Changes Big and Small……

As the curtain falls on 2011, we reflect with satisfaction on the many achievements as well as lessons learnt during the course of the past 12 months. 365 days of working for holistic community development, we celebrate the small gains and progresses made by our communities in their efforts towards greater involvement in their growth and development, and being there to nudge them along when they faltered. Challenges and issues in both fund mobilization and programme implementation made us look for non-conventional solutions. New partnerships were forged and new projects in the pipeline were streamlined so that lessons learnt were incorporated. Strengthening of the financial oversight at the head office also was a priority in 2011 and segregation of accounts by projects was carried out. There have been mixed achievements in the field and performance evaluation of project personnel indicated need for some change as we embrace 2012.

The interim management of the Folk Heritage Museum is being facilitated by Tarayana. The Museum Kitchen is open for business and a small team being built to take over the Museum management recruited. In the months ahead, it is hoped that the Folk Heritage Museum will be a centre for folk culture and community engagement as envisioned by the Founder and Patron.

We joined the Nation in celebrating the Royal Wedding of our King and Queen and prayed for peace and prosperity for the country along with long lives for the Royal Couple.

Happy New Year and hope 2012 will bring us closer to our goals.

On Becoming A Trained Carpenter

“Happiness is …

......... inner feeling of self satisfaction of doing something helpful for others”

Dawa Tshering
Tarayana Field Officer

“I never thought that I could become a skilled carpenter” says 22 years old Mr. Pema Thinley from Digala. He attended the carpentry training provided by Tarayana Foundation and found that he enjoyed the work. Thinley says that he might never have become a skilled carpenter if not for the opportunities provided by Tarayana. His workmanship and dependability has endeared himself to the community who is very appreciative of his work. The opportunity of working as an apprentice with Mr. Phurba after the initial training, in the construction of a few of the initial houses under the Housing Improvement Programme being implemented by Tarayana. Once confident of working independently, he took up assignments as head carpenter in the construction of houses. He is grateful that the Housing Improvement Programme gave him the opportunity of improving his skills, gain confidence and also earn a decent living. He is happy to have been able to contribute to the growth and development of his own community, through the application of his skills as a trained carpenter.

He is convinced that “interest is the main factor; if we have interest we can learn everything”.

According to Thinley, the main challenge of being a head carpenter is knowing that the outcome of the house construction is totally dependent on the calculations and measurements he makes. Thus he takes his task very seriously. He has also availed microcredit service provided by Tarayana to purchase a power chain to enable better work output.

Besides being a carpenter he loves to dance and is a member of the village mask dance troop. Thinley says “I used to face many financial problems earlier but being a carpenter enables me to earn enough to support my family”. Thinley is married to Phuntsho Wangmo, a 22 year old lady and they have 2 children.
The Senior Citizens Annual Pilgrimage Programme was initiated in 2008 to commemorate and gratefully acknowledge the dedicated service rendered by our Monarchs for 100 years and to celebrate the Coronation of the 5th Druk Gyalpo. The 4th batch of senior pilgrims were from the Lhop community. This year, Ms. Pema and Ms. Thinley Bidha from Tarayana escorted four Angays and four Agays from Lotokuchu Jigme, Lotokuchu Singye, and Lotokuchu Wangchuck under Samtse Dzongkhag. One Angay from Tashigang Radi who is currently living in Thimphu, also came on the pilgrimage.

Most of senior citizens from the Lhop community had not been to Thimphu before and they were glad that they had an opportunity to visit before old age left them blind or deaf. They seem to take all the new challenges of overcoming several barriers in stride and were very excited about their first flight ever. The group said they have seen planes flying overhead in the sky but had never seen a plane so close like they did when they reached Paro Airport.

A few of the senior citizens were pensive as they moved through the security procedures at the airport. When asked why, they mentioned that they could not believe that they were actually going to fly and go so far from their home town. Angay Tashi Pem Doya mentioned “I wonder if I will return home safe”.

The team reached Dorji Den on 11th November, 2011 at around 1:00 pm. The team was received by Lopen Khandu from the Royal Bhutan Temple. During the stay in Doji Den, they visited several other holy places like Nalanda, Varanasi, Rajgir hot springs and many other places of significance in relation to the life of the Buddha.

Agay Dip Raj Doya mentioned “I feel very peaceful in this beautiful place. I never thought that we would be able to pay homage in this lifetime. I had heard about the Senior Citizens from other communities visiting Doji Den and wondered if Tarayana would ever bring us here”.

“My parents never told me about Doji Den, even though many of the places are mentioned in our songs and stories. I always thought that these places were from another time, another world. I am glad that Tarayana brought us here to this very holy place and helping us make sense of some of the stories that finally adds up”, says a grateful Angay Pelzom Doya.

On their return to Bhutan Agay Gyem Tshering Doya mentioned “I am very thankful to Tarayana and to the two escorts for looking after us like their own parents”.

“Tarayana sent us to Dorji Den and I am very glad and now I feel sad thinking that I will never get a chance to go there again in my life. I will always pray and wish Tarayana to be successful forever”, said Goling, the only Sharshop Angay in the team.
Lhadon’s Life

34 years old Lhadon (in the left) from Digala shares with us how her life has been changed by taking up the opportunities provided through the many Tarayana initiatives in her village.

Her house was constructed through Tarayana support and it was the first house constructed with in Digala. Since then her house has served as the guest house in the village. Nowadays all the official stays at her place.

Lhadon was trained in basic tailoring and she set up tailor unit at the village with help of Tarayana Foundation.

Tarayana has provided her with not only the training but also with a tailoring machine and other necessities to set up the unit. She now earns from tailoring to support her family.

“I am fortunate to get tailoring training from Tarayana and today I am very proud of myself. I am more fortunate than any other family, because my house was also constructed with support from Tarayana Foundation. Not only this Tarayana has opened community saving group and weaving group for the women of Digala and provided greater opportunity for us. I think Tarayana has done everything to us and I don’t know how to thank Tarayana. But I always pray for long live of our Queen. She is our Yeshi Khandom” says Lhadon.

Lhadon and her 35 year old husband, Kali first came to Thimphu for Tarayana Fair in 2008. Kali still laughs and shares us his funny story about when he got lost in Thimphu Town.

He says” I think Tarayana has opened our eyes to better outside world. I and my wife are very lucky. But my wife is better than me in whatever we do. I am proud of my wife”, he says. Kali is a cool man and he is very supportive of his wife.

They have four school going children and a 53 years old Aum Pema Lhamo, Lhadon’s mother, who also live with them.

Social Mobilization & Business Plan for Enterprise Promotion

Like Lhadon, 32 year old Chimmi is another Lady Tailor in Digala. “In the Beginning my Husband was not very supportive when I went to Thimphu for the tailoring training. Now I think he is happy with my tailoring work because I make little money and help to send our two children to school”. Says Chimmi.

Lhadon and Chimmi are very hard working and good model ladies in the village and they are best friends and share their working tips together. Tarayana is grateful to these young ladies for forging a new path and setting an example. They are in turn happy to be a partner in the growth and development of their community through the provision of their tailoring services where none existed before.

Five Tarayana Program Officers attended a training program on Social mobilization and Business Plan (SM &BP) for Enterprise Promotion from 21st-24th of December 2011. The training was organized by Nation Commission of Women and Children (NCWC) funded by Asian Development Bank (ADB). The four day training included ADB project’s perspectives on social mobilization, practical aspects of social mobilization and elements of business plan preparation and implementation.

For many of the other participants this was the first training in social mobilization. The sessions were very interactive with several group exercises and the participants found them very informative and educational. Social mobilization being a core activity of the Tarayana, the presentation on social mobilization and other related activities served as a refresher course.
**Monitoring Visit to Mongar**

Mr. Mamun, an FK Exchange participant along with Tarayana staff Ms. Pema, Program Officer and Ms. Wangmo, Marketing Officer undertook a monitoring visit to all project sites in Mongar from 5th to 17th of December 2011. They were accompanied by Mr. Sonam Jamtsho, the Mongar Field Officer. The team visited Resa, Bangbangla, Chaibi Pam, Gongdi, Nagor, Dak and Silambi to monitor project activities.

A community consultative meeting was held in Chaibi Pam, Gongdue Geog and it was noted that the micro credit program has benefited the people in many ways. Most of the people availing the services of microcredit bought horses, so that they could earn through by transporting goods to the Dungkhag headquarters in Weringla. Twenty-two houses were constructed in Chaibi Pam and the construction of a work shed was also completed. During the consultation, the community members expressed their gratitude to Tarayana for helping them with housing construction and for facilitating income generating activities.

The team also held a community consultation in Nagor. During this meeting, it was noted that construction of forty houses were completed in the village. There were still thirty-two houses to be constructed in Nagor and eighteen houses in Gyalkoan. People from those villages were asking about the construction of their houses. They mentioned that they would be glad if Tarayana could give them a particular date of issuing CGI sheets and when construction would start.

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**The TARAgram Yatra**

Ms. Roseleen Gurung, Program Officer attened the TARAgram Yatra in India. It was held from 21st to 25th Nov in Jhansi. There were participants from Nepal, Pakistan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and apart from presentations and discussions, the participants were also taken to the project sites to view Development Alternatives’ on ground interventions. The DA team had also organized a fair within the TARA campus where all their technologies were on display. Roseleen also met with the FK exchange participants: Karma Wangchuk, Biraj Gautam, Raju Basak and Dellwer Hossain.

She attended the International Seminar on “Cost-effective, Energy efficient and Ecologically appropriate building materials and technologies for housing”. While there were many technical presentations, DA guests’ presentations were from the NGO point of view. Roseleen gave a presentation on our Rural Housing Improved Programme specially focused on community interventions through our “Rukha Model”. The response from the other participants were good and one participant from an NGO in India requested for one staff from Tarayana to come to his project sites and help implement the “Rukha Model”.

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**In Brief**
Visit to Bussien International NGO in Social Welfare

Ms. Sonam Pem, Program Director visited Bussien International NGO in Social Works, Japan. Sonam was invited to see their programmes and to explore opportunities for partnership with Tarayana. Bussien supports disabled citizen in Japan and is highly regarded for their philosophy and efforts of integrating these people into the society through creative and innovative means. During the visit, Sonam was introduced to different projects run by Bussien for children and senior citizens in Kanazawa and Noto.

Sonam also met with the board members of Bussien, where they offered a long term partnership with Tarayana. The proposal was in form of support to community development through a ‘Buckwheat Project’- whereby, Tarayana will mobilize buckwheat from the communities we work with and Bussien will import it to Japan. The profit from this will be poured back to Tarayana, as their main intent is to provide a holistic support. Bussien, has also offered a space in their new office, for Tarayana to establish a rural crafts outlet. At some point they also want to assist in re-designing and packaging of our rural products, so as to meet the demands for export quality. Possibilities of sending technical experts for relevant field were also discussed.
The Year in Review

Her Majesty Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck Leads Monitoring Visit to Tarayana Project Sites

Mountain Echoes 2011, A Literary Festival

Community Based Enterprise for Self Help Group through TARA Machines Technologies

Dechenpelri Community Produces Concrete Pavers

Mashroom Cultivation Training for Digala and Langdurbii Communities

Two Carpenters from Dak Attend Eco Friendly Construction Training at Tingtibi, Zhemgang Organized by Department of Forestry
The Year in Review

Tarayana Fair (6th-8th May, 2011) Technologies For Sustainable Rural Development

FK Partners During the Mid Term Review Meeting (24th-26th Sept, 2011)

Surgicorps International in Bhutan During the Surgical Camp 2011

Mr. Dawa, The Field Officer Facilitates Book Keeping Training to the Community Members of Langdurbi and Digala (12th-16th Dec, 2011)

Ms. Thinley Bidha During Feasibility Consultation on Eco Stove

Tarayana Staff During the Training on Green Technologies and Participatory Technology Developments Conducted by Mr. Mamun
From the Tarayana School Clubs

It seems like we have just lived the last ten month in a length of one good dream. 2011 adds yet another year of experience as the Tarayana Club Coordinator. As I sit down to reflect the activities that we have carried out this year, I felt everything has just pasted by so swiftly, and I am standing at the end of time proud and satisfied with what we have contributed to the needy students, school and community as a whole.

The club proved to be very beneficial, as we were able to help many disadvantaged students in full-filling their basic needs. We have been able to achieve our targets because of the tireless effort by the club members and unfailing support rendered by school administration, all teachers, supporting staff and our beloved students of the school.

Lucky draw and conducting various games proved to be the main source of generating income for the club. And as planned, the income generated was used in meeting the basic needs of the disadvantage students.

Gratitude of the students to the Tarayana School Club:

I am Tashi Jamtsho of class XD. Presently I am staying with my grandparents as my parents got divorced. I am thankful to Tarayana School Club as they helped me when I needed the most. I had no school shoes to wear like my other friends; they helped me by providing a brand new school shoes which brought a smile on my face. I thank you Tarayana Coordinators and the members as a whole.

My name is Kinzang Gyelmo of Class VIII A. After my mother passed away my father married again and they now live in other house. I was suffering a lot with my only sister at home and no one else. I missed my mother a lot. I am very grateful to Tarayana school club for your kind support, love and care which will be always in my heart and I feel much better today.

I am Tsheche Dema of Class VII B. My parents do not have any jobs. We grow vegetable, cereals and other food items for self consumption. Tarayana Club is very helpful as they helped me meet my basic needs. They gave me school shoes, socks, etc. When I lost my school shoes, I was feeling ashamed in front of my friends, but now with my new pair of shoes I can walk proudly with them. I am very grateful to my friends from the Tarayana Club.

You have been a light in the darkness of the life of a poor boy like me. Without your support and contribution I wouldn’t have made my stay at this school a peaceful one. Especially, I thank the Club for contributing school shoe and socks and moral support. Thus, with the deepest gratitude in my heart, prayers on my lips and enduring hopes in my thoughts, I hope to be able to give back to others in need when I can carrying forward the spirit of compassion says Kinzang Norbu.

Pema Choki
Club Coordinator

Support Tarayana

We invite you to be a part of reaching out to the most vulnerable members of our society through your support to Tarayana. We operate with financial support of individuals and organizations, without which we would not have the opportunity of helping so many families help themselves. Tarayana complements and supplements the initiatives of the Government in empowering rural communities towards sustainable livelihoods.

The Foundation maintains its accounts in accordance with accepted financial norms and is audited annually by the Royal Audit Authority of Bhutan. An audited financial report and an annual progress report are published every year and is available for all interested individuals and organizations.

Please contact us for more information.