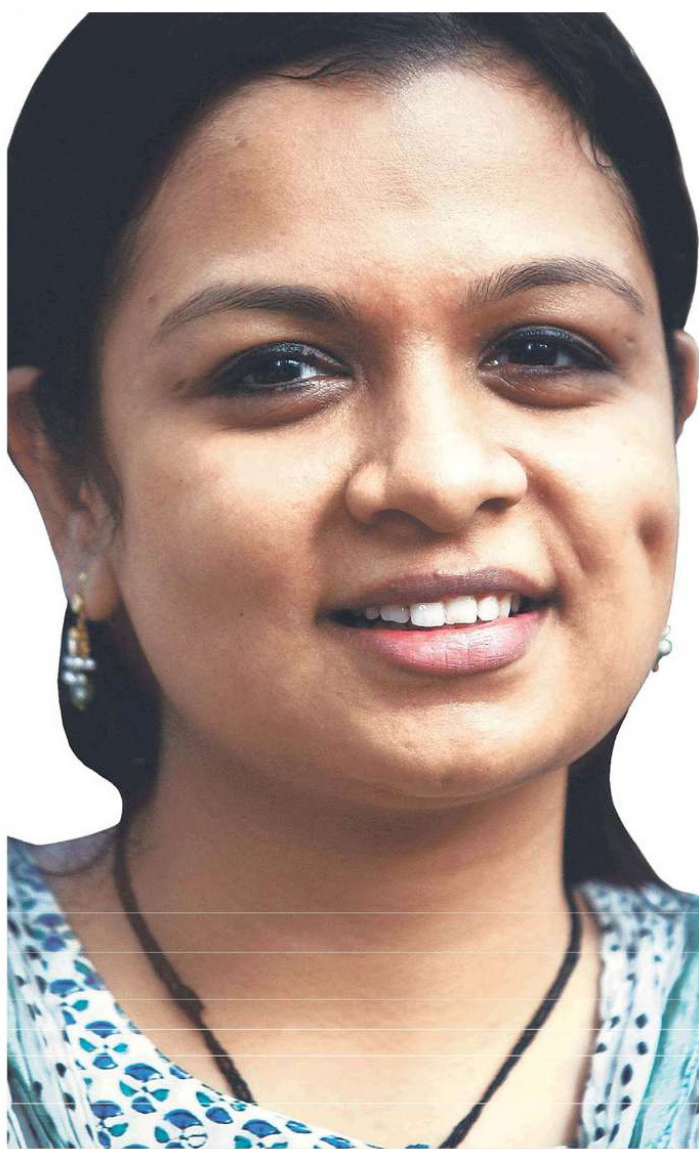


THE NEW Movers & Shakers

YOUNG. RESTLESS. AND MAKING A DIFFERENCE.
MEET A UNIQUE KIND OF MUMBAI ENTREPRENEUR



Naomi Canton
Mumbai, December 12

ON A warm September day four years ago, Pooja Taparia watched actress Lilete Dube's daughter Neha perform the role of a young girl sexually abused by her uncle.

In 30 Days in September, Mala Khatri grows up traumatised and moves from relationship to relationship looking for sex and is unable to stick with any man.

Graphic designer Taparia (30) felt sick. She had no idea that incest was prevalent in Indian households. The play had been commissioned by RAHI (Recovering And Healing from Incest), a Delhi-based NGO that provides support to female victims of incest. When she left the Sophia Bhabha Hall in Breach Candy that night, Taparia vowed to do something. The next day she was on the phone to NGOs seeing which ones worked with incest victims and discovered that barely any were. Her charity Arpan, she had started in her spare time a year earlier, immediately took up the issue as its main cause.

Despite being the daughter of a successful businessman, Taparia had never followed the typical path of a South Mumbaiite from an upper class family.

Since the time she was in school, Taparia had been busy collecting crayons and newspapers for the underprivileged. In her final year at Sophia Polytechnic, she volunteered at a school for the mentally challenged in Breach Candy.

"From a young age, I had found life unfulfilling if I was not doing voluntary work. I used to feel that something was missing from my life," she said.

At the age of 26, she started Arpan as a platform for vol-

unteers to help out in orphanages and old people's homes. Following the play, she launched a major initiative to educate parents, children and teachers, counsellors and psychiatrists about how to recognise child sex abuse.

Now founder director of Arpan, she employs five staff and has 20 volunteers and does virtually no design work.

Arpan focuses on holding training programmes and awareness days for parents, victims, counsellors and teachers about child abuse and lobbying the government about the issue. "Today, more than 53 per cent of children are sexually abused in India. Fifty per cent offenders are known to the victims. As a result, millions of children and adult survivors are left traumatised," she said.

Taparia is one of 10 social entrepreneurs in Mumbai chosen to receive funding and training by newly formed foundation UnLtd India. UnLtd India, run by Briton Richard Alderson (33) and Indian Pooja Warier (27), was launched at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai last week. It aims to train, financially support and mentor early stage social entrepreneurs in India.

"We are looking for more people in Mumbai with interesting ideas and projects for social change to look at funding and training them for a year," said Warier, who previously worked for UnLtd in the UK. Their income comes from individual donors, often rich British Asians in Europe but they are looking for Indian donors.

According to Dr Meena Galliard, professor of social enterprise at NMIMS University, more and more money is coming into India to fund social entrepreneurship.

"Before liberalisation, there was a lot of dependency on funds from foreign donors and the government. But now that the markets have opened up, companies have started funding social issues," she told HT. "India is an emerging economy and it is social entrepreneurs who hold the keys to the problems here," she said.

Dr G.K. Jayaram, director of the Institute of Leadership and Institutional Development in Bangalore, said: "Development work is no longer about the salvation of the soul. It needs to be result-oriented. We need social entrepreneurs in India."

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BIG WORD, BIG DEEDS

- A social entrepreneur is an entrepreneur who uses business principles to tackle daunting social problems in an innovative way and bring about lasting change.
- Target consumers, although often the have-nots, could include the haves.
- The service or product must simply make the world a more just and better place and not be adequately provided by the state or market.

- The business model must be primarily driven by bringing about social change but could be non-profit or for profit.
- A social entrepreneur could theoretically be a millionaire.
- The finances could come from bank loans, venture capital or donations.
- The structure could be traditional – hierarchical with decisions flowing top-down – or a modern flat one.



HT PHOTOS: HEMANT PADALKAR
Pooja Warier and Richard Alderson started UnLtd India to fund, train and mentor social entrepreneurs.

We are looking for more people in Mumbai with interesting ideas and projects for social change so we can fund and train them for a year

POOJA WARIER
Works with UnLtd India

THEY'VE DONE IT ALL

Across the world, well-known social entrepreneurs include British chef **Jamie Oliver**, who trains disadvantaged young people to work in hospitality; Bangladeshi **Muhammad Yunus**, founder of the Grameen Bank, which offers small loans to the poor and Briton **Florence Nightingale**, who founded the modern nursing profession. In India, some of them include **Jeroo Billimoria** who launched Childline in Mumbai, a free 24-hour emergency number for street

children; **Harish Hande**, who heads the Bangalore-based Solar Electric Light Company, which provides solar energy to poor people in rural areas and was named Social Entrepreneur of the Year 2007; **Bunker Roy** who founded Barefoot College, which has campuses across India and trains young dropouts in key professions and **Vikram Akula** who founded SKS Microfinance, a for-profit organisation, which gives income-generating loans to poor people to help them break the cycle of poverty.

More than Profits

These young people have received funding. Here's what they hope to do



Shweta Chari (25) founder, Toybank, Andheri

"I WORK as a corporate fundraiser for an NGO but in my spare time, I am busy with Toybank, a social enterprise I founded three years ago.

"There are six of us now. We collect toys donated by rich kids, clean them, repair or recycle them and then gift wrap them and hand them out to children in hospital wards, orphanages and on the streets.

"We are trying to turn it into a profit-making business by arranging for self-help groups of women to make toys and sell them as educational tools to schools."

PhD student Rama Syam, (27) charity programme manager Masood Akhtar (32), and bank agent Syed Gausuddin (24), members of Society for Awareness, Harmony and Equal Rights or Saher, Jogeshwari

"WE ARE a non-profit organisation working in the run-down slum areas of Jogeshwari, where the 1993 riots started. We believe that unemployment was one of the major causes of those riots.

"We work with Hindu and Muslim youths, building community relations and empowering youngsters by teaching them life skills and workplace skills such as fabric painting or glass painting to make them more employment ready.

"We recently placed some young people in a five-star hotel so they can learn about the hospitality business.

"We now plan to turn Saher into a self-sustainable organisation by starting a labour resource bank in Jogeshwari list-



From left: Syed Gausuddin, Rama Syam and Masood Akhtar.

ing all the work skills that the young people have and charging them a nominal sum to be on it and also by starting a chargeable cyber cafe."

Legal advisor Savio Viegas (38), full-time CEO of Aveksa Milind Mhaske (28) and project coordinator Jeevan Chavan (27), unpaid volunteers for the Aveksa Trust, Mulund East

"AT AVEKSA, we are a non-profit group that provides IT solutions to other not-for-profits. We are in the process of developing a website for charities to advertise services they need. It will be a free service with some chargeable components and we hope to generate money through adverts on the site. Professionals or volunteers will be able to offer their services for free or at a charge. We are also producing docu-dramas about what NGOs are doing and showing them to college students to educate them as a lot of NGOs have no place to showcase their work. We are charging the NGOs to make these and these are the funds we rely on."

YOU CAN TOO

Have an idea? Think you can make a difference? Log on to or www.unltdindia.org or e-mail pooja.warier@unltdindia.org



Milind Mhaske, Jeevan Chavan and Savio Viegas.