

The Vasudhaiva Ride

Projects of Grassroots Resilience from India to Scotland

Hello, we are Prashant Kumar, upcycling artist and Ben Reid-Howells, community organiser. Since January 2017, we have been working alongside local, marginal communities and global volunteers, building resilience and capacity for grassroots action as we travel from India to Scotland. Through our projects in sustainable building, skills-trainings and social bridge-building, we are demonstrating the power of community-led direct action to bring about positive change.

We call our journey the **Vasudhaiva Ride**, inspired by the Sanskrit phrase Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, which means **the whole world is one family**. Our work is locally rooted and globally connected. We travel by motorcycle. We are entirely community supported.

OUR PROJECTS SO FAR

1/ The Bombay Project: Accessible Education in Jijamata Nagar slum community. January 2017.

Workshops with students on peace and sustainable practices. Teacher training program to assist EDUCO NGO in their work to transition an inner-city public school to socially relevant teaching methods to empower the at-risk youth of Jijamata Nagar.

2/ The Pushkar Project: Redefining Affordable Housing in rural Rajasthan. February 2017.

Creating a model home to redefine affordable housing in rural India. Working with waste and natural materials we revived sustainable building techniques infused with upcycling design and created a model home for twelve people within a budget of USD 1,500\$. We hosted regional and global volunteers and employed local workers. This project was [awarded the Hildur Jackson Award](#) for regenerative solutions through the Global Ecovillage Network.



3/ The Bihar Project: Self-reliant Housing and a future Centre for Resilient Livelihood. April 2017 - March 2018.

Bihar, N. India, faces issues of poverty, unsustainable development and severe vulnerability to climate change. Over the course of eleven months, we created a prototype for self-reliant, resilient housing and sustainable development, and the basis for a skills training centre for resilient livelihood that Prashant Kumar will run to deliver trainings to local workers to become social entrepreneurs, bringing employment and sustainable economic development to Bihar.



4/ The Nepal Project: A Playground from Waste in rural Nepal. March - April 2018.

Construction of an upcycled playground at Kagati village elementary school and training with local women's groups in upcycling products to achieve economic independence. Train-the-trainer program with Nepali NGO's working to bring education to Nepal's marginalized communities.



5/ The Kyrgyzstan Project Series: Capacity Building in rural Kyrgyzstan. June - September 2018.

Organisational trainings, social entrepreneurs trainings and arts collaborations alongside farmers, craftswomen, local community leaders and NGOs and the national Artists Union of the Kyrgyz Republic to strengthen local initiatives working to create sustainable employment in rural areas that preserve Kyrgyz culture and environment.

6/ The Uzbekistan Project: Resourcing Uzbek Women's Shelters. October 2018.

Uzbekistan only has two women's shelters that offer comprehensive services and long-term safe homes and community to women who have gone through domestic abuse. We are connecting these two teams with international and regional volunteers with the skills they need to continue and grow their work.

7/ The Lesvos Project: Stoves in Refugee Camps. November 2018 - February 2019.

Millions of refugees have fled situations of violence, poverty and oppression to live in limbo in refugee camps in Mediterranean Europe where they are faced with inhumane realities and barriers to a free life. We worked alongside asylum seekers from West Africa, Afghanistan, Syria and beyond to create 300 stoves to warm families without heating in the Olive Grove Refugee over-flow camp. See project-launch video [here](#).



8/ The Scotland Project: Derelict Land into Community Spaces. June - July 2019.

The East Glasgow suburb of Easterhouse is one of the UK's poorest areas with a life expectancy ten years below West Glasgow. A small group is planning to transform the site of a now-abandoned school ground into a community centre with a food garden, skill workshops, social spaces and outdoor learning area for local community. We plan to assist in this project.

PREVIOUS EVENTS INCLUDE

Resilient Design, Social Change and Climate Justice. Three Day Seminar. BIT Architectural College, Patna, Bihar. India. September 2017.

Environment Sustainability and Societies Lecture Series. Graduate Showcase: Keynote Speaker. College of Sustainability, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada. K'jipuktuk, Mi'kmaq Territory. November 2017.

Reflective Education as a Force for Peace. Student and Teacher Trainings. Mahindra United World College of India. Pune, India. October 2017.

Building Resilient Futures from Waste. The Natural Homes Conference 2018. Prague, Czech Republic. March 2018.

Building Peace, Community, Resilient Designs. TEDx Jacobs University. TED.com. March 2018.

PRESS

The Guardian. UK.

<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/apr/17/playgrounds-of-rubbish-can-upcycling-help-kathmandu-defeat-trash>

The Times. UK.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/ben-reid-howells-and-prashant-kumar-two-men-and-a-dog-s-motorbike-journey-from-india-to-scotland-rlp0glffc>

The Economic Times. India.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/magazines/travel/soul-riders-from-india-to-scotland-on-bikes-and-on-a-mission/articleshow/58554886.cms>

HOW WE FUND OUR WORK

While our work has grown significantly in scale, we remain a community-funded endeavour. Our three pillars of support are: international crowd-funding, relentless cost-cutting and our own resources.

AREAS OF WORK

Our work is needs based. We work for free, in exchange for a roof and food alongside the communities we collaborate with.

1/COMMUNITY & ORGANISATIONAL TRAININGS

- Organisational Frameworks: Clarifying Vision, Mission, Means, Programs, and thus,
- Articulating team/organisational priorities; creating timelines;
- Mapping of community issues and resources; Multi stakeholder analysis;
- Avoiding burnout; maintaining long-term vision
- Methods of collaboration
- Open Space Technology sessions: tool for problem solving, ideation.
- Facilitation 101: team dynamics; group stages; conflict management; effective communication
- practices for team/community building
- intercultural communication

2/LEARNING & EDUCATION

- holistic curriculum development
- project based learning / service-based learning / values-based learning
- intercultural programming, teaching
- creating active learners

3/PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE DVPT. & HARD SKILLS TRAINING

- using upcycled waste materials--e.g. scrap metal / wood / plastics--which can be applied to:
- create infrastructure: gardens, outdoor play/learning-spaces / community spaces
- develop trades-skills (welding, carpentry, etc) through artistic applications of same materials
- thus building capacity for economic development: earning from waste materials converted through upcycling into high-value functional +/- artistic products

4/RESILIENT DESIGN

- hybridized, affordable construction methods with natural +/- upcycled +/- conventional materials
- self-reliant design: locally sourced materials and design; urban gardening; water recycling; integrated systems

5/SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- making a business plan: theory of change, theory of action
- product design, marketing, sales

6/ART

- artistic process, concept, application in community context, etc
- designing artists residencies, connections for international residencies
- art as activism / service

CALL TO ACTION: Join the global collective of the Vasudhaiva Ride.

The Vasudhaiva Ride is a callout for engagement, locally and globally. Contact us to connect.

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