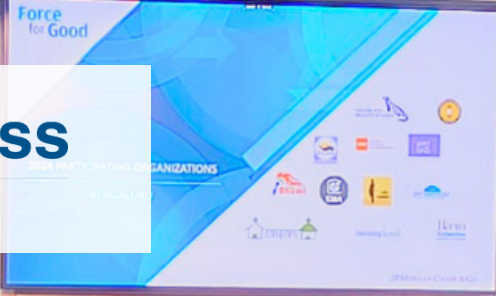




# Enable Me Access

Accessibility & Inclusion for all



# BLUEPRINT FOR INCLUSIVITY

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF ENABLE ME ACCESS

1ST QUARTER • JANUARY TO MARCH 2024

## A Thrilling First Quarter of 2024: Building Momentum for Impact!

Welcome to the first edition of our 2024 quarterly newsletter! We're excited to share the whirlwind journey of the past three months (January-March 2024). It's been a time of dynamic growth, filled with both **strategic outreach and the thrilling launch of impactful projects.**

We kicked things off with a focus on networking and relationship-building, laying the groundwork for collaboration and success. This foundation has propelled us into actively implementing projects that are making a real difference.

Additionally, we've begun development on some long-term initiatives, designed to be enduring tools for our organization and stakeholders.

These projects will continue to evolve and empower us all in the months and years to come.

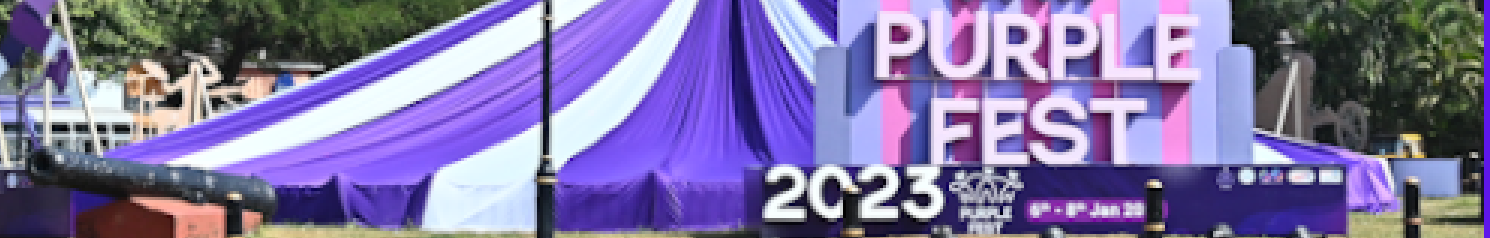
We're truly elated to share these initial strides with you. These past three months have instilled in us a renewed sense of hope, and we're energized by the moments of joy and impact we've witnessed on the ground.

Stay tuned as we delve deeper into the specifics of our accomplishments and future plans in the following sections of this newsletter!

*"Small actions, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world."*

- Howard Zinn





## Purple Festival 2024: An Epitome Towards Inclusion in India

The International Purple Fest took place in Goa this year, hosted by the Office of the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Goa. This was one of India's first inclusive festivals celebrating persons with disabilities, emphasizing the importance of creating an inclusive world that highlights unity and diversity.

She voiced a major concern that inaccessible environments make it impossible for people with mobility impairments to come out. She urged to make Goa and its tourism accessible for all including people with disabilities, as of now, hardly any tourist sites or accommodation facilities serve the purpose.



The event spotlighted 22 Purple Ambassadors, each representing one of the 21 types of disabilities listed under the RPwD Act, 2016 (including one with Spinal Cord Injury). From EMA, Anubha was the purple ambassador for Muscular dystrophy.

During the meeting with state and central commissioners of persons with disabilities, she proposed to work on **training on Accessibility and Universal design among urban and town planning departments** and establishing electronic systems for building plan approvals to make the compliance check transparent.

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Image: From Purple Fest 2024 Goa, Anubha shares vision of EMA.



Image: From Purple Fest 2024 Goa

# Universal Design: Why Every Architect Needs to Be on Board

ANUBHA SINGHAL

Imagine a world where everyone can move freely and confidently through their environment, regardless of age, ability, or circumstance. This is the power of Universal Design (UD). UD goes beyond just ramps and accessible bathrooms; it's a philosophy of creating spaces that are usable by everyone, to the greatest extent possible. From wide doorways to clear signage, UD benefits everyone, not just those with disabilities.

As an architect with a disability, My journey has been an eye-opener, a story that reflects the evolving yet incomplete conversation around Universal and accessible design in Indian architecture.

Diagnosed with a rare, progressive form of muscular dystrophy, I found myself navigating a world that was suddenly filled with obstacles. This personal experience is a stark reminder of how quickly life can change. It's a cautionary tale for architects, highlighting the critical need for UD education. My architectural training, like many others, lacked any focus on UD principles.

I vividly recall the dismissive comments during my thesis presentation: "Why do people with disabilities need to come out of their houses?" This pervasive attitude, though thankfully fading, highlights a critical knowledge gap within the architectural fraternity.

Fortunately, the discourse is shifting. Today, there's a growing recognition of UD's importance. However, the question remains – **are we, as architects, truly well-informed on the subject?**

## The Devil's in the Details

What always stuns me is encountering fancy staircases with open risers and zero handrails. Another prime illustration is the lack of color contrast. Imagine navigating a building where there's no clear distinction between floor levels or signage blends into the background. This isn't just an issue for the person with vision impairment; it can be a safety hazard for anyone at night or an elderly.

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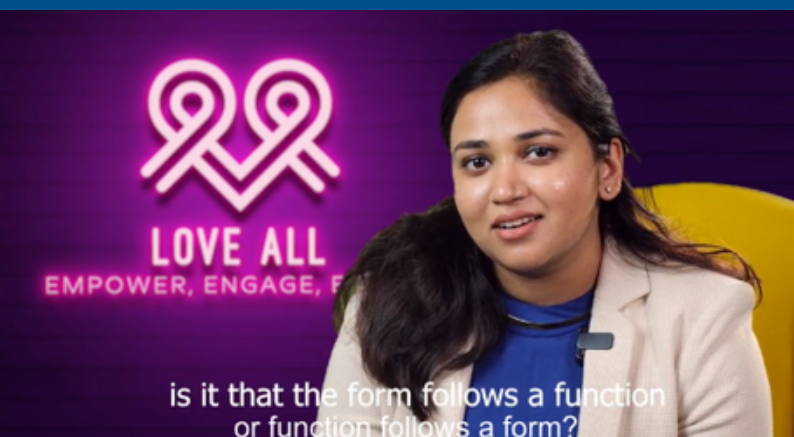




Image: from Empowering Inclusion: Accessibility Standards One - Day Training Program

## Breaking Down Barriers: EMA Empowers Aurangabad with Dynamic Accessibility Training



### Getting it Real

The immediate effects of the session happened even before the trainers arrived. EMA will not conduct these sessions without first evaluating the facilities at the venue to make sure that the participants are not humiliated or inconvenienced by inaccessible facilities. There was a single step level change for which the hotel had fabricated a small but useful ramp.

Another immediate effect was that in the first session the **subject of language and etiquette was discussed** and one important aspect of this is the use of patronizing, condescending, meaningless and sometimes insulting adjectives.

So the delegates learnt that it was not OK to use “Special Needs”, “Differently Abled”, “Handicapped”, “Divyangjan” etc and that it was universally preferred and acceptable to say, person first, Person with Disabilities, student with multiple disabilities, Lawyer with visual impairment, blind, artist with cognitive impairment etc. The delegates immediately found this a revelation and started to experiment with using this more meaningful and respectful language. This interactive session, held at Hotel Amarpreet, tackled the critical issue of accessibility in built environments.

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Image: from Empowering Inclusion: Accessibility Standards One - Day Training Program



Image: From JPMC Kick off event of Force For Good program

## Launching Into Technical Development with JPMC

Enable Me Access (EMA) is honored to be partnering with JPMorgan Chase's Force For Good program! This incredible initiative connects JPMC's talented employees with nonprofits like EMA to develop impactful tech solutions.

JPMorgan Chase's Force for Good champions social causes that empower communities. Through this collaboration, EMA will receive expert support to make our database user-friendly and accessible to everyone. The revolutionary tool will promote disability inclusion and educate on accessibility standards.

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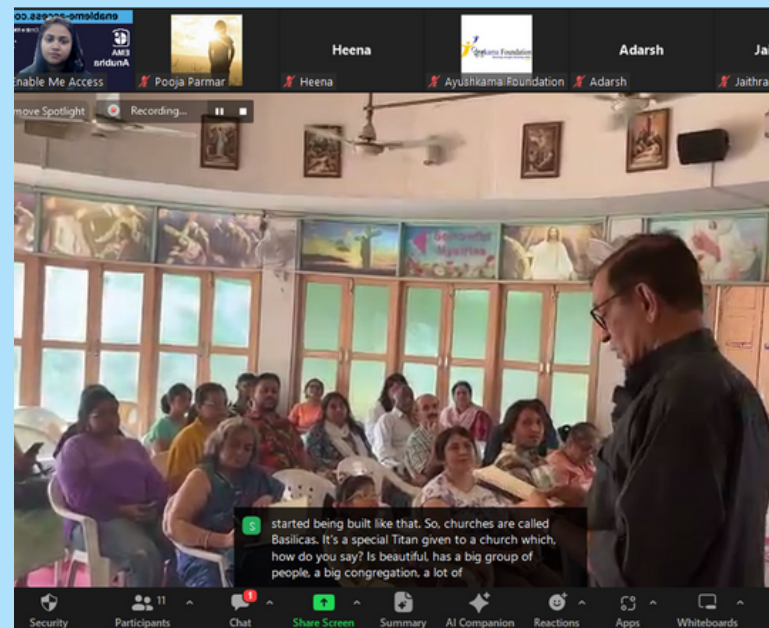


## E-Heritage Walk: Tour the Churches of Fatehgunj

On March 23rd, 2024 the Heritage Trust hosted a two-hour special tour commemorating the sacred season of Lent. This tour explored the cultural heritage of Fatehgunj, with its enchanting history of the churches narrated by the Church Pastors themselves.

EMA, in collaboration with the Heritage Trust, introduced "**E-Heritage Walk**," allowing participants with limited mobility or physical disabilities to tour the churches of Fatehgunj online for an immersive, inclusive, and accessible experience.

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Picture credits: World Bank

### Importance of Inclusive Education:

Education is a cornerstone of a successful society. It empowers individuals and shapes their future. EMA believes that this ideal extends beyond basic access to creating truly inclusive environments. Schools, colleges, and universities should foster learning environments where students and staff with and without disabilities can learn alongside one another, benefiting from a shared educational experience.

### EMA's Accessibility Assessment Services:

EMA offers comprehensive accessibility assessments designed to transform educational settings into universally accessible built environments. We recently partnered with a boarding school to conduct a preliminary accessibility assessment. **This evaluation ensured compliance with established accessibility standards and identified areas for improvement.**

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## Accessibility in Educational Settings: A Comprehensive Approach

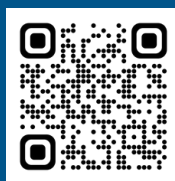


### YOUR DONATION, MAKES A DIFFERENCE !

Imagine a world where everyone feels welcome. With your support, we can make it a reality. Your donation helps us **educate, empower, and create lasting change** with our revolutionary tools. Be a part of this meaningful journey. Donate and help us build a more inclusive future for all.

*Keep an eye on our website for upcoming blogs and also social media- Instagram, facebook and LinkedIn for more updates.*

**Thank you !**



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### EMA in Media:

1. Article published in IMPACT Magazine. [Read Here](#) (Pg. 28)
2. Training program at Aurangabad, Maharashtra- Newspaper clippings [Images Here](#)
3. Sharing of Life journey and EMA's Vision at Media interview by Love All movement - Enable India. [Watch Video](#)

