Data and the Stories It Can Tell: Strengthening the Air Quality Narrative in Nepal

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What is Drishti Kathmandu?

A project by concerned citizens, run by volunteers, to give voice to our concerns about the growing air pollution problem in Kathmandu Valley by:

1. **Raising Awareness** about the toxic air pollution in Kathmandu Valley and its harmful effects

2. **Advocating** for our right to breathe clean air

3. **Collaborating and Supporting** individual action, citizens movements, government and institutions working together to make the air we breathe, breathable
Credible Data is a pre-condition to a successful campaign to raise awareness – Installed a network of air quality monitors across Kathmandu Valley and make the data accessible

**Challenges**

- Cost
- Accuracy
- Coverage

**Solution**

- Low cost sensors – Rs. 20-25k
- Calibration
- 12-16 devices across the Valley
Raising Awareness – What is the Data telling us

Monthly PM2.5
Jul, ‘16 – Jun ‘18

1. Seasonal and Diurnal Variation
2. Reasonable Accuracy
Social media most effective at raising awareness among youth and tech-savvy adults. More presence needed on Twitter and more communications in Nepali language.

Data is easily and openly accessible across multiple platforms.
There are now many agencies collecting air quality data across Nepal and we believe these efforts will be sustainable unlike in the past.

Drishti has now shifted focus to more advocacy and collaboration with like minded organizations.

You can make a difference and if you think your voice doesn’t count then think again -

– Think Dr. Govind KC
– Think Jan Andolan 1 & 2
– Think Drishti
Advocacy and Collaboration – Partnership

• Working with our elected representatives and bureaucracy
• Bringing like minded organizations and individuals together
• Constructive and collaborative partnerships
On World Environment Day 250 concerned citizens (including over 150 students from Rato Bangla) marched, peacefully but purposefully to the Department of Roads. In less than one week after the protest, roads in the Jhamiskhel and Bakhundole area were paved. When citizens mobilize, things happen.
Advocacy and Collaboration – Areas of focus

- Vehicles
- Open Burning
- Construction & Road Dust
- Gensets
- Brick Kilns

For Healthy Air, **All 4 Sources Must be Reduced**

No longer a major source, thanks to NEA!
• **Air quality monitoring Network**
  – Replace and recalibrate devices
  – Expand the network

• **Campaigns**
  – Educate and mobilize youth
  – Work with Department of Transportation on effective vehicle emission testing
  – Work with elected representatives in the Valley to implement the ban on open waste burning
  – Continue to put pressure on DoR, Melamchi Water Project, Municipality to embrace and implement environmentally friendly construction practices
Thank you for caring about the air we breathe

Drishti Kathmandu