activity/download.php?filename=YOUTH%20Summit%20-%20My%20Act.ppt)

A comprehensive table of the various 'My Acts' can though be viewed in this report (page 26)

## Sample FAQs & fact sheets from the breakaway workshop

Below are just sample FAQs and Factsheets from the Breakaway Workshop Sessions. Complete list of the same is available online on [www.vfabi.org](http://www.vfabi.org).

### Sample FAQs on "Vill to Lead"

Q. What is Entrepreneurship?

A. The capacity and willingness to develop, organize and manage a business venture along with any of its risks in order to make a profit. The most obvious example of entrepreneurship is the starting of new businesses. Entrepreneurial spirit is characterized by innovation and risk-taking, and is an essential part of a nation's ability to succeed in an ever changing and increasingly competitive global marketplace.

Q. What are the three P's axis of Sustainability?

A. People, Planet and Profit

Q. Who is a Sustainable Entrepreneur?

A. E.g - Look around yourself - the "Wallas" are promoters of Sustainability!!  
Dabbawallas, Presswallas, Kabariwalla/Scrap Collector are common Sustainable Entrepreneurs - Promoters of the 3Ps

- Use of No Petrol in supplying Products, use bicycles - Environmental Sustainability - Planet
- Effective Waste Managers - waste recycle and management - Environment Sustainability - Planet
- Preservers of Traditional system of consumption and services of every householder - Social Sustainability - People
- Sustainable Entrepreneurs - Run their business interdependently - Constitute the informal economy largest sectors in India - Economic Sustainability - Profit

Q. What are social innovations that promote sustainable livelihoods?

- A. A) Grass Root Innovations  
B) Promotion of Sustainable Services - mobility, health, food and water  
C) Promoters of Alternative Use of Technologies in rural and urban spheres

Q. How can entrepreneurship and innovations together achieve sustainability?

A. Innovate new ventures and businesses initiatives that would promote Responsible Business and sustainable Practices Use technology in social realms and efficiently utilize it for those at the Bottom of the pyramid (informal economy, rural populations, women etc) Undertake initiatives for the use of environmental friendly technologies.

Encourage technological Design for Sustainability - not merely focus on a product centric approach ie. just producing goods but the focus should rely upon the accountability in scale of production

and services should be accountable and useful, and be consumed by the people. Promoting Human rights, transparency and work towards inclusive growth in their own independent ventures.

### Sample FAQs on Declining Child Sex Ratio

Q. Who qualifies as an adolescent?

A. Young people in the age group 10-19 years qualify as adolescents.

Q. What is the difference between sex and sexuality?

A. Sex refers to the biology and anatomy of a person, while sexuality is an integral part of every individual's personality. Sexuality is expressed in the thoughts, emotions, desires and language.

Q. What is gender?

A. 'Gender' refers to the socially constructed roles of and relations between men and women. But the fact that gender attributes are socially constructed means that they are also amenable to change in ways that can make a society more just and equitable.

Q. What is child sex ratio?

A. In India Child Sex Ratio (CSR) is defined as the number of girls per 1000 boys in the 0 to 6 years age group.

Q. What is reproductive rights and sexual and reproductive health?

A. Three principles are key in the right-based approach to reproductive health:

Q. Individuals have the right to control their sexual and reproductive lives and make reproductive decisions without interference and coercion

A. The right to non-discrimination and respect for difference requires governments to ensure equal access to health care for everyone and to address the unique health needs of women, men and adolescents. Governments are obliged to make comprehensive reproductive health services available and remove barriers to care, in order to fulfill people's rights to life and health.

Q. What is gender discrimination?

A. Gender discrimination refers to the practice of granting or denying rights or privileges to a person based on their gender. Attitudes, conditions, or behaviors that promote stereotyping of social roles based on gender perpetuate gender discrimination. In India it is manifested in extreme forms such as gender-biased sex selection, child marriages, dowry, 'honor' killings and multiple forms of gender based violence. It is equally persistent in covert forms in everyday lives where restrictions are imposed on mobility of girls instead of teaching boys not to be aggressors of violence.

Q. How is gender discrimination perpetuated throughout a woman's life?

A. Gender discrimination throughout a woman's life has been captured in the table below:

Phase	Type
-------	------

Prenatal	Prenatal sex selection, battering during pregnancy, coerced pregnancy (rape during war)
Infancy	Female infanticide, emotional and physical abuse, differential access to food and medical care
Childhood	Genital cutting; incest and sexual abuse; differential access to food, medical care, and education; child prostitution
Adolescence	Dating and courtship violence, economically coerced sex, sexual abuse in the workplace, rape, sexual harassment, forced prostitution
Reproductive	Abuse of women by intimate partners, marital rape, dowry abuse and murders, partner homicide, psychological abuse, sexual abuse in the workplace, sexual harassment, rape, abuse of women with disabilities
Old Age	Abuse of widows, elder abuse (which affects mostly women)

Q. Is gender equality a concern for boys/men?

A. The achievement of gender equality implies changes for both men and women. More equitable relationships will need to be based on a redefinition of the rights and responsibilities of women and men in all spheres of life. It is therefore crucial not to overlook gender as an aspect of men's social identity. But the lives of men are just as strongly influenced by gender as those of women. Societal norms and practices about "masculinity" and expectations of men shape their behaviour. Men also have the right to assume a more nurturing role, and opportunities for them to do so should be promoted. Equally, however, men have responsibilities in regard to child health and to their own and their partners' sexual and reproductive health.

Q. What can be 'My Act'?

A. Gender discriminative practices prevail in popular spaces such as sexist lyrics of chartbuster songs or deeply entrenched patriarchal scenes in big blockbusters. Gender discrimination is seen in everyday lives, at homes and outside. If you are perceptive towards gender discrimination this is the time to act on it. 'My Act' is a simple one- 'Spot gender discrimination in popular spaces; Stop it in personal and public spaces.' Observe these everyday examples to defy them and make a difference. Don't forget to share with everyone on how you not only spotted but also stopped gender discrimination in everyday instances.

### Sample FAQs on Sexual-Reproductive Health and Rights

Q. What is comprehensive sexuality education and why is it important?

A. Comprehensive sexuality education is essential for young people to develop healthy and fulfilling lives. It refers to the access to information and education about sexuality and the knowledge and skills necessary to enjoy sexuality in a healthy and positive way. Comprehensive sexuality education must include information on gender, sexual and reproductive health and rights, HIV and AIDS, sexual citizenship, pleasure, violence, diversity and relationships.

Comprehensive sexuality education offers information on a full range of possibilities for young people to practice safer sex and does not just promote abstinence. There is a large and growing body of evidence showing that quality, comprehensive and rights-based sexuality education can help delay when young people have sex for the first time, reduce unprotected sex, decrease the number of sexual partners that young people have, increase contraceptive and condom use, and ultimately help decrease unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections among young people.

While these are important outcomes of comprehensive sexuality education, young people's access to

accurate information is a fundamental right on its own.

- Q. Are all persons sexual?
- A. All persons are sexual. This means that every human being has sex organs, sexual feelings, sexual urges, expression of these sexual urges (verbal and non verbal), and sexual behaviors. This exists in some aspect or the other right from the time a person is born and continues until death.
- Q. Is sexuality natural?
- A. Sexuality is a natural and health part of living. Curiosity is the means by which human beings learn about themselves and about the things around them; Compiled by: FPA India Page2 Sexuality is part and parcel of the human personality, and being curious about sexual matter is natural.
- Q. What does the 'evolving capacity of young people' mean?
- A. All people under 18 years should enjoy the full range of human rights, including sexual rights. The importance and relevance of some rights change as a person transitions from infancy to childhood to adolescence. Therefore, the rights of children and youth must be approached in a progressive and dynamic way.

The rights and protection of young people under the age of 18 differ from those of adults. Particular attention must be given to these differences in relation to sexual rights. The evolving capacity of young people to make decisions about their health and wellbeing must be recognized, while also ensuring appropriate protection of their best interests.

- Q. What is the difference between sexual rights and reproductive rights?
- A. Sexual rights and reproductive rights are closely related, but they are distinct from one another. Sexual rights relate to a person's sexuality, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual behaviors and sexual health. This is different from reproductive rights, which relate to a person's fertility, reproduction, reproductive health and parenthood. There can be a lot of overlap between the two concepts: for example, the right to choose whether or not to have children is both a reproductive right and a sexual right (when a couple chooses to have children through sex). However, the right to choose whether or not to have sex is more of a sexual right, because sexual acts are not necessarily done with the aim of having children. The fact is many aspects of sexuality are not directly aimed at reproduction. So, it is important to recognize that sexual rights are different from reproductive rights and equally important human rights for everyone, including young people.

### Sample FAQs on Girls Every Where Safe Every Where

- Q. What Is Violence ?
- A. Violence takes place when someone uses their strength or their position of power to hurt someone else on purpose, not by accident. Violence can take the following forms:
- Physical violence/abuse (e.g. battering, using objects to harm a person)
  - Sexual violence/abuse (e.g. touching, rape, forcing a person to take part or watch pornographic images)
  - Psychological violence/abuse (e.g. insulting, making a person feel worthless etc.)
  - Neglect can be considered a form of violence.

Both women and children across the world are vulnerable to violence as they often have less power and control in society. Violence can affect all women and children, independently of nationality, race, ethnic group, caste, class and religion. Violence in broad terms can also include other harmful practices and forms of violation of child rights, such as trafficking, labor exploitation, sexual exploitation and harmful practices, like child marriage.

Q. Why is violence against children taking place?

A. As violence is a manifestation of power and control over someone, children are more vulnerable than others for several reasons. Often they trust the adult that is being violent against them. Children have less access to other people and resources to report the cases and protect themselves. They have nowhere else to go and even if they report the act, they might not be listened to. Different factors contribute to violence against children: isolation and lack of support/services to families, unemployment, alcohol and substance abuse, weak implementation of the law, patriarchal values and little consideration of the role children, and particularly girls, play in society. Poverty does not generate violence. It is rather the lack of support to families that can lead parents to isolation and desperation which may manifest itself into violent behaviors.

Q. Where is VAC taking place?

A. Often violence takes place in close doors, at home, or school, or even in the community perpetrated by people that children trust. The perpetrator of violence usually employs force, threats or promises to ensure the child keeps silent. For instance, an adult sexually abusing a child will push the child to remain silent by threatening that he will kill his/her pet.

Q. Is VAC really a problem?

A. Violence is wide-spread across the world.

An estimate of between 500 million and 1.5 billion children experience violence annually.

86 per cent of children 2–14 years old experience physical punishment and/ or psychological aggression. Two out of three children are subject to physical punishment.

Data from 68 countries indicate that more than 50 per cent of girls and women 15–49 years old think that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife under certain circumstances in India.

A total of 33,098 crimes against children were reported in 2011, which is a steep 24 per cent rise from the 2010 figures. Cases of trafficking, abductions, and kidnapping increased in 2011.4

In a 2007 study:

2 in 3 children reported physical abuse

1 in 2 children reported a form of sexual abuse

1 in 2 children reported emotional abuse.

Q. What is the impact of different forms of violence on a child?

A. Violence can have many effects on children, which can still be felt many years later. Effects may include:

- Physical health problems, such as changes in the development of the brain, injuries, bruises and fractures,
- Difficulties in dealing with other people,

- Learning problems and difficulties in relationships,
- Emotional health problems including anxiety, depression, aggression or even wanting to kill him or herself,
- Being more likely to do dangerous things like using drugs or having sex at a very young age.

Q. How can we detect violence against children?

A. We see and hear manifestations of violence (battering, screaming etc).

The child may show some symptoms such as:

- bruises, scars and broken bones
- aggressive behavior,
- learning problems,
- nightmares,
- loss of appetite,
- excessively reserved or on the contrary excessively touchy behaviors,
- depression and anxiety

Q. What do we do if we detect violence?

A. Call 1098 – Childline and report the case.

Call the local Police Station.

If you are not sure, you can still call Childline for an advice or you may seek the assistance of a local NGO.

#### Resources:

1. Voices of Youth, <http://voicesofyouth.org/sections/violence-war-and-conflict/pages/the-big-picture>
2. Website of the Special Representative on Violence against Children, <http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/>
3. UNICEF, Progress for Children, 2009
4. Ministry of Women and Child Development, Study on Child Abuse, India 2007. <http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/>

#### Some Myths And Facts Around Domestic Violence

MYTH: Domestic violence and other forms of violence happens only in low-income families.

FACT: Domestic violence happens irrespective of family background. It is seen in rich and poor, urban, suburban and rural, among literate and illiterate people, in every part of the country/ world, in every racial, religious group. Evidence from the 2005 National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3) shows the nature and extent of domestic violence in all socioeconomic and cultural population subgroups in India. Spousal violence for women age 15-49 is reported as the most common form of domestic violence, with rural women more likely than urban women to have ever experienced physical violence since the age of 15, and to have experienced it in the past 12 months.



MYTH: Alcohol and drugs cause domestic violence.

FACT: Battering is a socially learned behaviour that is not necessarily the result mental illness or substance abuse. Men who batter women often use excessive drinking as an excuse for their violence. That is, they attempt to shirk personal responsibility for the problem by blaming physical violence on the effects of alcohol. It is important to point out, however, that many male alcoholics do not batter their female partners and numerous men who beat their female partners do not drink excessively. Some men with alcohol problems batter their female partners when they are drunk, others beat their female partners when they are sober, and some men with alcohol problems never batter their female partners. Interestingly, men who abuse their partners at home do not typically get into fights outside the home. Abusive men who need power and control usually abuse individuals who are seen as weaker, more submissive, or more vulnerable.

MYTH: Domestic violence is an anger control issue.

FACT: Domestic violence has nothing to do with anger. Anger is a tool abusers use to get what they want. We know abusers are actually very much in control because they can stop when someone knocks on the door or the phone rings; they often direct punches and kicks to parts of the body where the bruises are less likely to show; and they are not abusing everyone who makes them “angry”, but waits until there are no witnesses and abuses the one he says he loves.

MYTH: Most abusive actions are really just a couple of slaps and not harmful.

FACT: Violence with anybody whether be it a man or a woman is a violation of the most basic human right i.e right to a violence free life, mentioned in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Abusers usually escalate violent behaviors in frequency and intensity over time. There are long term impacts of violence not only on the woman herself about also her family. While a slap may not physically scar a woman it can cause deep psychological impact, poor mental health and low self esteem. Violence in various forms can also lead to fear, anxiety, miscarriages, suicide and permanent disability. It is also important to ask the question- why should anyone raise their hand on another person in an intimate relationship. Violence is never justified .

MYTH: Children aren't aware or get affected by the violence within their home.

FACT: Studies show that most children are aware of the violence directed at their mother. Men who abuse their partners are more likely to abuse the children in the home. Children raised in violent environment end up internalising violence. Studies have found that 30% of male children who have witnessed domestic violence end up becoming abusers as adults. It has been acknowledged in global studies that childhood witnessing of violence is a strong and consistent risk factor for adult partner violence.

MYTH: Domestic violence is a family matter, it is not a crime.

FACT: Domestic violence is a crime. It is against the law for anyone to physically harm or harass another person, whoever it maybe. A civil case can be registered against the abuser under the new Protection of Women against Domestic Violence Act 2005. In case the woman has been facing violence for dowry then one can register a case under IPC 498 A.

MYTH: Only when you are slapped, or hit or have a physical injury then it is violence.

FACT: Physical injury or hurt is not the only form of violence, the other forms of violence include verbal, mental, emotional, sexual and economic. Most of the other forms are not considered as violence and so are usually not reported.

## Resources:

1. The Absence of Rage: Domestic Violence is Not a Private Matter (December 15, 2000) [Accessed on: January 14, 2013] <http://www.cafra.org/spip.php?article348>
2. National Family Health Survey – 3, 2005-06, Chap. 15, pp. 493-524 [Accessed on: January 17, 2013] <http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pdf/FRIND3/00FrontMatter00.pdf>
3. Myths and Facts about Domestic Violence and Child Contact (April 2004) [Accessed on: January 22, 2013]
  - o Fact Sheet of UNODC
  - o Scorecard – World we Want

## The Organizing Team

<u>VBI Coordinators:</u>	Rahul Gautam & Atika Dhandia
<u>Partnerships and Youth Summit Strategist</u>	Dr. Richa Chopra
<u>National Coordinators:</u>	Shyamala Jhaveri Priyanka Bagaria
<u>Local Travel &amp; Accommodation</u>	Sakshi Bhardwaj
<u>Venue Logistics</u> (in a mentoring capacity):	Jaideep Nath
<u>The Art of Living State Coordinators</u>	
Assam	Savita Bhutani Prabhjyot Bedi
Chandigarh & Punjab	Dr. Anish Dua Paulomi Mukherjee Yogesh Gaur Sumit Mahajan
Gujarat	Deepak Punjabi Khyati Dasani
Haryana	Priyanka Ahuja Sarika Ahuja
Himachal	Shilpa Kuthiala
Karnataka	Rishikamal Jha Mohit Saharan Darshan Patil
Kerala	Aswin Nandakumar Shalini

Madhya Pradesh	Savita Vyas
Maharashtra	Vasudha Jhunjhunwala Seema Rao
Meghalaya	Sujit Chakraborty
New Delhi	Nirmal Matella Dr. Poonam Gulia Priyanka Bagaria
Rajasthan	Aparna Sharma Abhishek Soti
Uttar Pradesh	Anurag Arora Pradeep Pathak Sharda Dwivedi Anisha Sharma Meenakshi Arora

### *List of dignitaries*

Mr. Oussama Tawil, Country Coordinator, UNAIDS  
Fr. Philip Kuruvilla, Secretary, INERELA+ / IICA  
Ms. Sujata Natarajan, President, Family Planning Association of India  
Dr. Vandana Shiva  
Ms. Frederika Meijer, Representative, India and Bhutan, UNFPA  
Maulana Wahiduddin Khan  
Mr. Louis-Georges Arsenault, Country Representative, UNICEF India  
Ms. Caroline den Dulk, Chief, Advocacy and Communication, UNICEF India  
Ms. Cristina Albertin, Representative, UNODC Regional Office for South Asia  
Mr. Minar Pimple, Regional Director of Asia and Pacific, UNMC  
Mr. Hindol Sengupta, UNMC  
Dr. Harish Gupta, President, Delhi Medical Association  
Mr. Shashi Munjal, Co-chairman, PAN IIT  
Mr. Shiv Gopal Mishra, General Secretary of Railway Mazdoor Union  
Mr. Pooran Pandey, Executive Director, UNGCN  
Mr. Shatrughan Jiwnani from Bahai Community  
Mr. Satyan Mishra, Founder, DRISHTEE  
Mr. Roy Wadia, Executive Director, Heroes Project

Major Genral Satbir Singh, Vice Chairman, All India Ex Service Men movement

Mr. Shiv Gopal Mishra, General Secretary of Railway Mazdoor Union

Mr. Deepak Yadav, AIIMS

Dr. Suruchi Pant, UNODC

### Summit Agenda

Time	Session Details	Venue
10:00am – 10:55am	Plenary Session	Auditorium
10:55am – 11:10am	Movement to Workshop venues	NA
11:15am – 12:40pm	Seven parallel Break away Workshops	NA
	Getting to Zero! (UNAIDS et all)	Exposition Hall
	Spot It to Stop It! (UNFPA et all)	Senate Hall
	High on Life! (AIIMS)	Smart Classroom 1
	Know It to Fight It! (UNODC)	DSM Classroom
	Girls Everywhere, Safe Everywhere! (UNICEF)	Edusat Hall
	World We Want! (UNMC)	Seminar Hall (ECE Dept.)
	Vill to Lead! (DRISHTEE et all)	Smart Classroom 2
12:40pm – 12:55pm	Tea Break and movement to auditorium	NA
1:00pm – 1:45pm	Valedictory Session	Auditorium
1:55pm – 2:45pm	Lunch with visual treats of Flash mob and Nukkad Natak	Campus grounds (in front of the auditorium)
3:00pm – 4:00pm	Partner meetings with Youth & AOL State Coordinators	Smart Classroom 1

# Moments Relived





*What you aspire for the nation, collectively  
we can achieve.*

*~ H.H Sri Sri Ravi Shankar*

**Vyakti Vikas Kendra, India**  
No. 19, 39th A Cross, 11th Main,  
IV T Block, Jayanagar  
Bangalore - 560041  
Karnataka, Ph: 080-67433600,  
Email : [vfabi.youthsummit@gmail.com](mailto:vfabi.youthsummit@gmail.com), [admin@vvki.net](mailto:admin@vvki.net)

