

GREENPEACE
ग्रीनपीस

A hand holding a globe of the Earth. The top of the globe is engulfed in bright orange and yellow flames. From the bottom of the globe, a network of blue and green lines resembling tree roots or veins extends downwards. The background is dark with some orange and red particles.

WITNESS

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EDITORIAL

Binu Jacob
Executive Director
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As we embark on yet another journey around the sun, it is a struggle to not write about challenges and to focus on hope. Our thoughts are with the people caught up in the crossfire in the Ukraine war or driven from their homes. This conflict is a tragedy for the most vulnerable from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions who depended on wheat imports from both Russia and Ukraine. The challenges of the pandemic and now this war is hard on the poor of the world. Along with these crises, the climate too has been unforgiving last year with 1,750 deaths from 'extreme weather' events occurring across the country as reported by the India Meteorological Department. Over the first three months of the new year, the report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Working Group-II on the impacts of climate change and Greenpeace India's reports like 'Are Cities In Southern India Breathing Safe Air' and the 'World Air Quality Report 2021' by IQAir have highlighted the increasing climate & health emergency that Indians are facing. Hope is not wishful thinking in these times, but hard work by individuals, civil society and the concerned governments around the world.

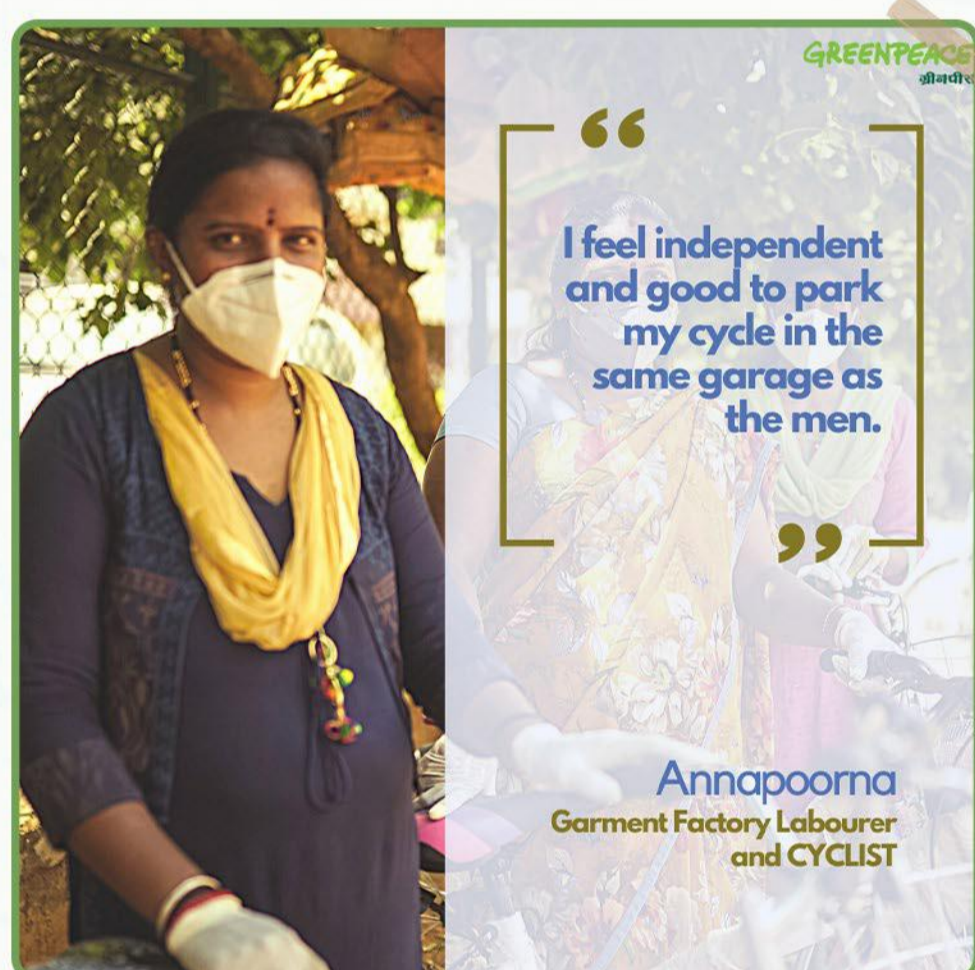
We along with allies were able to bring forth the lack of scientific evidence behind the much-hyped rice fortification program with a report named 'Adding Diversity To Plate'. It is true that interventions are needed to tackle malnutrition and anaemia but we have local diverse food options besides established scientific practices. It also showcases the way women performing organic farming from Jamui, Bihar, have secured their nutrition by growing organic kitchen gardens.

As the pandemic loosened its chokehold, it was possible for us to bolster our on-ground activities, involving the Power The Pedal community-women, volunteers, and allies. With the support from our individual donors, Greenpeace was able to train these women in cycling and is nearing the end of its first round of (500) cycle distribution.

My best wishes for all grassroots movements by the common people of our country!

WOMEN FIGHTING GENDER BARRIERS & CLIMATE CHANGE USING CYCLES

Power The Pedal is our ongoing campaign where we have partnered with women from lower-income communities in Delhi, Bangalore, and other cities to access safe transportation through cycling. These women have taken up cycling as their mode of commute, and by doing so they are not only fighting air pollution but also **demanding what is rightfully theirs** – access to safe, empowering, and accessible transport.



“
I feel independent
and good to park
my cycle in the
same garage as
the men.
”

Annapoorna
Garment Factory Labourer
and CYCLIST

We have a community of 500 cyclists who are out on the streets reclaiming their space and silently fighting air - pollution. Today, women are challenging gender and socio- economic barriers, while also fighting climate change.

New Delhi: Most polluted Capital City in the world

2021 **World Air Quality Report**, released in March 2022, presents an overview of the state of global air quality in 2021. According to the report, **India ranks fifth in the world** with an average of $58.1\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ PM2.5 concentration. The lockdown did not help in bringing down the pollution levels in the country. Rather, there has been an increase in PM levels in cities like Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru. In 2021, India also became home to **11 of the 15 most polluted cities** in Central and South Asia. **No cities in the country**

met the **WHO air quality** guideline of $5\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. Rising pollution has an adverse impact on our health as it can increase the risk of respiratory infections, heart disease, and lung cancer.

This report highlights the immediate requirement of action on all fronts to ensure we have clean and safe air to breathe.

It's time for a cycle revolution!

Studies show that cars occupy nearly 76% of the road space in Bengaluru, and these numbers keep growing over time. This can largely be blamed on the city's infrastructure that encourages private transport, pushing cycles and public transport to the margins.

On February 27, 2022, Greenpeace India did a projection on the Kempegowda tower with a message - **Cycle is the solution!** The

projection image is a celebration of the cyclist community who are silently fighting air pollution in Indian urban spaces. The

Kempegowda Tower at Corporation Circle was chosen, as it honours Kempegowda, the founder of Bengaluru who was a visionary urban planner who built multiple markets to support artisans and local traders and hundreds of man-made lakes and tanks that continue to keep Bengaluru cool. Such is the long-term vision we need today to rethink our car-centric city infrastructure. A cycle revolution in our cities will make our streets cleaner, safer, and more accessible to all.

Are cities in southern India breathing safe air?

Greenpeace India released a report on the **air quality analysis** of 10 cities in South India. The analysis of CPCB data in this report finds that annual average levels of PM2.5 and PM10 in the 10 south Indian cities have exceeded the WHO revised standards manifold. The report goes on to provide recommendations and actions that can be taken to address the air pollution crisis: seeking alternative resources to fossil fuels, adopting updated WHO air pollution guidelines, and more. If we don't act now, these south Indian cities are not too far behind cities like Delhi in terms of the health and economic impact of air pollution.



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NO PROOF THAT FORTIFICATION IS A SOLUTION TO NUTRITIONAL SECURITY: RTI's

To address the issue of malnutrition and anaemia, the Government of India has proposed fortification of rice where micronutrients such as B12, folic acid, and iron will be added to improve its nutritional value. Greenpeace India struggled to find any relevant data available in the public domain that could validate the need for such a policy, hence, we filed multiple RTIs with different government agencies. Upon receiving the response from these RTIs it was found that there is a **lack of substantial scientific** evidence to support fortification as a solution to the issue of malnutrition in India.

Based on the findings through the RTIs, Greenpeace India released a report on 4 February 2022 - **Adding Diversity to the Plate**. This report brings to light the lack of adequate scientific data to validate this recent policy move based on a series of Right to Information (RTI) requests. According to one of the responses to the RTI, The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution could not provide any specific survey or data for the basis for fortification. Similarly, another RTI response from the Indian Council of Medical Research, the National Institute of Nutrition, has mentioned that **no study has been conducted to study the impact of chemically fortified food**.

The report emphasizes the need to focus on dietary diversity and enhanced access to nutritional food to tackle malnutrition and the growing issue of climate change-induced food scarcity. With a lack of diligent research on the impact of fortification of rice, it would be dangerous to implement it on a national scale. A sound approach would be to focus on nutritional diversity where the government focuses on promoting diverse foods like cereals, pulses, fruits, vegetables, and animal-based diets rather than focus on fortified rice.

Which meal would you prefer?



JAMUI FARMERS PROVIDE ORGANIC FARMING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE

The farmers from Jamui and Bhojpur districts of Bihar have set an example for the world with their dedication and unflinching efforts in organic farming, that is, growing safe, nutritious, and diverse crops. Based on their experiences in the field, **the farmers provided multiple suggestions** to the Bihar Government to be included in the budget. Some of the suggestions included providing incentives to farmers practising organic farming, declaring minimum support prices for organic produce, and much more. In their suggestions, the farmers focused on collective growth rather than individual growth for the greater good of the state of Bihar.

CHIEF MINISTER OF BIHAR VISITS JAMUI

Shri Nitish Kumar, Chief Minister of Bihar, visited Jamui where the local administration showcased the Bihar Living Soils Ecological Agricultural Model. The Bihar Living Soils team along with Kedia and Tari Dabil farmers created a 3D model of Biogas plants, vermicomposting units, cemented cattle sheds with cattle urine collection tanks, and drip irrigation system and much more that help farmers reduce their agricultural input costs and significantly cut resource abuse and carbon emissions. More than 1,500 people appreciated this model including the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, Finance Minister, and Education Minister.

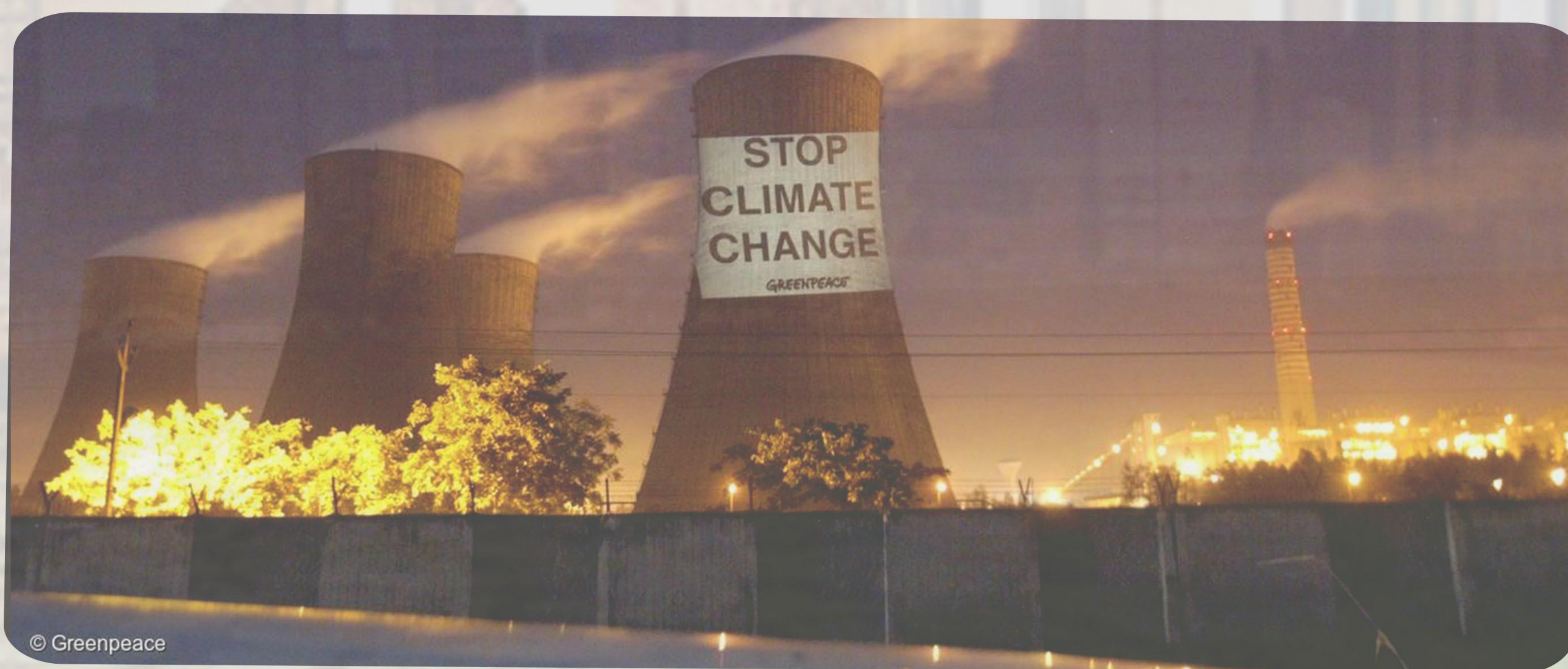
JAMUI SCHOOL KITCHEN GARDEN



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IPCC REPORT IS A MOMENT TO REDEFINE CLIMATE POLITICS

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its Working Group II (WG-II) report in February 2022, where it has provided details on how severe is the impact of climate change and how it's causing widespread losses and damages to people and ecosystems across the globe. The IPCC WG-II report also lays focus on the crucial importance of fighting the interconnected climate and nature crises together. Only by protecting and restoring ecosystems can we build their resilience towards warming, and protect all the services that human well-being depends on. The report also highlights how extreme events are impacting cities, settlements, and related infrastructure. It points out the need for an adequate system that can support climate resilience, mitigation, and enable climate adaptation in cities. Commenting on the report,



Avinash Chanchal, Campaign Manager at Greenpeace India said, *“Today’s updated IPCC findings make it clear that climate change is a human rights issue. We now have enough facts to say that the most vulnerable and poor communities in the global south are already facing a greater risk from the climate crisis and collective efforts are needed to deter that. Mortality from extreme weather events is staggering and higher than ever in climate-vulnerable countries like India. The government and corporations must ensure that any climate action has to address the growing gap in adaptation, losses, damage, and deep injustices. The world leaders are required to face the facts emerging from the report with brutal honesty and responsibility so that we can find solutions that match the scale of the interconnected challenges.”* The report clearly states the importance of doing more to fight climate change. As governments across the world have admitted that they have not done enough to address the Paris Climate Agreement's 1.5°C warming limit, this report will help in defining climate politics in the future.

THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW!

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GLOBAL & NATIONAL NEWS

TOTAL ENERGIES GIVES UP NEW FACILITY

Greenpeace France, along with La Sphinx, an association of students and former students of Polytechnique, and Anticor have been pushing to prevent the building of an R&D facility on the college campus. Now, after years of mobilisation, including a criminal complaint and three administrative appeals, the **Fossil Free Revolution (FFR) campaign** has a big win: Big Oil TotalEnergies decided to cancel its project on the campus of the most renowned French engineering school, Ecole Polytechnique. This is a huge victory for everyone involved as it is a step towards preventing the harmful influence of the fossil fuel industry on higher education establishments and the brains of future national executives.

GREENPEACE INDIA PARTICIPATES IN ASIA PACIFIC SOCIAL FORUM

Greenpeace India along with Mausam, Kalpavriksh, and Vikalp Sangam participated in the Asia Pacific Social Forum where we organized a session on “Reimagining the just transition”. The Asia Pacific Social Forum is an online event in which organizations from across the world participated. We organized a session on the ‘Just Transition’ in regards to the climate and its impact. Just Transition is a vision-driven, unifying, and place-based set of principles, procedures, and activities that help people transition from an extractive to a regenerative economy. This entails a waste-free, holistic approach to the production and consumption cycles. The transition itself must be reasonable and equal, with restitution for past wrongs and new power arrangements for the future. The outcome will never be just if the transition process is not just. Just Transition is a phrase that explains where we're headed as well as how we'll get there.

GREENPEACE INDIA'S RESPONSE TO THE UNION BUDGET

The Union Budget closely followed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Glasgow COP26. This laid down high expectations from the union budget to consist of climate change mitigation and adaptation plans. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's speeches and several announcements made, focused on the urgency of the climate crisis that the country is currently facing. Unfortunately, the documents available in the public domain do not shine a light on the mitigation measures.

Greenpeace India analyzed the budget to find that the government is taking active measures like acknowledging the climate crisis, introducing EVs, and boost to organic farming. While trying to encapsulate the issue of climate change in the budget, it also failed to address a few issues like allocation of NCAP, clarity on climate action, focus on clean equitable transport, and reduction of the use of chemical fertilizers.

While the finance minister acknowledged the strong negative impact of climate change in her speech, the government did not increase the Climate Change Action Plan and National Adaptation Fund budget. There is enough evidence that the climate crisis/extreme weather events are impacting most vulnerable communities and they need support to mitigate and adapt to climate change.”

– Avinash Kumar Chanchal, Campaign Manager, Greenpeace India

“The finance minister in her speech spoke about chemical-free natural farming and the International Year of Millets. While we welcome these moves, we feel that the crisis of toxic pesticides and fertilizers has not been adequately addressed.

– Ishteyaque Ahmed, Senior Campaigner, Greenpeace India

THE WOMEN OF GREENPEACE INDIA

Women are disproportionately affected during instances of climate change due to social, cultural, and economic factors. Our world can only become sustainable when we achieve a just, equitable, compassionate, and respectful world. On this International Women's Day **Greenpeace India celebrated** the passionate women who power our campaigns and make change happen.

"I believe my strength as a woman comes from the community of determined, passionate, fearless women that surround me. An unapologetically independent woman unknowingly empowers numerous young girls. That is who I aspire to be."



**- Tamanna Sengupta,
Communications Consultant at Greenpeace India**

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A woman with dark hair, wearing a green dress and a red shawl, is shown from the waist up. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a textured, light-colored wall.

Impact Box

Mangla Gowri -

“When I first moved to a big city like Bengaluru, I felt intimidated by the heavy traffic. But becoming a cyclist has changed that feeling. I am more confident now.”

Mangala Gowri, a garment factory worker from Bengaluru, India is bringing about a cycle revolution in her community. Waking up at 6 AM to perform all the household chores and walking to her workplace on an empty stomach changed when she got a cycle through our Power the Pedal campaign. Commuting to the workplace with the cycle reduced her travel time by half, now giving her time to rest, spend time with her loved ones, and to EAT!

Many more women like Mangla Gowri have taken up cycle as their mode of transportation and are silently fighting air pollution in our cities. It's high time we chart the path to help them continue their work and transform into sustainable cities.

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