



ANNUAL REPORT



2024
TARAYANA FOUNDATION



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TARAYANA FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT 2025

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Cover Picture: Choden, Jangbi village, Langthil Gewog, Trongsa Dzongkhag

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Ugyen Choden, Bjokha, Zhemgang



About Tarayana Foundation

Tarayana Foundation was founded by Her Majesty Queen Mother Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck and was formally launched by His Majesty The King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the then Crown Prince on 4th May 2003.

The Foundation is a Civil Society Organization (a Public Benefit Organization), registered (Registration No. CSOA/PBO-08) with the Civil Society Organization Authority of Bhutan. The Foundation is governed by a Board of Directors and advised & supported by an Executive Committee. The Secretariat plans, coordinates, and rolls out all interventions through a network of programme and field officers.



"Service From the Heart"



VISION

A Happy and Prosperous Bhutan

MISSION

To help vulnerable and the disadvantaged help themselves

MOTTO

Service from the Heart

CORE VALUES

Compassion: We will be guided by the spirit of compassion from which the Foundation derives its name.

Dignity: We will act with dignity in our work and seek to respect the dignity of those we serve.

Integrity: We will follow the highest ethical standards.



"Service From the Heart"

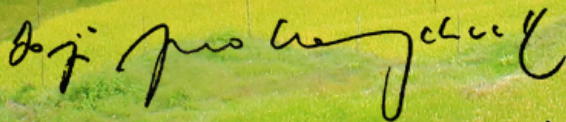
MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDING PRESIDENT

As we reflect on the past year, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to uplifting the lives of vulnerable communities across Bhutan. Tarayana Foundation continues to be a beacon of hope, empowering individuals and fostering sustainable development. Guided by our core values of compassion, resilience, and inclusivity, we have made significant strides toward creating lasting impact.

The year 2024 has been pivotal, marked by significant achievements and global recognition. Our strengthened partnerships with local communities, organizations, and government agencies have enhanced our ability to deliver meaningful and sustainable outcomes. Among our key accomplishments was receiving the prestigious Smile Asia Philanthropic Visionary Award in Singapore, recognizing our transformative contributions through the Tarayana Foundation and Smile Asia. Our work is built on a foundation of strong partnerships and a shared vision for a more equitable society. We remain steadfast in our mission, adapting to emerging challenges while staying true to our guiding principles. As we look ahead, we are refining our strategies to nurture entrepreneurial skills, enhance food security, and strengthen climate resilience. We envision a future where no one is left behind a future shaped by collective action, innovative solutions, and a deep-rooted sense of service.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated team, generous supporters, and resilient communities. Together, we will continue to build a brighter and more sustainable Bhutan.

Tashi Delek!



Gyalyum Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck

"Service From the Heart"



Executive Director's Note

The past year has been one of growth, resilience, and meaningful impact for Tarayana Foundation. With the support of our partners and dedicated teams, we have expanded our reach, bringing holistic development initiatives to more communities across Bhutan.

In 2024, Tarayana Foundation achieved significant milestones across various initiatives aimed at sustainable development and community empowerment. Through the Payment for Environmental Services (PES) program, the Foundation promoted sustainable environmental practices, thereby ensuring the conservation of natural resources. The Agriculture Land Development (ALD) initiative enhanced rural livelihoods by improving agricultural productivity. Programs such as Nettle Enterprise Development and the Cotton Group created innovative income-generating opportunities for rural communities. Recognizing the importance of cultural preservation, the Foundation engaged youth, particularly school dropouts, in reviving endangered crafts, equipping them with skills to earn a livelihood.

Additionally, we expanded internships in collaboration with colleges, offering students hands-on experience in community development, food security, and climate adaptation. Our scholarship programs continued to support underprivileged students at the tertiary level, ensuring they have the opportunities they deserve. Furthermore, artisan empowerment initiatives trained rural artisans, refining their skills, expanding their market reach, and contributing to local economic growth.

Our sister concerns, the Folk Heritage Museum, Tarayana Rural Crafts, Tarayana MicroFinance for Rural Development, and the Tarayana Centre for Research and Development, have all made commendable strides in advancing our holistic approach to sustainable development.

These achievements are a testament to the collective effort of our team, partners, and the communities we serve. As we move forward, we remain committed to scaling up holistic community development programs while contributing meaningfully to Bhutan's national and international sustainable development agenda. We will continue refining our initiatives to nurture entrepreneurial skills, enhance food security, and strengthen climate resilience.

Finally, I extend my sincere gratitude to our partners, supporters, donors, volunteers, and well-wishers in Bhutan and abroad. Your unwavering support inspires us to pursue our mission with renewed passion. Together, we are making a tangible difference in the lives of those we serve.

Thank you for being part of our journey towards a more inclusive and sustainable future.



A stylized, handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read 'Sonam Pem'.

Sonam Pem
Executive Director



Our Team



Chime P. Wangdi *Secretary General*



Chhimi Dorji
Director (TCRD)



Sonam Pem *Executive Director*



Sangay Dorji (PhD)
Technical Director

Programme Department



Roseleen Gurung
Director of Programmes (On Study Leave)



Palden Ongmo
Sr. Programme Officer



Karma Uden
Sr. Programme Officer



Tulasi Ghalley
Programme Officer



Bhuwan Kafley
Asst. Programme Officer

Administration & Finance Department



Sonam Jamtsho B
Head, AFD



Pema Lhendrup
Sr. Adm & HR Officer



Tashi Pem
Accounts Officer



Tashi Choden
Asst. Accounts Officer



Ram Bdr Ghalley
Office Assistant/Driver



Tsheten
Night Guard



Ganga Maya Gurung
Cleaner

Communication & Monitoring Department



Sherub Wangmo
Communications & Documentation officer



Namgay Pem
Monitoring & Evaluation Officer



Ramesh Subba
Asst. Communications & Documentation Officer

Field Officers



Passang Tobgay
Sr. Field Officer



Namgay
Sr. Field Officer



Sonam Jamtsho
Sr. Field Officer



Thinley Bidha
Field Officer



Ugyen Tshomo
Field Officer



Jigme Wangchuk
Field Officer



Tashi Tshering Doya
Field Officer



Som Bahadur Rai
Field Officer



Dorji Tshegang
Field Officer



Sonam Gyeltshen
Manager (Bhutan TSHAR Institute)



Neten Tshering
Trainer Asst. (Bhutan TSHAR Institute)

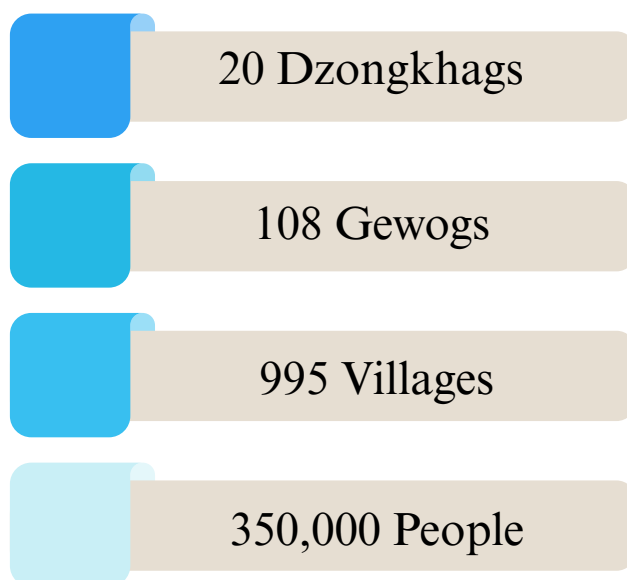
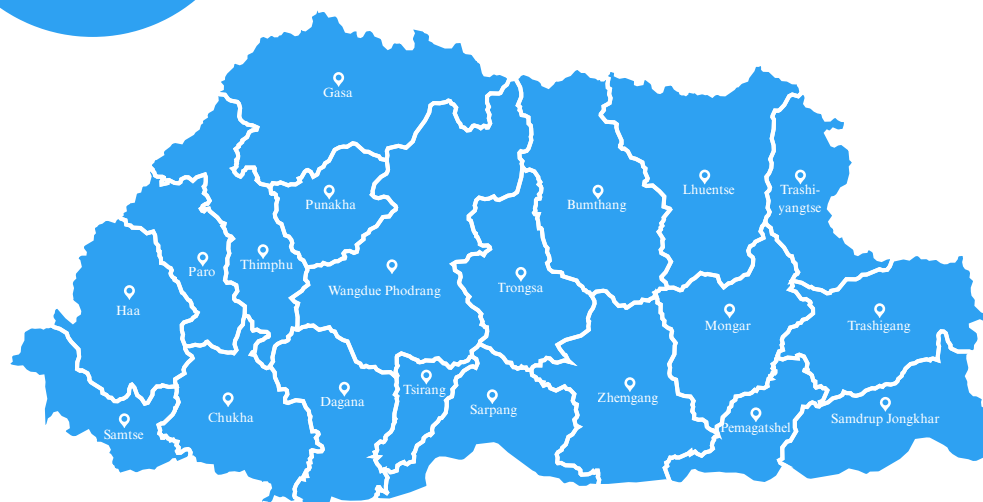


Namgay Tshering Doya
Trainer Asst. (Bhutan TSHAR Institute)

“Service From the Heart”



Where We Work



Tarayana Foundation has strategically organized its initiatives into four programmatic categories:

- i) Social Development,**
- ii) Economic Development,**
- iii) Environment and Climate, and**
- iv) Research, Advocacy, and Network.**

Each project undertaken by the Foundation is aligned with one of these overarching thematic areas. Notable among the Foundation's efforts are flagship initiatives such as the Housing Improvement Programme, the Annual Green Technology Challenge, the Annual Pilgrimage Programme, and the Scholarship and Learning Opportunities Programme-all of which form integral components of the Social Development Programme.

"Service From the Heart"



Smile Asia Philanthropic Visionary Award

The inaugural Smile Asia Philanthropic Visionary Award was presented to Her Majesty The Queen Mother Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck on the evening of August 15th in Singapore in recognition of Her Majesty's contributions to transforming the lives of thousands of Bhutanese through the Tarayana Foundation and Smile Asia. Through the Tarayana Foundation, Smile Asia has successfully organized six medical missions to Bhutan. These missions have provided comprehensive evaluations for 504 children, and 231 have benefited from life-changing surgeries. The award was presented by H.E. Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore, on behalf of Smile Asia. The event was attended by senior government officials, Resident Ambassadors and High Commissioners, Donors and Partners of Smile Asia, and its board members. H.E. The Ambassador of Bhutan to Thailand and Singapore, accompanied Her Majesty the Queen Mother, along with an Executive Committee member and the Executive Director of the Foundation.

"Service From the Heart"



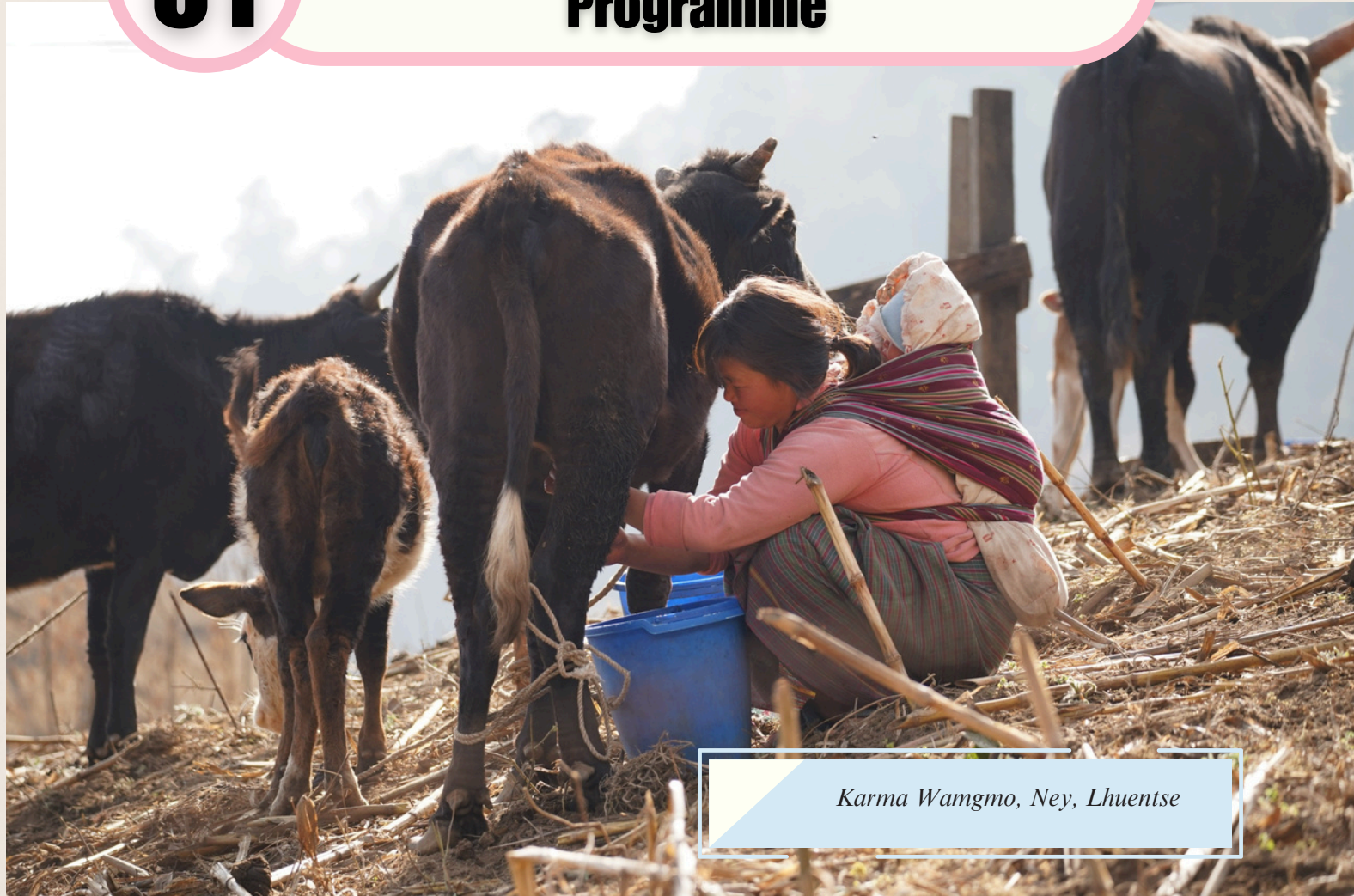
About the Award

The award is instituted to honour inspirational leaders who have made substantial philanthropic contributions, significantly improving the lives of communities through various charitable initiatives. The recipients of this award would have had notable collaborations with Smile Asia, allowing them to witness their excellent work firsthand.

About Smile Asia



The Smile Asia is a global alliance of independent charities that works together to treat children with facial deformities like cleft lips and cleft palates. This alliance was formed in 2008 with the signing of a cooperative framework by six independent charity organizations, namely the Smile Cambodia, the Future Smile Charitable Foundation and Beam International Foundation of China, the Cleft to Smile Mission of India, the Bright Faces Inc. of U.S.A., and the Smile Mission of Singapore.

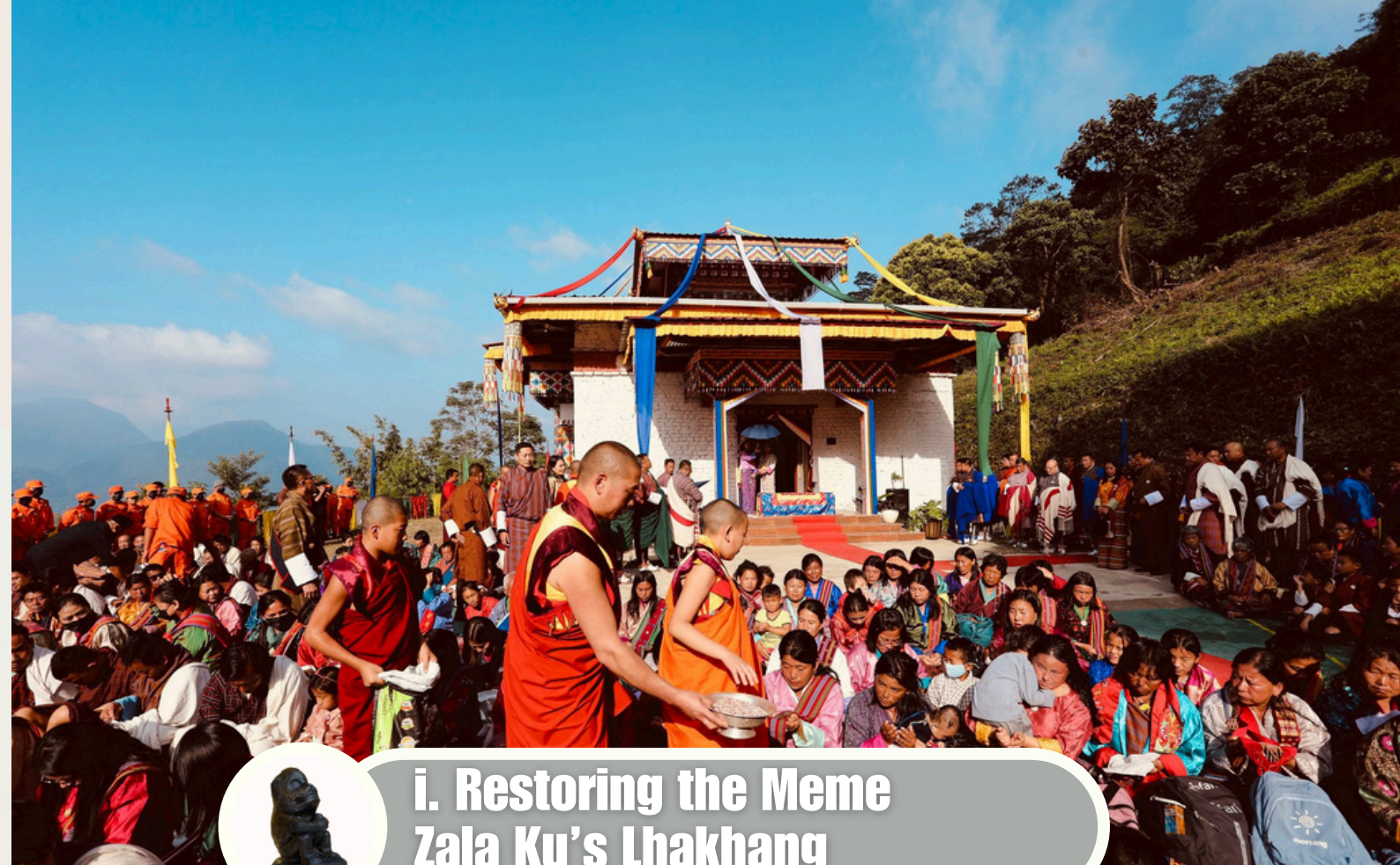


Karma Wangmo, Ney, Lhuentse

Tarayana Foundation's commitment to contributing to a prosperous Bhutan has led to the facilitation of essential services and the delivery of goods in some of the most remote and hard-to-reach parts of the country. Through a range of innovative social development programmes, the Foundation has worked to reduce community vulnerabilities and enhance well-being. These efforts are largely carried out by Tarayana's dedicated field staff, supported by a strong network of volunteers-embodiment the true spirit of service and volunteerism that defines Bhutan.

The Social Development Programme is one of the key initiatives of Tarayana Foundation, aimed at reducing vulnerabilities in critical areas such as housing, food and nutrition security, water & sanitation facilities, social inclusion, and the promotion of green technologies in the most remote corners of Bhutan.

This programme contributes towards fulfilling many targets under SDGs, specifically SDG 1. and targets 1.4: By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance.



i. Restoring the Meme Zala Ku's Lhakhang

Tarayana completed a very special project entrusted to the Foundation by Hon'ble Board Director, Her Royal Highness Princess Sonam Dechan Wangchuck: the restoration of Meme Zala Ku's Lhakhang at Nobrugang Gewog in Nganglam, Pemagatshel Dzongkhag. His Eminence Vairochana Rinpoche Ngawang Jigme Jigten Wangchuk consecrated the Mang Lhakhang at Nyingshingborang village on 3rd November.



Sangag Choekhor Dongag Tenpaling Lhakhang, affectionately known as Mang Lhakhang, was constructed in 1997 and symbolizes spiritual devotion and community unity in Nyingshingborang village. This Lhakhang gained added significance after His Majesty The Fourth Druk Gyalpo, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, visited 23 years ago and discovered an extraordinary stone statue, known locally as Meme Zala Ku, which resembles a monkey.



Following the visit, His Majesty the King immediately granted CGI roofing at the caretaker's request. Twenty-three years later, the Lhakhang was in dire need of restoration. To preserve this important cultural and spiritual heritage site, the Foundation, supported by the community, the Dzongkhag and Dungkhag Administrations, Dungkhag Yenlag Dratshang, Dungkhag Court, Bhutan Power Corporation, and Gewog Administration, began restoration work on April 1st. By June 20th, the Lhakhang was restored to its former glory, complete with additional facilities, all within a span of less than three months.

The attendees of the consecration ceremony were doubly blessed, as His Eminence gave blessings and an Oral Transmission (Lung) to empower their spiritual practices and well-being. Her Majesty Gyalyum Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck, Her Royal Highness Princess Sonam Dechan Wangchuck, invitees and officials from various stakeholders in the Dzongkhag were present at the consecration ceremony.



ii. Annual Pilgrimage

In 2024, eight senior citizens from Lumang under Trashigang and Lhuentse embarked on a 10-day life-changing pilgrimage to Dorji Den (Bodhgaya), the sacred site of Buddha's enlightenment, from 22nd Dec 2024 to 2nd January 2025. Accompanied by two coordinators, the group visited revered spiritual sites, including Nalanda, Dra Ge Phungpo, Varanasi, Shawa Regi Draphu, Lo Dru Kawa, and more.

The Annual Pilgrimage is one of the cherished initiatives of the Foundation initiated in 2008 to commemorate the Coronation of His Majesty The Druk Gyalpo Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck.

Every year a group of senior citizens from the rural communities is provided the opportunity to undertake the pilgrimage, escorted by the Foundation staff to take care of their logistic needs. Till date more than 100 senior citizens have undertaken the Annual Pilgrimage in India.



"Service From the Heart"



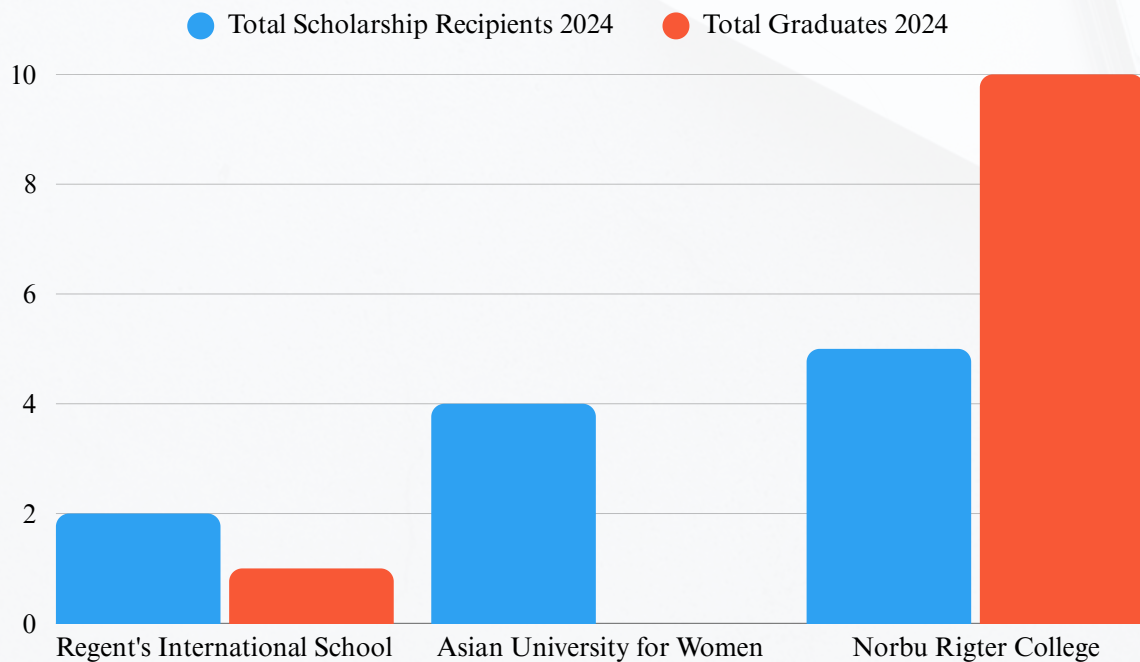
iii. Scholarships and Learning Opportunities

Tarayana Foundation is committed to invest in building the future of Bhutan. Scholarships and learning programmes currently underway will continue and be expanded to include vocational and technical skills that will contribute to a more self-reliant Bhutan.

A

Scholarships

Currently, 29 scholarship recipient students are pursuing further studies at Regents International School in Bangkok, Norbuling Rigter College in Paro, Maharishi Markandeshwar (Deemed to be University) in India, and Royal Thimphu College in Thimphu.



B

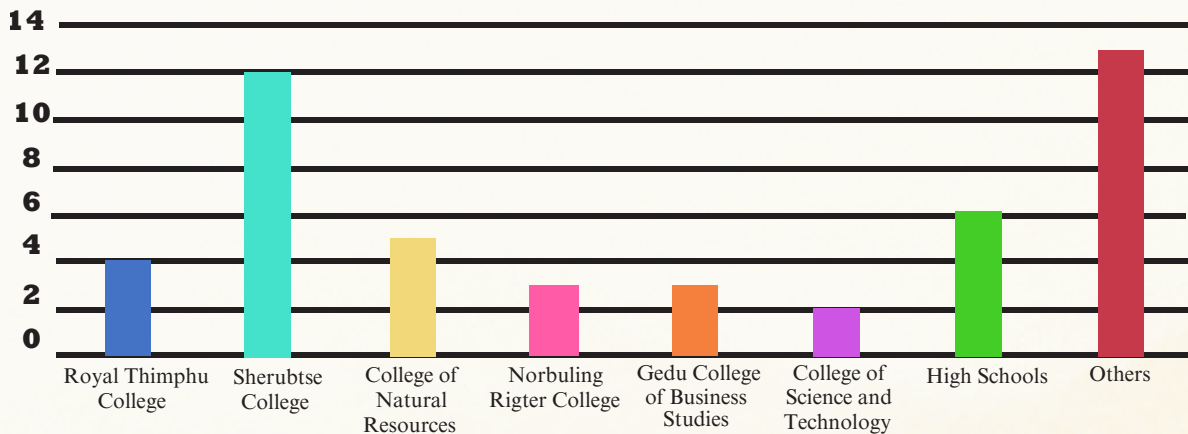
Professional Development

Forty eight students (36 female and 12 male) from Sherubtse College, Norbuling Rigter College, Royal Thimphu College, the College of Natural Resources, as well as students studying abroad, high school graduates, and interns referred by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment (MoICE), were engaged with the Foundation. The interns were placed in various programmes based on their interests and academic backgrounds. They were also given the opportunity to visit project sites, interact with community members, and gain firsthand insights into the socio-economic challenges faced by disadvantaged communities.



Intern Kinga Gyelthsen Namgyel from Royal Thimphu College at Tsirang documenting Agriculture Land Development

Total interns for the year 2024: 48



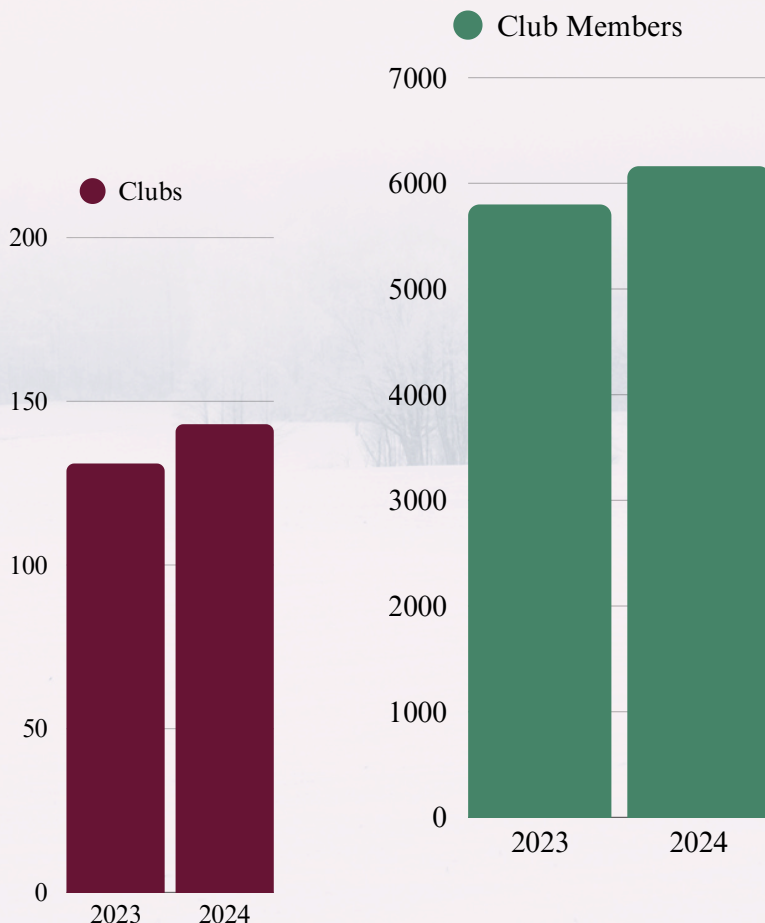
C

Tarayana Club

In 2024, there were 143 Tarayana Clubs with a total of 6,162 members across educational institutions, ranging from primary schools to colleges. Thirteen new clubs, comprising 362 members, were established during the year. Each club designs its activities to address the unique needs of its community. Some notable initiatives include visiting hospital patients without family support, assisting elderly citizens with house renovations, adopting and protecting water sources, and helping single mothers with paddy harvesting and other household tasks. Established in 2004, the Tarayana Club aims to foster a spirit of compassion and volunteerism among youth.



Menstrual Day Celebration at Lamgong High School, Paro



Tarayana Club Members of Tsirangtoe Central School attending a Knowledge Session on Spngshed Management and Climate Change



"Service From the Heart"

D

Annual Green Technology Challenge

The 11th Green Technology Challenge, organized in collaboration with the College of Science and Technology (CST), was held on April 27 under the theme “Climate and Disaster-Resilient Houses in the Bhutanese Context.” Five finalist teams showcased their innovative prototype houses before a panel of judges. Team Harmonica Dwelling, Dream Builders, and My Home Team were awarded the top three positions. These prototypes were subsequently exhibited during the Tarayana Foundation Day celebrations at Coronation Park, Changlimithang, Thimphu, from May 3rd to 5th. With further technical inputs from experts, three prototype houses are currently being constructed two at the Bhutan TSHAR Institute in Kalapang, Gyalposhing, and one in Gomche, Dogar, Paro. Two of the prototypes are supported by the Karuna Foundation.



Prototype House Construction at Gomche, Paro

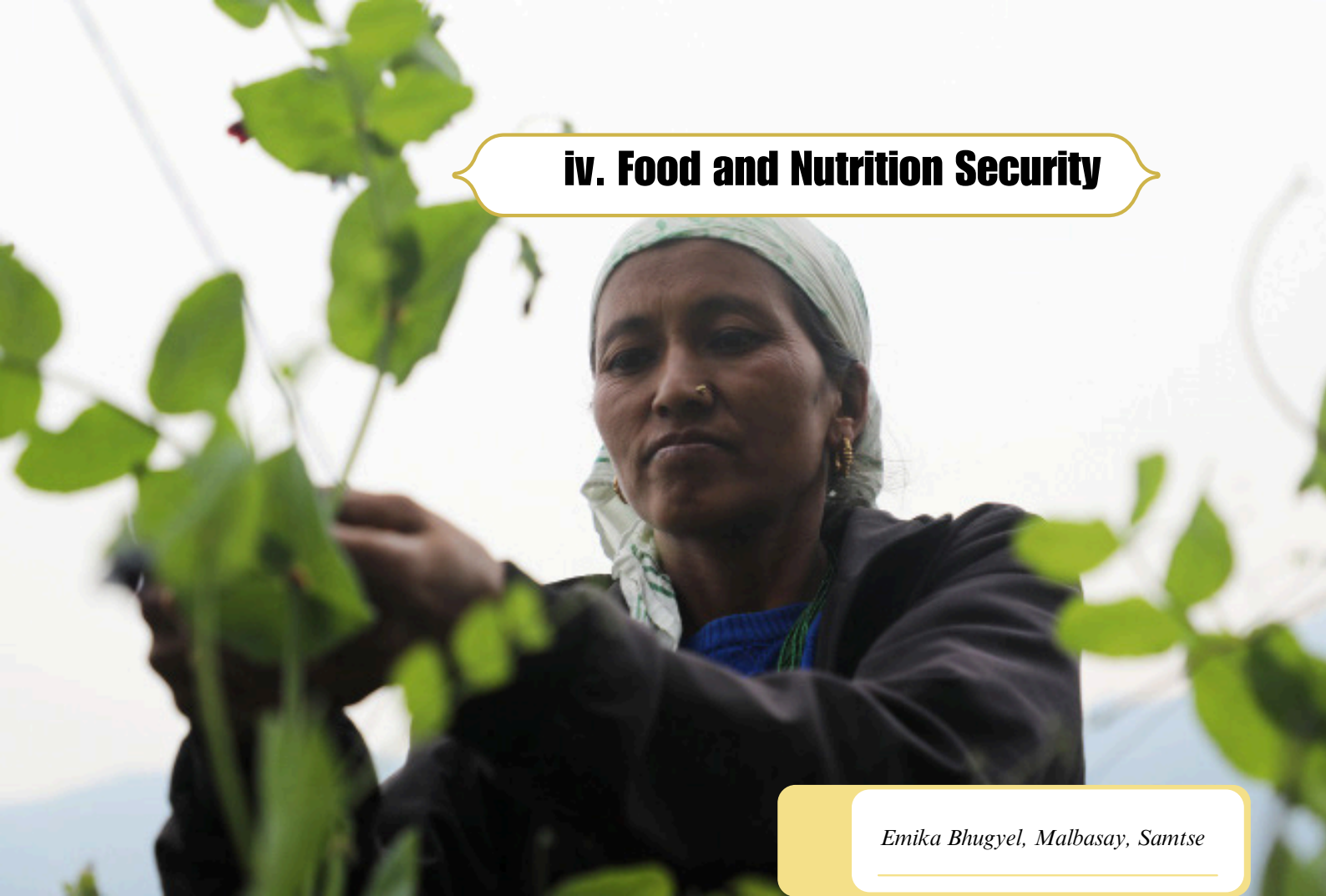


Students Presenting their House Model to the Panelist at CST



Ground Breaking Ceremony for the Prototype House at Bhutan TSHAR Institute, attended by the Karuna Foundation team led by Mr. Eric Lemelson (President)





iv. Food and Nutrition Security

Emika Bhugyel, Malbasay, Samtse

Tarayana Foundation promotes food and nutrition security as an essential component of its holistic rural development model. Since the Foundation's inception, the Foundation's Field Officers have provided support, guidance, and facilitation to encourage the establishment of backyard gardens in every household across project sites. Aimed at achieving food self sufficiency in villages, this initiative complements the significant efforts of the Department of Agriculture under the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. Support is provided through input supply, capacity building, and market facilitation.

This programme supports SDG 2 by addressing key targets:

- *Ending hunger and ensuring year-round access to safe, nutritious food for all, especially vulnerable groups (Target 2.1).*
- *Eliminating malnutrition, including reducing stunting and wasting in children and meeting the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant/lactating women, and the elderly (Target 2.2).*
- *Doubling productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, especially women (Target 2.3).*
- *Promoting sustainable and resilient agriculture to boost productivity, protect ecosystems, and enhance climate change adaptation and soil health (Target 2.4).*

A

Capacity Strengthening and Technical Outreach Services for BRECSA Project

The Capacity Strengthening and Technical Outreach Services for the BRECSA project aims at transforming smallholder agriculture into inclusive and resilient agri-food systems that are increasingly profitable and contribute to food and nutrition security.

Funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the project is implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock through a Project Management Unit based in Samtenling, Sarpang Dzongkhag. The World Food Programme (WFP) serves as the Technical Assistance partner, while Tarayana Foundation is the local implementing partner for WFP.

The project is being carried out across 37 Gewogs in four Dzongkhags- Zhemgang, Trongsa, Tsirang, and Sarpang covering 539 villages. It targets subsistence, semi-commercial, and commercial farming households, aiming to catalyze a 30% increase in resilient commercial agricultural production and enhance food and nutrition security by 2030. The project is expected to benefit 12,074 households (47,088 individuals), including 60% women and 30% youth.

Focusing on livelihood enhancement and commercialization of resilient agricultural production, the project emphasizes value chain coordination, market engagement, and strengthening the competitiveness of the agri-food sector in the targeted Dzongkhags.

The project comprises three main components:

- Resilient agricultural production,
- Strengthened value chains and market linkages, and
- An innovative and competitive agri-food system.



Project briefing for newly recruited Sanam Jabchorpas



Newly recruited Sanam Jabchorpas with the Executive Director, and the Head of Food Systems and Resilience Portfolio, WFP, Mr. Binai Lama

As the local implementing partner for WFP, Tarayana Foundation supports the ‘resilient agriculture production’ component, providing targeted, nutrition-sensitive interventions to help vulnerable groups improve their income and nutrition.

In 2024, 29 *Sanam Jabchorpas (SJs)*-Agriculture Extension Supporters-were recruited, oriented, and deployed to their respective Gewogs. Senior Field Officers facilitated courtesy visits to the respective Dzongkhag administrations and formally introduced the SJs to the Gewog officials.

As part of their initial responsibilities, the SJs carried out village profiling and data collection, participated in a Training of Trainers (ToT) programme on organic farming, and supported fruit plantation surveys in Sarpang. In addition, the SJs have actively assisted the extension officers in delivering organic farming training to local communities.

Testimonial



Sangay Lhamo

Sanam Jabchorpa, Bjoka Gewog, Zhemgang

After nearly 13 years away from her native village, Ms. Sangay Lhamo, recently recruited as one of the Sanam Jabchorpas of Bjoka Gewog in Zhemgang, has finally reconnected with her roots. “Returning to my village and having the chance to serve my people and community feels like coming home,” Sangay shares with a warm smile. Like many young people, Sangay had planned to go abroad after completing her class 12 in 2024. However, unforeseen circumstances altered her path, leading her to join the Tarayana Foundation. After her plans fell through, her parents encouraged her to engage in meaningful work rather than let time go to waste. With many relatives in her assigned area, Sangay finds it convenient and fulfilling to serve her family and community locally. “I have witnessed the Foundation’s transformative impact in my area, and people often ask me what new changes are coming to the village,” she says. Having joined the Foundation about two months ago, Sangay is currently gathering data to prepare for upcoming project implementation. She sees this role as a valuable opportunity to give back to her community. “I feel a deep responsibility in my work. If I fail, it means I am letting down my own community, so I must dedicate myself fully to every task,” Sangay emphasizes.

“Service From the Heart”

B

Himalayan Agroecological Initiative

The Himalayan Agroecological Initiative, endorsed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, supports the development of sustainable food system roadmaps under the project *“Enhancing Knowledge and Capacities of Local Stakeholders to Strengthen Policy Environments, Enabling Agroecology in the Himalayas.”* Funded by BMZ and IFAD, and coordinated by the World Future Council (WFC) and IFOAM-Organics International, the initiative spans Bhutan, Nepal, and India.

Guided by Bhutan’s 13th Five-Year Plan and other key national policies, the roadmap aligns with national priorities for food security, sustainable agriculture, and agroecological resilience. The initiative focuses on key areas such as governance, land and water management, market access, and climate resilience. Through multi-stakeholder collaboration, it integrates sustainable agricultural practices into policy frameworks to promote food security, economic viability, and environmental sustainability.



Dzongkhag -level consultation in Chukha

To support this initiative, a **Technical Advisory and Working Committee** was formed, bringing together key stakeholders from various sectors. A draft roadmap was developed and shared during consultations held in selected Gewogs of Dagana (Kana and Khesiba) and Chukha (Metakha and Logchina) to gather feedback.

These consultations engaged a diverse group of participants, including Dzongkhag and Gewog administration officials, elected representatives, civil servants, financial institutions, businesses, cooperatives, farmers’ groups, and individual farmers. Through this collaborative approach, the initiative seeks to inform and guide local communities and policymakers in shaping a resilient and sustainable agricultural future for the Himalayan region.



02

Economic Development Programme

Supporting rural communities across Bhutan in securing a better future through sustainable livelihoods and improved access to financial services has been a primary objective of the Foundation. Recognizing that empowering communities to become self-reliant requires a robust economic framework, the Foundation has developed and implemented a comprehensive Economic Development Programme. This programme encompasses a range of activities-from skills development and promotion of income-generating activities to market facilitation for rural products-all aimed at building resilient local economies and enhancing community well-being.

This programme contributes to targets 8.3: Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation... and 8.6: By 2030, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training under SDG 8.

A. Bhutan TSHAR Institute

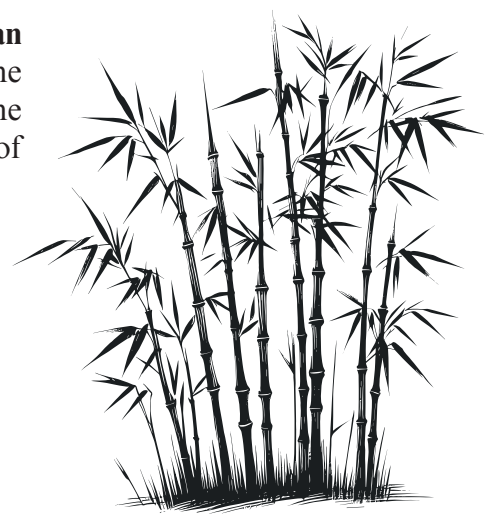
The Bhutan TSHAR Institute, inaugurated in October 2023 by Her Majesty Queen Mother Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck, the Founding President of the Tarayana Foundation, stands as a beacon of innovation and growth in Bhutan's bamboo sector. Established to serve as a dynamic platform for artisans and entrepreneurs, the Institute is dedicated to promoting bamboo as a sustainable resource while offering essential skills training. Its core mission is to foster innovation, enhance product design, and facilitate knowledge sharing, ensuring that Bhutan remains responsive to evolving trends and opportunities within the global bamboo industry.



Bhutan TSHAR Institute, Kalapang, Mongar

Alongside the **Bhutan TSHAR Institute**, operates the **Bhutan TSHAR Enterprise**, as a social enterprise arm to sustain the Institute. It compliments the Institute's mission by serving as the commercial wing focused on marketing and distribution of bamboo products both locally and internationally.

"Service From the Heart"



Training Programs

The Bhutan TSHAR Institute successfully conducted 10 comprehensive training sessions in 2024, focusing on product development, handicrafts, and bamboo furniture making. These sessions benefited over 100 artisans, strengthening their skills in bamboo craftsmanship, product design, and entrepreneurship. As a result, the training programs have significantly enhanced the artisans' capacity to produce high-quality bamboo products, enabling them to explore new market opportunities and increase their income-generating potential.

*Ms. Pema Wangmo
(Master Artisan)*

*Bamboo cladding of the hot
spring at Lungtenzampa,
Trashigang.*

*Bamboo handicraft hands-
on training conducted in
Broksar, Mongar*

*Exposure visit to bamboo
nurseries to Arunachal
Pradesh, India.*

"Service From the Heart"

Recruitment

To meet the growing demand for bamboo products and services, the Bhutan TSHAR Institute recruited 10 new employees in 2024. These recruits underwent rigorous training in production techniques, product design, and sustainable practices, ensuring they are well-equipped to support the Institute's expanding operations. This strategic hiring has not only strengthened the workforce but also significantly enhanced the Institute's production capacity, enabling it to respond more effectively to increasing market demands.



*Newly recruited
artisans
Ms. Sangay Choden
and
Mr. Passang Dorji*



Bamboo outsourced from Thrilangbi village



Collaborations

The Bhutan TSHAR Institute has forged strong partnerships with local artisans, entrepreneurs, and bamboo industry experts to facilitate knowledge sharing and the exchange of best practices. In addition, the Institute has established an active network for bamboo promotion with international institutions, fostering global collaboration and supporting market expansion. As part of its advocacy efforts, the Institute successfully organized a World Bamboo Day event, bringing together key stakeholders-including artisans, entrepreneurs, and policymakers-to promote the bamboo industry and highlight its economic potential and environmental benefits.



World Bamboo Day Celebration at Bhutan TSHAR Institute

"Service From the Heart"

*Bhutan TSHAR Institute team members at the
Bamboo Processing Training in Itanagar,
Arunachal Pradesh, India*



*Director of Department of Tourism at
Bhutan TSHAR Institute*



*Dasho Tashi Wangmo, Hon'ble Secretary (MoICE), the Director (DoT),
Dasho Dzongda of Mongar and the team at Bhutan TSHAR Institute*

Bhutan TSHAR Institute attended Bamboo Kerala Fest, 2024

The Bhutan TSHAR Institute participated in the 21st edition of the Bamboo Kerala Fest, a grand celebration of the bamboo sector, held at Marine Drive Ground, Kochi, Kerala, India, from December 7th to 12th. The Institute joined the event at the invitation of the Kerala State Bamboo Mission.



"Service From the Heart"



B. Empowering Rural Communities through Agri-product Innovation and Local Enterprise Development

Funded by the Bhutan Foundation, the project *Empowering Rural Communities through Agri-product Innovation and Local Enterprise Development* is implemented in Trashigang and Mongar Dzongkhags.

In 2024, the Foundation conducted community consultations focusing on key areas such as food processing, crop selection, marketing strategies, packaging solutions, and production cost management. A total of 300 kilograms (kgs) of Adzuki beans were distributed to Tshhepa in Mongar and 600 kgs of Adzuki beans to Lumang in Trashigang. The Self-Help Group (SHG) in Tshhepa harvested 1,800 kgs of Adzuki beans, and setting aside 400 kgs as seeds for the next planting season.

Significant progress was made in infrastructure development, including securing land for the processing unit, establishing a reliable water connection, clearing the site, and procuring construction materials.

Adzuki bean field at Lumang, Trashigang

Additionally, a Self-Help Group (SHG) member generously volunteered a room for bean storage, which was renovated to ensure proper conditions for preserving the beans. The project aims to contribute to the development of sustainable, inclusive, resilient, and climate-adapted agri-food systems and nutrition security in three Gewogs- Lumang, Jurmey, and Kengkhar-by supporting local enterprise development through facilitation and infrastructure provision.

This initiative is build on lessons learned from the earlier pilot project, *Enhancing Food Security in Bhutan through Value Chain Facilitation and Development of Self-Help Groups (SHGs)*, implemented across the Dzongkhags of Haa, Tsirang, Trongsa, Mongar, Trashigang, and Lhuentse.

Tshegpa Group members



Community members preparing land for Adzuki bean cultivation

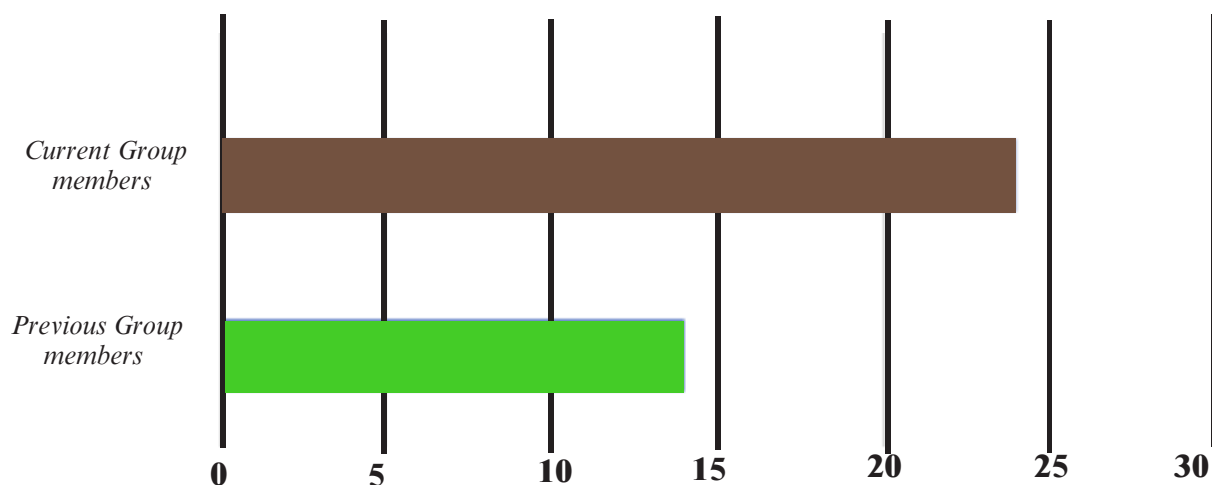




Bangyul Cotton Group,
Pemagatshel

C. Creating Livelihood Options for Youth through the Promotion of Cotton Production

Implemented in Pemagatshel for the members of Bangyul Kapa Detshen, the project *Creating Livelihood Options for Youth through the Promotion of Cotton Production*, funded by UNICEF Bhutan, made significant progress in 2024. A consultation meeting was held during which new youth members joined the Self Help Group. Additionally, training sessions were organized for members of both the Bangyul Kapa Detshen and the Pineapple Kapa Group in Dungmin Gewog, spanning eight days. The growth in number of youth joining the group reflects the opportunities that they see in this revived traditional practice.



Previous and current group members comparison

Trainings given to the Bangyul Kapa Detsen and Pineapple group

The training sessions offered under the project were carefully designed to address multiple aspects of community and enterprise development. The Gender Empowerment and Financial Inclusion: Personal Advancement and Career Enhancement (PACE) training, held from October 19th to 22nd, focused on empowering participants-especially women and youth by enhancing their financial literacy, leadership skills, and career development opportunities. This training aimed to foster confidence and self-reliance, enabling individuals to actively participate in economic activities and community decision-making.

The Self-Help Group Management training (October 23-26) enhanced governance and financial management skills to ensure sustainable group operations. Meanwhile, the Natural Dyeing and Yarn Spinning training (October 15-21) revived traditional craft skills, improving product quality and marketability. Together, these initiatives have empowered participants and strengthened local enterprises for lasting impact.

Natural Dyeing and Yarn Spinning Training



(P.A.C.E), Gender Empowerment and Financial Inclusion Training



Self-Help Group Management Training

"Service From the Heart"

D. Nettle Enterprise Development

Funded by the Bhutan for Life, the *Nettle Enterprise Development Initiative* is implemented in Dagana, Lhuentse, Mongar, Trashigang, Trongsa, Zhemgang, and Punakha. The project focuses on the value chain development of nettle fibre. In 2024, significant progress was made. Following thorough consultations, resource area mapping was conducted, and three beater machines were procured and distributed to Lumang, Broksar, and Gangzur to enhance local production capacity.

To further build community ownership and technical know-how, local artisans and community members were trained in fibre processing. Market linkages are also being explored to ensure sustainability and income generation.



Balung Nettle Group, Dagana

Project sites





Gangzur Nettle Group workshed, Lhuentse



Lumang Nettle Group workshed, Trashigang

To support fibre processing, 13 spinning machines and three carding machines were fabricated, and processing shade houses were constructed in Lumang and Gangzur to improve working conditions. Broksar received essential materials, including CGI sheets and HDPE pipes. Specialized training on yarn processing was conducted in Zhemgang and Dagana, alongside broader training and awareness programs. Raw materials were procured from the community and handed over to Tarayana Rural Craft for value addition and product development, contributing to sustainable livelihoods and economic growth in these rural areas.



Members of Gangzur Nettle Group, Lhuentse



Members of Balung Nettle Group, Dagana

In 2024, the Foundation, in collaboration with government agencies, CSOs, and technical partners, provided training to 1,635 individuals (852 women and 783 men) in construction skills (e.g., masonry, carpentry), enterprise development, green technologies (e.g., solar drying, bio-gas), and basic smart agriculture techniques. These trainings enhanced technical capacity, promoted sustainable practices, and opened new income-generating opportunities for rural communities. By building local skills, the Foundation fosters economic resilience and long-term self-reliance.



“Service From the Heart”

Market Facilitation

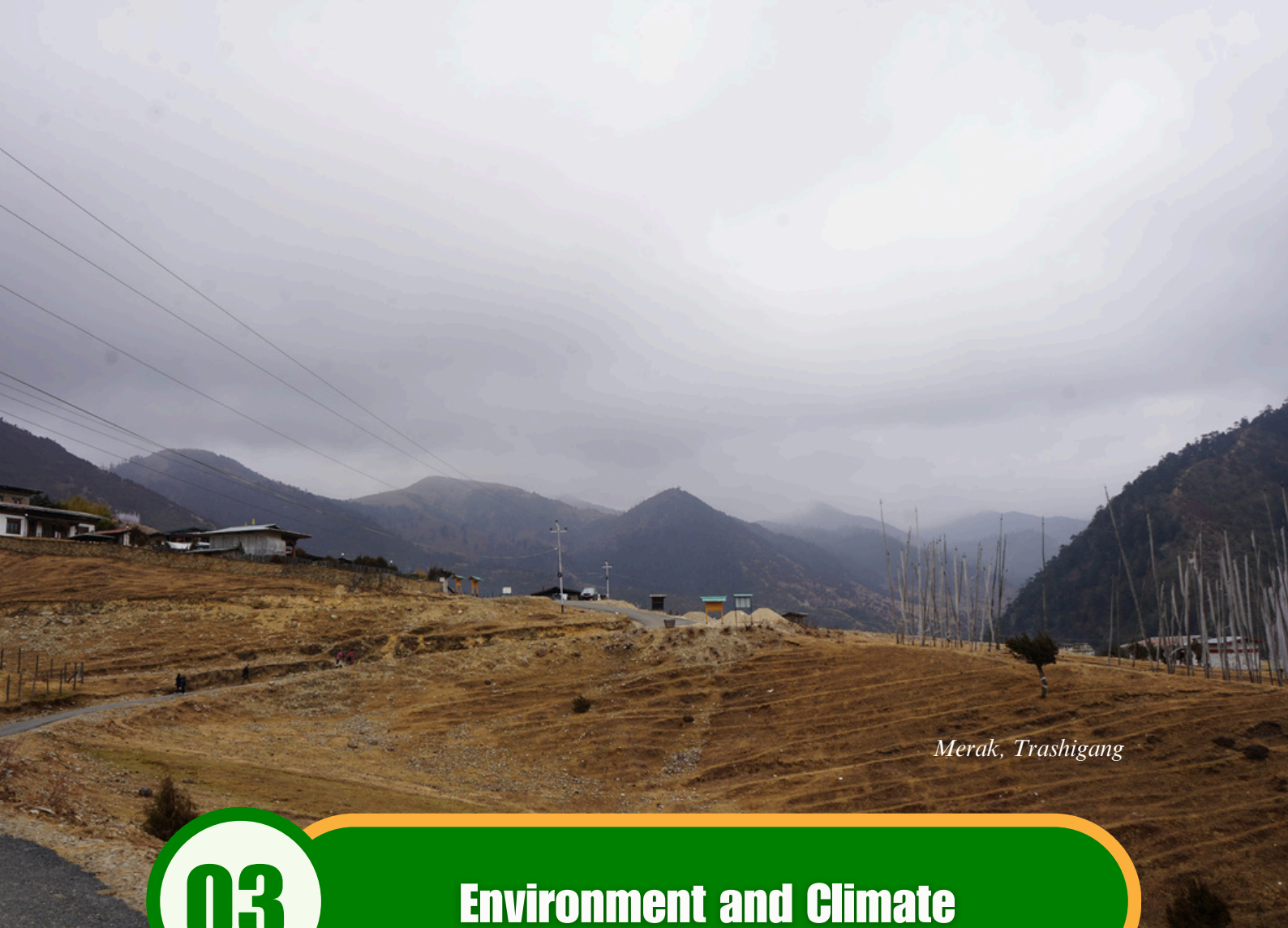
The Foundation continues to play a vital role in facilitating market access for products crafted by Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and individual artisans from rural communities. By actively participating in local and national events, trade fairs, and cultural festivals-and through the ongoing promotion via Tarayana Rural Crafts outlets-the Foundation supports the sale and visibility of a wide range of indigenous and handmade products. These efforts not only preserve traditional skills and knowledge but also strengthen rural livelihoods. In 2024 alone, products worth over **Nu. 1.5 million** were sold, directly benefiting producers and reaffirming the value of community-based enterprises in sustaining rural economies.



Community members selling products at the Tarayana Annual Fair in Thimphu



"Service From the Heart"



Merak, Trashigang

03

Environment and Climate

Tarayana Foundation works with some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable communities in Bhutan, many of whom face high levels of poverty and limited capacity to cope with climate-induced risks. These communities often live in areas of high climate variability, making them more susceptible to hazards such as water scarcity, increasing pests and crop diseases, declining agricultural yields, and human-wildlife conflict-further exacerbating food insecurity and livelihood challenges.

In response, the Foundation implements holistic and context-specific interventions to strengthen community resilience. By building local capacities, promoting climate-smart practices, and enhancing adaptive strategies, Tarayana empowers rural communities to better respond to and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

This programme contributes to SDG 7, SDG 9, SDG 11, SDG 13, and SDG 15 specifically Target 15.4: By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits essential for sustainable development.

A. The International Climate Initiative (IKI) -Living Landscape: Securing High Conservation Values (HCVs) in South-Western Bhutan



IKI Water project: Tashithang, Umling, Sarpang

The International Climate Initiative (IKI) - *Living Landscape: Securing High Conservation Values (HCVs) in South-Western Bhutan* – is an eight-year project funded by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety (BMU) of Germany. The project is jointly implemented by WWF Bhutan and Tarayana Foundation, and spans nine Dzongkhags: Haa, Paro, Thimphu, Chhukha, Tsirang, Dagana, Sarpang, Samtse, and Zhemgang.



“Service From the Heart”

The project aims to promote human-wildlife coexistence, ensure sustainable access to water resources, develop resilient livelihood strategies, and foster environmentally friendly, community-based enterprises as alternative income sources. Guided by the High Conservation Values (HCVs) framework, the project seeks to protect ecologically and socially significant landscapes while enhancing the well-being of local communities.

In 2024, the project achieved significant milestones in enhancing community resilience and resource security. A total of 55 water reservoir tanks were constructed across project sites: 12 in Thimphu, 8 in Dagana, 2 in Paro, 6 in Samtse, 17 in Chhukha, 3 in Tsirang, 3 in Sarpang, and 4 in Zhemgang, improving access to reliable water sources for rural households. Additionally, intensive awareness and sensitization programs on sustainable land management were carried out in 27 villages, helping to build local knowledge and strengthen environmental stewardship within the communities.



With support from the Department of Water, a HOBO data logger was installed at Salungpa A and B springs in Dogar, Paro, to monitor rainfall data and strengthen local water resource management efforts. As part of the project's advocacy and awareness initiatives, the Foundation celebrated World Water Week across multiple sites through a series of community-based activities. Additionally, a 3D animation video was launched to promote understanding and advocacy around the concept of springshed management, reinforcing the importance of protecting and sustaining local water sources.

"Service From the Heart"

The Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) was initiated for the Dotikhola watershed area in Phuentsholing and the Lemichhu watershed area in Dagapela Town. A detailed assessment of both watershed areas was conducted to understand their ecological significance and service potential. In Phuentsholing, meetings were held with key stakeholders, including the service providers-the upstream communities-and the service beneficiaries, to facilitate dialogue and establish mutual understanding for the implementation of the PES mechanism.



Video documentation, including drone footage, was carried out to capture baseline visuals of the project site prior to the implementation of the Agriculture Land Development (ALD) initiative in Balakhop village, Semjong Gewog under Tsirang Dzongkhag. The ALD intervention covered approximately 38 acres of land, directly benefiting 36 households by enhancing land productivity and improving access to arable land for sustainable agricultural practices.

An in-depth assessment and community consultation on community-based ecotourism was carried out with the Lhop community in Samtse to explore sustainable livelihood opportunities rooted in local culture, heritage, and natural landscapes..

"Service From the Heart"



Sustainable Land Management at Lumang, Trashigang

B. Enhance the Resilience of the Grassroots Communities to Adapt to Climate Change Through the Promotion of Agroforestry

Funded by Stiftung Drittes Millennium, the project titled *Enhance the Resilience of Grassroots Communities to Adapt to Climate Change through the Promotion of Agroforestry*, is being implemented in selected Gewogs of Trashigang, Trashy Yangtse, and Dagana. The project adopts gender-sensitive and agro-biodiversity approaches to strengthen rural livelihoods by building capacity in climate-resilient farming, sustainable land management, water sustainability, community seed banking, food processing, and facilitating access to credit for smallholder farmers. It places particular emphasis on the promotion of climate-resilient farming techniques and technologies, water resource management, the establishment of community seed banks, and financial inclusion.

In 2024, notable progress was achieved across the project sites. Organic pesticide production was completed in Trashigang and Trashy Yangtse, while training in mushroom cultivation was conducted in Nindha under Trashy Yangtse. In Khebisa, Dagana, 3,000 fruit saplings were distributed to community members, and a corn-flattening machine was provided to support improved agricultural practices. Furthermore, the introduction of Internet of Things (IoT)-based technology to mitigate human-wildlife conflict was initiated in Khebisa. Progress was also made toward organic certification at various sites, with farmer awareness sessions conducted, registration forms distributed, and data collection underway.

Sustainable land management practices were implemented on 50 acres of land, complemented by awareness and training sessions. In addition, 12 acres of stone bunding were completed in Nindha Village, Jamkhar Gewog, Trashi Yangtse. In Tshogoenpa village, a critical drinking water shortage affecting 69 households was identified, and a detailed survey was carried out to initiate appropriate interventions.

From November 17th to 23rd, a joint monitoring visit was conducted by representatives from Eco-Himal Austria and Nepal in Lumang. During this period, community members from Lumang in Trashigang and Nindha in Trashi Yangtse undertook an enriching exposure visit to deepen their understanding of sustainable agriculture practices within the country. The group of 26 community members visited key institutions including the Khangma ARDC Sub-Centre in Trashigang, ARDC Wengkhar, the Lingmethang Post-Harvest Unit, and the Bhutan TSHAR Institute, among others. The visit offered valuable insights into eco-friendly farming technologies and innovative approaches to resilient agriculture.

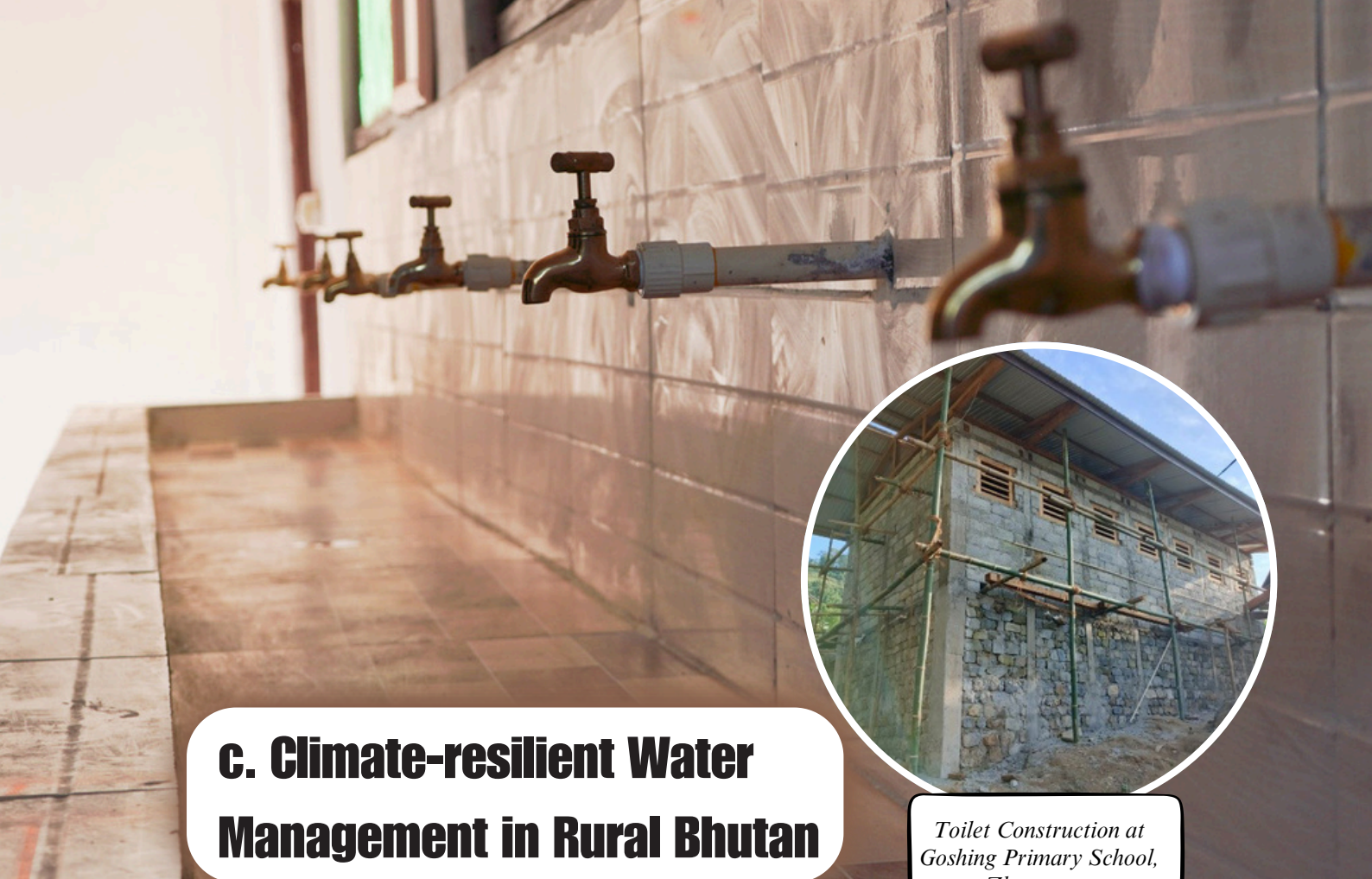
Awareness Program at Khebisa, Dagana



Project monitoring led by Dr. Kurt Luger at Lumang, Trashigang



Community members of Lumang and Ninda villages at the ARDC, Wengkhar



c. Climate-resilient Water Management in Rural Bhutan

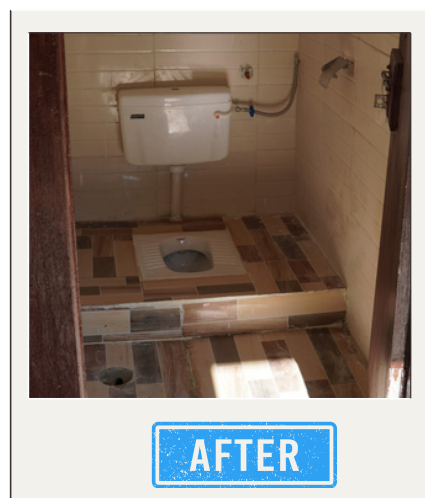
*Toilet Construction at
Goshing Primary School,
Zhemgang*

The project *Climate-Resilient Water Management in Rural Bhutan*, funded by the City of Vienna, has made significant progress since its launch on 1st November 2023. Focused on Lichibi village in Goshing Gewog, Zhemgang, the initiative aims to strengthen climate-resilient water management, promote water sustainability and governance through springshed conservation, and improve health and sanitation by ensuring access to clean water.

In 2024, a water user group was formed to oversee sustainable water management in the community. Four household toilets have been completed, alongside the construction of four water tanks and one intake tank in Lichibi village. Additional sanitation improvements include the construction of a seven-unit toilet facility at Goshing Primary School, enhancing hygiene and sanitation for both students and staff.



BEFORE



AFTER

“Service From the Heart”

04

Research, Advocacy and Network



Former Ambassador of Canada to Bhutan, visit to BKIND project site in Peltari village, Punakha

The Foundation champions action research and advocacy as vital tools to drive meaningful community change and sustainable development. By collaborating with stakeholders at all levels—from grassroots to global—the Foundation advocates for transformative solutions to address rural challenges. Its advocacy program focuses on raising awareness and influencing policy on critical rural issues, striving to create an enabling environment that fosters strategic partnerships, amplifies community voices, and promotes participatory decision-making.

Key advocacy areas include gender equality and inclusivity, environmental and social justice, ending violence against children (EVAC), youth development, nutrition and well-being, Gross National Happiness, and climate change adaptation. The Foundation is a founding member and inaugural chair of the Business, Enterprise, and Employment Support for Women in South Asia Network (BEES), and an active member of regional networks such as the Asia Development Alliance (ADA), the South and South West Asia Network on the SDGs (SANS), the South Asia Rainwater Network (SARNET), and the South Asia Women's Network (SWAN) and the Mid-Latitude Regional Network (MLRN).

"Service From the Heart"

i. Research

The Tarayana Centre for Research and Development (TCRD) serves as the research arm of Tarayana Foundation, dedicated to conducting practical, community-centred research to co-create sustainable solutions for vulnerable populations. TCRD's work focuses on promoting sustainable practices, conducting impact studies, and developing innovative approaches to enhance livelihoods, support climate change adaptation and mitigation, and preserve Bhutan's rich cultural heritage.

TCRD ensures that research findings are shared widely with communities, development practitioners, and policymakers to inform evidence-based policy decisions and contribute meaningfully to development dialogues. Through rigorous research, documentation, monitoring, and evaluation of the Foundation's interventions, TCRD provides valuable insights to guide policy formulation at local, regional, and national levels.

Key objectives of TCRD include serving as a knowledge repository of the Foundation's more than two decades of experience, supporting program development through research and community feedback, and guiding the selection of appropriate theories of change and development pathways in alignment with the Foundation's mission.



Mini power tillers supplied at Gangtey Gewog under B-KIND project



Strawberry and tomato production in a greenhouse as a model, at Peltari, Punakha - Action Research Site

Bhutanese Knowledge for Indigenous Development (B-KIND)

Bhutanese Knowledge for Indigenous Development (B-KIND) is a research project funded by International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Government of Canada, executed under the TCRD. The project adopts a transdisciplinary, political-ecological approach to studying natural resource management and integrated food systems in Bhutan, particularly in the face of climate change. In partnership with the College of Natural Resources (CNR), the project conducts biophysical research and quantitative assessments to map climate, livelihood, and food system vulnerabilities. Key focus areas include organic agriculture, climate adaptation, food and nutrition security, gender, socio-economic aspects of food processing, distribution, value addition, and economic trade-offs. The research also explores human-wildlife conflict, climate vulnerabilities, resilient livelihoods, and sustainable food production and distribution.

Traditional baby shower ceremony in Phobjikha



Research on Gender, Sustainable Agriculture, Climate Change and Wellbeing



Trench Greenhouse in Laya



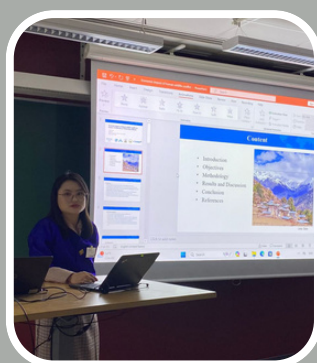
Financial Literacy Training in Phobjikha

In 2024, the Senior Researcher from TCRD, together with the focal person from CNR, visited Laya to collect data on the progress of the trench greenhouse initiative. They also gathered information on the benefits of mini power tillers supplied to Gangtey and Phobji Gewogs, implemented as part of a gender-transformative approach. Three phases of training on financial literacy and gender empowerment were conducted in Laya, Punakha, and Wangdue Phodrang. Additionally, the compilation of a photo book from the visual ethnography photo exhibition was completed, documenting the rich cultural narratives captured during the project.

POLLEN2024 Conference, Lund, Sweden



The Tarayana Center for Research & Development team, in collaboration with the College of Natural Resources, attended the Pollen 2024 Conference at Lund University, Sweden, from 10th to 12th June. The team held panels on the last day of the event. The panel was titled **“Livelihoods and Adaptation in Bhutan,”** A theme that resonates with the conference’s focus on political ecology, climate change adaptation, and sustainable agriculture.



*Ms. Tshering Zangmo
PHD candidate of B-KIND at
CNR*

The sessions featured three presentations: “Economic Impact of Human-Wildlife Conflict on Farmers’ Livelihoods in Northwestern Bhutan,” “Crop Diversity as Climate Change Adaptation in Western Bhutan,” and “Community Responses to Climate Variability across Various Agro-Ecological Zones of Bhutan.” Panel discussions underscored the significant economic consequences of human-wildlife conflict, highlighting its threat to farmers’ livelihoods and its wider implications for food security and economic stability in Northwestern Bhutan.

Papers submitted for publication and conferences

Several research papers by the TCRD team have been submitted for publication and presentation at conferences:

- Dr. Tulsi Gurung and Dr. Tshering Yangden submitted a paper on Traditional Balneotherapy in Bhutan to the BMC Springer Journal and are currently revising it based on reviewers’ feedback.
- Dr. Tshering Yangden authored a study titled Livestock Depredation and Human-Wildlife Conflict in Gangtey and Phobjikha Valley (2023), which is under review with the Journal of Bhutan Studies.
- Ms. Tshering Zangmo submitted a paper, Human-Wildlife Conflict and Its Financial Impact on Farmers’ Livelihood in Northwestern Bhutan, to Human Ecology in September; it is now under peer review.
- Ms. Priyanka Rai submitted a study in October on the Comparative Economic Analysis of Potato Production in Western Bhutan: Conventional Versus In-Conversion to Organic to Cogent Food & Agriculture, which is also under peer review.
- Ms. Sonam Wangmo submitted a paper titled Determinants of Participation in Different Livelihood Diversification Strategies Among Rural Households in West-Central Bhutan to the Indonesian Journal of Social and Environmental Issues for publication.

ii. Awareness and Advocacy



a. Empowering Rural Communities through Targeted Skills Training Initiatives

Funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the *Empowering Rural Communities through Targeted Skills Training Initiatives* project was implemented across 17 Gewogs in Thimphu, Chhukha, Paro, Punakha, Wangdue, and Dagana. The project primarily focuses on building the capacity of home-based women in both urban and rural communities, empowering them with essential professional and personal skills to advance their lives.

The training sessions equipped participants with vital knowledge and competencies aimed at enhancing their personal growth and contributing to community well-being. Key topics included effective communication, problem-solving and decision-making, time and stress management, and financial literacy.



Monitoring visit led by Mr. Huib Mijnaerends, Minister Plenipotentiary-Deputy Head of Mission, from Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, India, at Sali village, Paro



Under the training topic of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), participants received comprehensive sessions on water and waste management, sanitation, hygiene, and menstruation, with a strong emphasis on the importance of health and hygiene practices. The training also included critical discussions on Ending Violence Against Children (EVAC), highlighting the urgency of protecting children's rights and fostering safe, supportive environments.

A total of 2,689 individuals benefited from the training, including 1,813 women and 876 men, strengthening capacities across diverse communities. The sessions were designed to be interactive and participatory, making learning engaging and impactful through lectures, role plays, icebreakers, and energizers. Case studies and real-life examples reinforced key lessons on topics such as gender equality, gender division of labor, and violence against women and children.

Practical exercises like personal time auditing and monthly income-versus-expenditure calculations helped participants reflect on their financial habits, identify unnecessary spending, and recognize the importance of saving.

iii. Network

Tarayana Foundation is an active member of several prominent regional networks, like the BEES Network, the South Asia Women's Network (SWAN), the South Asian Rainwater Harvesting Network (SARNET), and the Asia Development Alliance (ADA). Through the membership in these organizations, Tarayana collaborates with partners across South Asia to advance gender equality, sustainable water management, socio-economic empowerment, and inclusive development amplifying its impact on vulnerable communities in Bhutan and beyond. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between, *Tarayana Centre for Research and Development (TCRD)*, *Tarayana Foundation and OJeong Resilience Institute (OJERI)*, *Korea University, South Korea* was signed during Annual International Conference of the Mid Latitude Region Network held in Paro in December.

This MoU sets a visionary framework for collaboration on climate resilience, sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, and knowledge sharing, fostering progress through joint efforts.



BEES- Business, Enterprise and Employment Support for Women in South Asia Network is a dynamic regional initiative committed to advancing the socio-economic transformation of women across South Asia. Reaching over 22 million women across formal and informal sectors, BEES supports entrepreneurs, home-based workers, and communities involved in producing garments, textiles, handicrafts, and agricultural goods. By addressing systemic barriers such as limited market access, inadequate skills training, and poor working conditions, the BEES Network aims to challenge entrenched gender norms and promote inclusive development. Through collaboration with communities, local bodies, and policymakers, the Network aspires to propel the region toward greater gender parity and economic integration.



SARNET-The South Asian Rainwater Harvesting Network (SARNET) is dedicated to advancing sustainable water management across South Asia by fostering a robust regional network focused on rainwater harvesting. With a vision to lead the region in building effective collaborations and showcasing best practices, SARNET connects individuals, institutions, governing bodies, and organizations specializing in rainwater harvesting. Serving as a vital repository of knowledge, experience, and technology, the network promotes the exchange of information and evidence-based practices to strengthen rainwater harvesting efforts and ensure water security throughout the region.



ADA- Asia Development Alliance (ADA) is a regional network empowering civil society and is a catalyst for social change. It brings together 30 national CSO platforms representing over 10,000 organizations from South, South East, North East and Central Asia.



SWAN-The South Asia Women's Network (SWAN), established in March 2009, based in New Delhi, India, brings together women leaders, parliamentarians, media representatives, creative individuals, NGO leaders, and grassroots workers from nine South Asian countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. SWAN operates through eight sectoral networks: Environment; Arts and Literature; Women in Peacemaking; Health, Nutrition, and Food Sovereignty; Education; Crafts and Textiles; Finance, Livelihoods, and Entrepreneurship Development; and Women in Media. SWAN recognizes the serious challenges facing women in South Asia, including poverty, poor maternal and child health, low educational achievements, violence, social injustice, economic discrimination, and vulnerability during environmental disasters and conflicts.

Mid
Latitude
Region
Network



The Mid-Latitude Region (MLR), encompassing critical ecosystems such as the Third Pole and the High Mountains of Asia, is home to over half the world's population and faces acute environmental challenges due to climate change. These areas, rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage, play a vital role in global climate regulation and water security. The region is especially vulnerable to shifting weather patterns and rising greenhouse gas emissions, which threaten both ecological balance and community resilience. Through initiatives led by institutions like the OJEong Resilience Institute and global platforms like the MLR Network of which Tarayana Foundation is an active member efforts are underway to promote science-based adaptation, carbon neutrality at the village level, and international collaboration for sustainable development.

Tarayana Annual Fair

The Foundation celebrates its Foundation Day annually with a three-day Fair. In 2024, the Foundation marked its 21st Foundation Day from 3rd to 5th May at Centenary Park, Changlimithang, under the theme, “Leveraging Conservation Efforts to Enhance the Local Economy.”

Seventy-four community members-41 women and 33 men-from 22 Gewogs across Zhemgang, Mongar, Sarpang, Trongsa, Trashigang, Pemagatshel, Bumthang, Tsirang, Haa, Wangdue, Samtse, Dagana, and Lhuentse participated by bringing their produce and products for sale. Together, they earned over Nu. 1.5 million during the Fair.

The Annual Fair serves as a key platform for community members to market their products, connect with potential clients, and receive valuable feedback to improve product quality and sustainability.



“Service From the Heart”

Tarayana's Sister Concern & Subsidiary Organizations



The Folk Heritage Museum offers visitors a unique glimpse into traditional Bhutanese lifestyles through its collection of rural household artifacts, tools, and equipment. The Museum regularly organizes live demonstrations of rural customs and traditions, including traditional games, archery, and darts. Visitors also have the opportunity to wear traditional attire from various regions and capture memorable photographs. Additionally, the Museum hosts educational programs that showcase Bhutan's rich cultural heritage and traditional customs.

Lolay Celebration

On 2nd and 3rd January 2024, Lolay was transcribed into poetic themes, and selected groups of students recited these verses at Lingkana Palace, the Ministers' Enclave, and various other organizations. The celebration of Lolay-meaning "best year"-also known as Nyilo (Winter Solstice), is an annual event held at the Folk Heritage Museum. This age-old tradition is practiced in the western districts of Wangdue Phodrang, Punakha, Haa, and Paro. The Museum has taken active initiatives to revive this fading custom and raise awareness among children about the cultural significance of Lolay and Nyilo.



Jakar Dung Zimchung Renovation

The renovation of Jakar Dung Zimchung, encompassing both its physical structure and interior design, is now 90% complete. This renovation is a significant initiative that honors and celebrates the Queens of Bhutan, symbolizing the nation's commitment to preserving and showcasing the vital roles women have played in shaping Bhutan's history and identity.



BEFORE



AFTER



"Service From the Heart"



In 2024, products worth over Nu. 2 million were marketed through various outlets of Tarayana Rural Crafts, notably supported by Bhutan Tourism Corporation Limited (BTCL) in establishing outlets at Docula Café and Phuntsho Pelri Hotel. The organization is in the process of registering as a separate Civil Society Organization, the Bhutan Association of Rural Artisans, under the Royal Patronage of Her Majesty Gyalum Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck.

Tarayana Rural Crafts serves as the production and marketing arm of the Foundation, working closely with thousands of artisans and hundreds of Self-Help Groups across the country to improve and promote products originating from rural villages. Each product is meticulously handmade by artisans whose families have practiced these crafts for generations, utilizing locally sourced natural materials. The artisans are provided with essential tools and skills to both revive traditional arts and crafts and adapt to evolving market demands.





The Tarayana Dragons, also known as the Bhutan Dragons Motorcycle Club (BDMC), is a unique brotherhood of bikers driven by compassion and community service. Founded on October 17, 2008, by three childhood friends with a passion for riding, the club grew into a charity organization with the motto “Love to Ride – Ride to Love.”

The Club was officially affiliated with the Tarayana Foundation on August 2, 2016, by Her Majesty The Queen Mother Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck.

The Tarayana Dragons, under the leadership of their President, Dasho Thinley Wangchuk Dorji, have since dedicated their strength and resources to supporting the Foundation’s initiatives. Over the years, the Club has raised millions for housing projects, medical aid, disaster support, and community development, proving that the spirit of biking can go hand in hand with spreading peace, compassion, and hope across Bhutan.



“Service From the Heart”

**TARAYANA FOUNDATION
UNAUDITED RECEIPT AND PAYMENT STATEMENT
FOR THE PERIOD FROM 1 JANUARY TO 31 DECEMBER 2024**


(Tashi Pem)
Accounts Officer

**Accounts Officer
Tarayana Foundation
Thimphu : Bhutan**


(Sonam Jamtsho B)
Head, Admin/Finance Division

Head, AFD
Tarayana Foundation


(Sonam Pem)
Executive Director

**Executive Director
Tarayana Foundation
Thimphu Bhutan**



GOVERNANCE

BOARD MEMBERS

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HRH Princess Sonam Dechan Wangchuck, President, Bhutan National Legal Institute, Royal Institute of Law & Bar Council of Bhutan
Dasho Karma Ura, President, Centre for Bhutan & GNH Studies
Dasho Yanki T. Wangchuk, Former Secretary, Ministry of Finance
Dasho Thinley W. Dorji, President, Tarayana Dragons Motorcycle Club & CEO, Bhutan Tourism Corporation Limited
Aum Sangay Zam, Proprietor, Rinchen Enterprise
Ms. Sonam Pem, Member Secretary

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dasho Tshewang Tandin, Former President, Royal Thimphu College
Aum Chhimmy Pem, Former Director, Cultural Division, BIMSTEC
Mr. Chhimi Dorji, Director, Tarayana Centre for Research & Development
Ms. Chimi Zangmo, CEO, Hotel Dorji Elements, Former Executive Director, Vast Bhutan
Mr. Karma T. Wangchuk, Ka-Ja Design Associates
Mr. Kunzang Thinley, Former Principal, Royal Academy for Performing Arts
Mr. Neten Dorjee, Executive Producer/Archive Manager, BBS
Ms. Rinzi Pem, Assistant Director, Social Window, SDF
Mr. Sonam Lhundrup, CEO, Peepal Consultancy Firm
Mr. Thinley Namgyel, Former Chief Environment Officer, National Environment Commission
Mr. Kalden Sonam Dorji, Proprietor, Terton Travel Bhutan & Founding Member, Tarayana Dragons Motorcycle Club
Mr. Tshering Tashi, Proprietor, Jojos Adventure & Founding Member, Tarayana Dragons Motorcycle Club
Mr. Sonam Tshering Dorji, Director (Department of Trade), Ministry of Industry, Commerce & Employment
Mr. Tashi Penjor, Director, Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport
Mr. Chencho Nidup, Proprietor, Druk Events

SECRETARIAT

Aum Chime P. Wangdi, Secretary General
Ms. Sonam Pem, Executive Director
Dr. Sangay Dorji, Technical Director

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Mr. Sonam Jamtsho B, Head AFD
Mr. Pema Lhendrup, Sr. ADM & HR Officer
Ms. Tashi Pem, Accounts Officer
Ms. Tashi Choden, Asst. Accounts and Finance Officer
Mr. Ram Bdr Ghalley, Office Assistant/Driver

PROGRAMME DIVISION

Ms. Roseleen Gurung, Director of Programme (On Study Leave)
Ms. Karma Uden, Sr. Programme Officer
Ms. Palden Ongmo, Sr. Programme Officer
Ms. Tulasi Ghalley, Programme Officer
Mr. Bhuwan Kafley, Asst. Programme Officer

COMMUNICATIONS & MONITORING

Ms. Namgay Pem, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer
Ms. Sherub Wangmo, Communications & Documentation Officer
Mr. Ramesh Subba, Asst. Communications and Documentation Officer

TARAYANA CENTRE FOR RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT (TCRD)

Mr. Chhimi Dorji, Director
Dr. Tshering Yangden, Senior Researcher, B-KIND
Mr. Tshering Phuntsho, Research Associate, B-KIND
Ms. Monika Sharma, Research Associate, B-KIND
Ms. Deki Yangzom, Senior Research Intern, B-KIND
Ms. Sangay Lhamo, Jr. Research Intern
Ms. Sonam Lhamo, Jr. Research Intern

FIELD OFFICERS

Mr. Namgay (Tsirang & Sarpang)
Mr. Sonam Jamtsho (Lhuentse, Trashigang & Trashigang Yangtse)
Mr. Passang Tobgay (Thimphu & Paro)
Ms. Thinley Bidha (Samtse)
Ms. Jigme Wangchuk (Dagana)
Ms. Ugyen Tshomo (Pemagatshel)
Ms. Tashi Tshering Doya (Haa & Chukha)
Mr. Sonam Gyeltshen (Manager Bhutan TSHAR Institute) Som Bdr. Rai (Trongsa)
Dorji Tshengay (Zhemgang)

SUPPORT STAFF

Tobgay, Gardener Tsheten, Night Guard
Ganga Maya Gurung, Cleaner

TARAYANA RURAL CRAFTS

Ms. Sonam Dema, Production Manager
Ms. Pema Wangchuk, Traditional Paper Expert, Production Division
Ms. Dhan Maya Pulami, Salesperson
Ms. Sangay Wangzom, Tailor
Ms. Samten Pemo, Tailor

FOLK HERITAGE MUSEUM

Ms. Samjana Limbu, Manager
Mr. Gado Tshering, Project Manager
Ms. Tashi Pem, Admin/Accounts
Mr. Kuenzang Dorji, Security Guard
Ms. Sangay Checzom, Sales Person
Ms. Chimi Lhamo, Sales Person
Ms. Ugyen Pemo, Weaver
Ms. Karma Thinley Choem, Live Demonstrator
Ms. Rinchen Namkha Lham, Cleaner

Our Partners and Donors



"Service From the Heart"

Year in Review

14th to 24th January

The Foundation organized the annual pilgrimage to Bodhgaya, India for the eight senior citizens from remote villages of Pemagatshel, Samtse and Dagana Dzongkhags.

18th January

The Hon'ble Founding President visited Regent's International School, Bangkok, Thailand.

25th to 26th January

Staff participated in a two-day training led by Dasho Tshewang Tandin, inspired by Search Inside Yourself and Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, focusing on mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and effective leadership.

29th to 31st January

The Annual Review and Planning of the Foundation for the year 2023-2024 was conducted at Tarayana Centre.

1st to 2nd February

The Foundation's Field and Programme Officers, along with interns, attended a Sustainable Land Management training led by experts from the National Soil Centre Services, enhancing knowledge on soil health and climate-resilient practices at Tarayana Centre.

8th February

The 39th Board Meeting was held at Tarayana Centre, led by Founding President Queen Mother Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck, with HRH Princess Sonam Dechan Wangchuck and other Board and Executive Members in attendance.

9th to 12th February

Sustainable Land Management training, led by Mr. Chenga Tshering from the National Soil Services Centre, began in Balakhop village, Semjong Gewog, Tsirang, and was later rolled out across all project sites, enhancing local capacity in climate-resilient land practices.

26th February

In collaboration with Dogar Gewog the Foundation distributed fruit saplings across Tashigang, Gomche, Lhajakha, and Tango villages.

27th to 28th February

The Tarayana Club Coordinator Tshering Penjore from Yangchenphug Higher Secondary School (YHSS), participated in the regional Children's Consultation organized by SAIEVAC in Thimphu.

5th March

The Foundation hosted a World Bank Mission to its intervention sites in Dawakha, Paro, welcoming Mr. Mauricio Monteiro Vieira, Mrs. Erisha Suwal, and Dasho Karma Yeshey to observe and engage with ongoing community development initiatives.

8th March

Hon'ble Members of Parliament from Germany, along with officials from the German Embassy and the Honorary Consul to Bhutan, visited Tshaluna village under Mewang Gewog, one of the Foundation's key intervention sites to witness community-based initiatives in action.

27th March

The Foundation conducted its Annual Rimdro at Tashigang Goemba.

26th March to 1st April

WWF Bhutan conducted monitoring visits to project sites in Tsirang, Sarpang, and Zhemgang, engaging local communities as part of the “Living Landscape” initiative.

1st to 15th April

The project team, led by the Project Manager, conducted Key Informant Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, and resource area mapping at the Nettle Enterprise Development sites.

2nd to 6th April

The community members of Lumang in Trashigang and Ninda in Tashiyangtse visited Khangma ARDC Sub Centre in Trashigang, ARDC Wengkhar, Lingmithang Post Harvest Unit, Bhutan TSHAR Institute and others.

27th April

A delegation from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMUV), including Dr. Christiane Paulus and team, visited Dogar, Paro, a key site of the “Living Landscape: Securing High Conservation Values” project.

27th April

The 11th Green Technology Challenge was held at College of Science and Technology on the theme “Climate and Disaster Resilient Houses in the Bhutanese Context.”

3rd to 5th May

The Foundation commemorated its 21st Foundation Day with the 18th Annual Fair with the theme “Leveraging Conservation Efforts to Enhance Local Economy”.

6th May

Nettle Machine Operation Training and Buyer and Seller Meet Workshop on Nettle Products was conducted to the Community Members and Tarayana Field Staff.

3rd June

Dr. Sangay Dorji joined the Foundation as the Technical Director.

10th June

In honour of the 69th Birth Anniversary of the Founding President, Gyalyum Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck, the Dogar community in Paro came together to offer butter lamps and planted 311 oak saplings.

10th to 12th June

A team from Tarayana Center for Research & Development and the College of Natural Resources, attended the Pollen2024 Conference at Lund University, Sweden.

11th June

A team from the head office, along with the field officer, held a comprehensive consultation meeting with community members and local leaders of Balung Chiwog under Lajab Gewog to discuss nettle enterprise development prospects.

13th June

A hands-on training on Sustainable Land Management Practices was conducted in six villages: Lumang, Kharphu, Tsho Gonpa, Dungmanba, Romzor Khansingri, and Moshi under Lumang Gewog, Trashigang Dzongkhag.

19th to 23rd June

The Foundation organized a Natural Dyeing Training at Langthil, Trongsa Dzongkhag.

27th June

The former Ambassador of Canada to Bhutan, His Excellency Cameron MacKay visited the BKIND project site in Peltari village, under Kabjisa Gewog of Punakha Dzongkhag.

18th to 19th July

The Foundation conducted the Midterm Review of the programmes under the Foundation.

25th July

The Foundation conducted its 40th Board Meeting.

26th July

The Foundation conducted training on Gender Empowerment and Financial Inclusion to the women from the Royal Bodyguard of Dechencholing and the Royal Bhutan Army of Lungtenphu in Thimphu.

1st to 5th August

The Gender Empowerment and Financial Inclusion training was conducted across multiple villages in Maedwang Gewog, Thimphu.

6th August

The Gender Empowerment and Financial Inclusion Training was conducted at Matekha Gewog, Chukha Dzongkhag.

7th August

The Indian Military Training Team (IMTRAT) donated a foxtail dehusk machine to the Lhop community of Ngawang Dramtoe in Samtse.

8th August

The four team members from TSHAR Institute embarked on a 30-day practical learning journey to Arunachal Pradesh, India.

14th August

The Gender Empowerment and Financial Inclusion Training, using P.A.C.E modules, was successfully conducted for women from the Royal Bhutan Police (RBP), Thimphu.

15th August

The Founding President Her Majesty Queen Mother Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck received the inaugural Smile Asia Philanthropic Visionary Award in Singapore.

12th to 16th August

Foundation staff, including field and program teams, participated in a comprehensive training on Payment for Environmental Services (PES), strengthening capacity in sustainable environmental management.

14th to 22nd August

The Centre for Sustainability Studies (CSS), and Tarayana Foundation conducted consultations for developing climate literacy content for grades 6 to 12, focusing on Tarayana Clubs in eight schools across Paro, Thimphu, and Sarpang.

28th August

Coinciding with the World Water Week, the Foundation held a sensitization program on the Payment for Environmental Systems (PES), at the College of Science and Technology.

26th to 29 August

The Gender Empowerment and Financial Inclusion: Personal Advancement and Career Enhancement (P.A.C.E) Module training was held in Lingmukha and Chubu Gewogs, Punakha Dzongkhag.

5th September

The inception meeting for the Building Resilient Commercial Smallholder Agriculture (BRECSA) Project between the WFP Bhutan and the Foundation was held at Tarayana Centre.

6th September

Mr. Bhuwan Kafley joined the Foundation as the new Assistant Programme Officer.

10th September

The Gender Empowerment and Financial Inclusion training (P.A.C.E modules) was conducted at Dogar Gewog.

21st September

The Bhutan TSHAR Institute celebrated its first-ever World Bamboo Day.

1st to 3rd October

Mr. Chhimi Dorji, Director of Tarayana Centre for Research and Development, represented the Foundation at the 2024 International Conference on Climate-resilient Agriculture for Sustainable Food Systems held at ICIMOD Headquarters and Living Mountain Lab, Nepal.

9th October

The Foundation met with Professor Vinod Pavarala, Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair on Community Media, Professor Vasuki Belavadi, Faculty Fellow, and Professor Kanchan K. Malik, Faculty Fellow, along with an official from BICMA at Tarayana Centre.

18th October

The Foundation held its 41st Board Meeting.

23rd to 25th October

A training on nettle yarn processing was held at Balung, Dagana.

26th October

A Training of Trainers on Natural Dyeing of Cotton Yarn and Cotton Yarn Spinning was conducted for women of Bangyul Kapa Detshen in Durungri village, Pemagatshel.

30th October

Kapa Detshen and Pineapple Self-Help Group in Bangyul, Pemagatshel were given trainings on P.A.C.E modules and Self Help Group Management.

2nd November

His Eminence Vairochana Rinpoche Ngawang Jigme Jigten Wangchuk consecrated the Mang Lhakhang at Nyingshing Borang village in Norbugang Gewog at Nganglam in Pemagatshel.

4th November

The Tarayana Club of Nganglam Central School, Pemagatshel, was inaugurated by Her Majesty Gyalyum Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck and Vairochana Rinpoche.

5th November

Water supply infrastructure in Mewang Gewog, Thimphu, was handed over to the community under the Living Landscapes project.

4th to 5th November

The Foundation conducted a consultation meeting on the Himalayan Agroecology Initiative (HAI) at Khuruthang, Punakha.

9th November

Dutch Embassy officials visited Sali village, Dogar Gewog, Paro, to engage with local communities.

12th to 22nd November

The Foundation, in collaboration with Mr. Kaka, Deputy Chief Forestry Officer of Wangdue Forest Division, conducted a comprehensive field study in the Dotikhola watershed.

17th to 21st November

The Eco-Himal Austria and Nepal teams, along with the Foundation's project team, visited the Agroforestry for Climate Change Adaptation initiative in Lumang, Trashigang, led by Dr. Kurt Luger, Dr. Rudolf, and Mr. Dhakal Eak Narayan.

27th November

The Foundation recruited 29 Sanam Jabchopas (Agriculture Extension Supporters) for the BRECSA project, Technical Assistance components of WFP Bhutan to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Royal Government of Bhutan.

7th to 12th December

The Bhutan TSHAR Institute participated in the 21st edition of Bamboo Kerala Fest at Marine Drive Ground, Kochi, Kerala.

10th December

The Foundation, in collaboration with two technical officials from the Agriculture Machinery and Technology Centre (AMTC), Paro, conducted an awareness programme on IoT for the local community of Khebisa Gewog, Dagana Dzongkhag.



For Rural Development

Tarayana MicroFinance (TMF) is the sister concern of the Tarayana Foundation. Recognizing microfinance as a key means for poverty alleviation, Tarayana introduced microfinance services in 2008. In 2018, Tarayana obtained a non-deposit-taking microfinance license from the Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan, enabling TMF to expand across the country. TMF integrates livelihood development with financing, prioritizing underprivileged communities. With a focus on impact over financial gains, TMF aims to unlock beneficiaries' potential, helping them build sustainable sources of income and long-term financial independence.



"Service From the Heart"



Pema Buti, Broksar, Mongar



His Majesty The King awarded the Nation Order of Merit (Gold), during the 109th National Day celebrations in Trongsa in recognition of Tarayana Foundation's contributions in the upliftment of the poorest and vulnerable communities of Bhutan

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