Youth led initiative

The Foundation partnered with the UNICEF for a small grant project titled “Youth-led Initiatives” to provide opportunities for skills development and self-empowerment through small grants to fund the initiatives led by them. This is a year-long project aiming to encourage youth to take up innovative community-based activities and is targeted at providing leadership opportunities to the youth both in rural and urban Bhutan. Tarayana believes that the youth involved in such projects can enhance their individual skills and promote civic engagement in the communities they live and work in. Since the inception, a total of ten projects have been initiated by different (four projects for Tarayana School Clubs and six for out of school youth) youth groups across the country.

Graffiti

The Tarayana School Club in Yangchenphu Higher Secondary School, Thimphu took the initiative to repaint walls and areas covered by crude drawings and slang words; in and around town with inspirational quotes and paintings. The project is named ‘Graffiti- An Inspiration by Sight’ aiming to beautify the town with words and figures of motivation and encouragement using their artistic creativity.

Skills Development in Pottery

The only pottery house in Gangzur, Lhuentse constructed with the project grant from UNDP was at the verge of losing its identity with only one person to run it. Gangzur was once known for its pottery and now only a handful of people are continuing this craft. The Tarayana School Club from Lhuentse Higher Secondary School used this as an opportunity to revive the dying art of traditional pottery in the region as well as to utilize the work shed more effectively. The club now has noticed how it is possible to be part of the exciting and important of giving back to the society and the dignity of work market every year, the problem may get worse before it gets better. There is grave worry that this situation could contribute to the growing social issues. It is widely accepted that the mismatch of skills and attitude with the available employment opportunity are some of the main causes of unemployment in the country. It is important to address the cause of the issue and seek workable solutions to mitigate this problem.

Tarayana, in our own small ways have been contributing towards addressing this issue. Our young adults could benefit from the right attitude towards nation building and their role in it. Through the Tarayana School Clubs that are established around the country, children learn the importance of giving back to the society and the dignity of labour at an early age, through the different activities. We have seen that these opportunities of service have made our student members more involved in the wellbeing of their peers and these less fortunate.

Many of our out of school youth are employed as Assistant Apprentices to our Field Officers and are implementing community development projects in their respective villages. They have noticed how it is possible to be part of the exciting socio-economic transformation of their own communities. They notice very quickly the pride they bring to their parents as the rest of the village recognizes the hard work and the commitment they are acknowledged with pride that they are responsible for improving the well-being of all in their village and it gives Tarayana much satisfaction to be able to facilitate these personal transformations of our rural youth. Some of the erstwhile unemployed youth are engaged in documenting their own communities. They are taking the opportunities to learn more about their traditional knowledge, their culture and reconnecting with their own roots. They are amazed to re-discover their own heritage and take pride in being the custodians of such unique traditional knowledge. These important skills help expand their own horizons and prepare them for more research based employment opportunities. There is a need to assess the attitudes and interests of the currently unemployed youth. Skills can be taught based on their interests. We are confident that if given the right platform, our youth will deliver by channeling all their energies into doing something innovative and contributing towards nation building. For a small country like ours, sending our youth to low income foreign labour markets is not the answer. We need all hands on deck to steer the country forward collectively and be part of this exciting and positive narrative.

“...I am King and I take my duty seriously, I have no aspirations or ambitions for myself. It is your aspirations and your hopes that I adopt as my own and I will spend my life trying to achieve them. So you must have great ambitions and hope for yourself and for our country”

- His Majesty King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck -
Tarayana School Clubs

In the year 2003, the teachers who graduated from Paro College of Education and Samtse College of Education started Tarayana School Clubs with the hope to promote one of the objectives of the Foundation, “The spirit of volunteerism” through meaningful social services in the communities.

The Foundation provides Tarayana T-shirts, badges, handbooks and a sum of Ngultrum ten thousand as seed money to start these school clubs. As of August 2015, there are 4537 active members in 90 schools ranging from primary schools to colleges in the country. A work plan is submitted to the Foundation once the club is formed. The activities these clubs implement are very innovative and focused to help the needy ones in their vicinity. The Programme Manager in the office monitors the clubs based on their work plan. These clubs provide the social work platform for our young volunteers who learn the importance of service and the art of giving. These are powerful opportunities of personal growth and development wherein the young volunteers are learning to make the connection between happiness and service.

Some of the activities carried out by the clubs are featured below.

Cleaning Campaigns

The Tarayana School Club Members from Taraythang Community Primary School in Sarpang carried out a cleaning campaign on the 16th of May, 2015. The cleaning took place in and around the villages and included a survey to identify vulnerable individuals in the community. The Gewog Administrative Officer, Health Assistants, Tshogpas and other community members also joined the cleaning crew and marked the day by creating awareness on the importance of cleanliness. The dedicated participants trudged cheerfully through the wilderness in the hot sun cleaning and spreading awareness.

On the 17th of May, the Tarayana School Club members from Chimong Primary School in Pema Gatshel Dzongkhag participated in white washing all the Stupas in the school and in Chimong village.

Helping senior citizens

On the 3rd of May, 2015 the Tarayana Club Members from Kheni Lower Secondary School along with other volunteers rendered help to a destitute family of Panthang village in Toetsho Gewog in Trashiyangtse Dzongkhag. The young club members helped the two very old grandparents Memey Nado and Abi Maling, with their house hold chores and field work which included ploughing and sowing maize seeds. The Tarayana Club members from Kheni LSS were overwhelmed with joy and satisfied when they observed the old couple smile. As the saying goes ‘A tiny good deed can go a long way’. We applaud and acknowledge your commitment and hard works towards helping the vulnerable. Please continue to make a difference and inspire others.

(Read more: http://www.tarayanafoundation.org/?p=867)
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.