

Road Safety through Self-Transformation

1. Project Summary

"For safety is not a gadget but a state of mind" – Eleanor Everet

Road accidents globally are increasing at an alarming trend becoming one of the leading causes of death and disability, with more than 1.3 million deaths and 50 million injuries per year currently. In Mauritius only we had 156 fatalities in the year 2012.

It is the young, poor and vulnerable largely falling prey to this deadly malaise. But one reassuring factor is that this problem could be resolved much more easily than issues like crime and disease, provided there is commensurate and immediate attention directed to it.

This project has been conceived by Academy for Integrated and Sustainable Development (AISD). It is based on the approach of focusing on the human element to facilitate long term positive changes in any system. Strategic activities have been designed to promote a sense of self-esteem and self - responsibility leading to self - transformation. The cumulative effect of change in 'human' perspectives and behavioral patterns, across various stakeholders, is believed to contribute to better road management systems, safer road users and safer roads.

The project focuses on road users but also has a multi-stakeholder approach considering that enhancing road safety would be possible only when one reaches diverse stakeholders like transport and traffic personnel, other road users especially children and youth, infrastructure developers, automobile companies, traffic authorities and legislators.

The Overall Aim of this project is to reduce the incidence of road accidents by inspiring and educating individuals to practice road safe behavior.

The Specific Objectives include:

1. To create awareness amongst multiple stakeholders about road safety and their role in making roads safer.
2. To popularize practical meditation as a means to enhance mental stability, change behaviour and concentration while travelling / driving.
3. To promote a culture of driving with dignity, courtesy and adherence to rules and de-glamorize speed and disobedience of rules.

Activities under the project can be broadly categorized into three sections:

- a) Direct action activities,
- b) Awareness Generation activities, and
- c) Educative activities

These include a variety of media and modes like:

- Citizens extending Thank You cards to drivers and other transport personnel
- A Road Safety Pledge drive
- Observance of World Day of Remembrance for Road Accident Victims
- Use of posters, hoardings, stickers for awareness
- Public interest audio messages in public buses
- Meditation commentaries and short talks on Radio
- Picture Exhibitions, Short talks and Video Shows at various institutions
- Quiz programme and/or Creative Competitions for schools, colleges, universities

Through all these activities, participants are helped to understand and touch the peace-loving, honest human spirit within them that inspires them to act with responsibility. This strengthens their ability to overcome the weak states of mind that drive them to addictions, road rage or irresponsible action.

Thus, solutions are offered to deal with various aspects of road safety that include:

1. Dealing with stress while driving / travelling
2. Enjoying one's driving / travelling experience without being distracted or distracting others
3. Driving under influence of alcohol and other kinds of substance abuse
4. Use of mobile phones while driving
5. Adherence to traffic rules

Spiritual education here, basically includes the following:

- Understanding inner processes within the self
- Managing the energy of one's thoughts, emotions, attitude, motives and memories
- Discovering the power of human values and the joy of living them practically

Knowledge of practical applications of these aspects is imparted to beneficiaries to address the road safety issues listed above.

Close Collaboration with the concerned authorities will be highly beneficial in helping the project reach larger masses across Mauritius. Hence, close co-operation is being sought as well offered by the implementing organization as a commitment to bring us closer to our vision of safer roads, safer families and a safer country.

2. Project Approach:

The project approach is guided by the aims and purpose of the Brahma Kumaris. All real change- big changes in the world and small changes in a single life - occurs as a sequence of subtle shifts, beginning with a change in awareness. A change in awareness precipitates a change in attitude; one's attitude colors one's vision; when we see the world in a new way, we can no longer take the same action we would have taken before; and our new actions generate a new world. So the subtle sequence, or the spiritual trajectory, for all real change is awareness, attitude, vision, action and the world.

The spiritual trajectory:

Awareness: 'My Life is Valuable; Divine Light guides me, protects me; I am Safe'.
Attitude: There is time and space for every individual, for every vehicle.
Vision: The world will be a safer place for all.
Action: I care for Life, I share road space.
World: My actions initiate the chain effect of positive change; this positive energy transcends all borders; All is Well; Safety prevails.

This approach touches the core of human consciousness; enabling one to reach the point of power within, where all transformation begins. It cuts across all professional and hierarchical barriers, adding worth to the specific contribution by personnel at every level of the ladder. It seeks recognition and authentication from top executives and facilitates efforts at all levels, including the grass-root level.

3. The Implementation:

The awareness campaign comprises of various activities across the country to sensitise the population on the need to bring behavioural changes through self-transformation actions. Details about the campaign are as follows:

PRESENTATION cum AWARENESS PROGRAMME

The awareness campaign in organization consists of a power point presentation on Safety through Self-Transformation, followed by a relaxation exercise, signing of Road safety pledge and distribution of pledge and thank you cards.

EXHIBITION

The exhibition consists of 20 big charts (7ft x 3ft) on causes of road accidents & and its remedies for the general public which will consist of practical tools and insights to manage and prevent road rage. Visitors will have the opportunity to explore and enjoy the depth of Silence Power through their inner journey.

3. The Implementing Organization:

The programme is implemented by Academy for Integrated and Sustainable Development (AISD) in collaboration with Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University

The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU) is an international organization popularly known as 'Brahma Kumaris'. BKWSU practices and teaches a form of meditation called Rajyoga. Rajyoga meditation offers a method and practice to support a process of transformation from body consciousness to soul consciousness. In doing so it nurtures a healthy balance between our inner and outer worlds. Through numerous service activities and partnerships, the organization promotes spiritual understanding, leadership with integrity, and elevated actions towards a better world.

For more information visit: www.brahmakumaris.mu

Brahma Kumaris at the United Nations

BKWSU is a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), in consultative status with UNICEF and affiliated to the Department of Public Information (DPI). It is also an accredited observer organization to UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). For more information visit

<http://un.brahmakumaris.org>