



*Looking at life through the eyes of the most vulnerable people, understanding their dreams, and providing means for them to reach out for their dreams.*

# **Tarayana Foundation**

## **Annual Progress Report 2004-2005**

## Foreword

Tarayana is two years old and it is time for serious reflection on the progress made as well as the way forward. We have now entered into the crucial phase of strengthening our credibility as an organization. The Foundation continues to strive towards fulfilling its goals and objectives with an evolved sense of urgency and direction.

The past year saw Tarayana attain a new level of maturity where critical attention was paid to the preparation of Strategic Plan 2005-2007 to set the focused direction, with passion and professionalism. We have also realized that there is more demand for our assistance from many parts of the country in addition to the remote communities that we were already working in. It also became apparent that our resource mobilization could barely keep up with the demand. The need to build up a corpus fund to ensure the continuity of the programmes and activities became heightened. As more activities needed to be taken up, we found that we needed more full time staff. Despite these constraints and challenges the Foundation has had a very successful year.

Our support to needy students has increased appreciably ensuring that more children are in schools among the poor communities. The Foundation has identified artisan skills for promotion in the communities, focusing on folk skills and interests coupled with market potentials. Stinging nettle weaving is one such area and currently two trainers are being trained outside the country. The Tarayana Clubs in schools and institutes have taken a life of their own and are engaging students in meaningful service to those in need of a helping hand. New beneficiaries have been identified and supported. Fund raising activities and viable business plans have been drawn up and deliberated upon. We look forward to the implementation of some of them in the coming year.

I take this opportunity to thank and commend the whole hearted support that we have continued to receive from all levels of the government, the private sector and our donors, both from abroad and within Bhutan. On behalf of all the lives you have helped Tarayana transform, we thank each of you for your generous support. We hope that we will continue to receive the same support and goodwill from all our friends in the years ahead.

Tashi Delek!

Her Majesty the Queen  
Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck  
Founder and President

# Târayâna Foundation

## Vision

*A happy and poverty free Bhutan.*

## Mission

*To help the 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 gets its name, in our service to the most vulnerable people and in working with each other.*
- ✚ **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.*

## Core Operational Strategy

*Look at life through the eyes of the most vulnerable people, understand their dreams, and provide means for them to reach out for their dreams.*

## Goals

1. *Support vulnerable individuals to achieve greater socio-economic security.*
2. *Sponsor students in disadvantaged circumstances.*
3. *Support needy patients to receive medical care.*
4. *Promote relevant artisan skills to enhance rural income.*
5. *Improve socio-economic security of vulnerable communities.*
6. *Make Târayâna an organisation of compassionate professionals.*

## Background

The Târayâna Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that helps the most poor and disadvantaged in Bhutan. It supplements the government's efforts to alleviate poverty in the country.

The Foundation was established by Her Majesty the Queen Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck in 2003 after her many travels to remote rural communities in the country. Her Majesty's close personal interactions with some of the most poor individuals and communities in the country resulted in the small but highly targeted interventions of the Foundation which helps the poor people take advantage of the economic opportunities spawned by the government development process. Thus the Foundation assists the vulnerable and disadvantaged gain greater economic independence through small and targeted interventions at the individual, household and small community levels. The Foundation has been in active operation for the last two years. This report covers the progress made in 2004-05.

## **Why should Târâyâna focus on the vulnerable people?**

Poverty reduction has been at the heart of Bhutan's every development plan since the 1960s. Despite starting late after years of isolation, Bhutan has achieved economic growth and poverty reduction. Today, studies have shown that roughly two-thirds of the Bhutanese population has attained a degree of economic security above the nation's poverty line. This has been possible through government's healthy development policies targeted at poverty alleviation.

However, as studies have pointed out, a sizeable number of the poor is stuck below the poverty line. They consists of people who have some severe handicap and which prevents them from taking advantage of opportunities that become available as Bhutan's economy grows. They include physically handicapped people such as blind, deaf, lame, elderly, or severely malnourished, psychologically handicapped people like the mentally ill, psychologically disturbed as in women from domestic violence, and socially handicapped people like orphaned children and ethno-linguistic minorities. Poverty alleviation of this "vulnerable" population calls for highly specific, tailor-made and targeted interventions to ameliorate their individual handicap. Without addressing these vulnerable groups, poverty alleviation is difficult to be realized.

Governments are usually not well equipped to address such specific interventions efficiently and effectively, essentially because they must be designed to meet individual needs. NGOs with an intimate knowledge of such individuals or communities, and trusted by them, have the comparative advantage to address these peoples. The Tarayana Foundation strives to address this public policy gap and complements the government's poverty eradication programme.

## **Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees determines the directions of the Foundation's programmes. The members of the Board of Trustees serve for a term of three years, which may be renewed. The members of the Board comprise of individuals from a wide spectrum of society and the Board meets quarterly to renew and take decisions on the activities of the Foundation.

### **Management/ Working Committee**

Guided by the Board of Trustees the Management/Working Committee supports the Foundation Secretariat in implementing the Foundation's activities approved by the Board of Trustees. It supervises proper maintenance of records, work plan preparation and implementation, screening of beneficiaries, allocation of the Foundation's fund, and its utilization. The Committee meets every fortnight to discuss and work on the planned activities of the Foundation. The members of the Management/Working Committee also serve for a term of three years, which may be renewed.

### **Secretariat**

The Secretariat prepares financial statement and reports on the progress of works of the Foundation every quarter to the Board. It implements the planned activities of the Foundation and ensures that the programmes are well coordinated. The Secretariat is responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the Foundation.

### ***Goal 1: Support vulnerable individuals to achieve greater socio-economic security.***

The Foundation continues to pay maintenance allowance of Nu 6000 annually to individuals incapable of earning and looking after themselves. Currently there are 39 beneficiaries being supported, an increase of seven individuals under this scheme. These individuals are from all parts of the country selected using the standard Tarayana processes.

### ***Goal 2: Sponsor students in disadvantaged circumstances.***

#### **Activity 1: Endowment Fund for Education**

The Foundation continues to strengthen the Education Endowment Fund to help school-going age children from poor and disadvantaged communities to attend school.

The scholarship provides for their uniforms, supplementary meal contributions and other associated expenses. In 2004 the Foundation supported 67 students at the primary level. In 2005 with the Endowment fund expanded with more support from SCF and others, the Foundation is supporting 264 children:

- 65 from the Lhop communities, Samtse Dzongkhag
- 10 from Kangpara, Trashigang Dzongkhag
- 32 from Adang and Rukha, Wangdue Dzongkhag and
- 128 from Zhemgang Dzongkhag
- 1 from Khaling
- 1 from Haa
- 7 from Thimphu
- 11 young Monks
- 9 from Bumthang

As of April 2005, the Endowment Fund stands at Nu. 3.9 million. The Foundation, however, hopes that we can expand the fund significantly so that more number of children can be helped. The potential candidates for the scholarship are identified with the help of Dzongkhag and Geog (Block) officials and the Head teachers of the schools.

The Foundation has also considered special cases after analyzing the circumstances of the beneficiaries. The Foundation helped a student complete her class 12 in 2004 by paying her school fees. The death of the girl's father had made it impossible for her to pay the school fees and would have had to drop out if not for the intervention.

In 2005 the Foundation also sponsored a 15-year old visually impaired boy, to study at the National Institute for Disabled in Khaling. It is paying the travel expenses along with taking care of the basic essentials. Having become blind when he was in the ninth grade he stayed at home for the next four years figuring out what to make of this despairingly difficult situation. He was referred to Tarayana Foundation for assistance to help him complete his education and stand on his own feet. He is an intelligent and hardworking boy with a determination that will see him through all difficulties.

The Foundation would also like to point out that a Danish Foundation, Terre Des Homme, has committed to sponsor 200 disadvantaged Bhutanese children from PP to class 12 for 13 years, starting 2005.

## **Activity 2: Tarayana Education Endowment Fund Operational Manual**

A transparent system is vital for sustainability and growth in any organisation. The Foundation has prepared an operational manual for the administration and management of its Education Endowment Fund. The manual outlines the criteria for awarding assistance, defines the processes, time and method of application, selection procedures, and terms of reference of the selection committee. The application forms are also provided.

The Foundation has submitted the manual to Save the Children, USA, who has reviewed the final draft and it has already been printed for distribution.

### **Activity 3: Production of 15-min documentary**

The Foundation is in the process of completing a documentary film on its student sponsorship programme with the aim of documenting the impact. This film will also be used in our fund raising efforts towards strengthening the Education Endowment so that more students can be accommodated.

The scholarship enables poor children to attend school and also prevents current students from dropping out because of social and economic reasons.

### **Goal 3: *Support needy patients to receive medical care.***

Although the government provides basic medical services free, complicated cases such as harelips are for most beyond reach. The Foundation helps the government, whenever possible, in facilitating access to such medical services.

In May 2004, supported by SDS, the Foundation in collaboration with the Ministry of Health organized hare lip correction clinics for 66 individuals, most of who were from remote villages. Two teams of volunteer surgeons from Thailand were invited by the Foundation to conduct the operations. The clinics were set up in Paro and Punakha. The Foundation provided all logistical support for the patients including travel, accommodation, food, and travel allowances. Local hospitality was provided to the visiting surgeons.

The operations were a success. Of the 66 patients who attended the clinic, 49 were operated upon and the others given advice as some of the patients were not ready for surgery.

It is hoped that the patients whose harelips have been corrected are enjoying a greater sense of self worth.

### **Goal 4: *Promote relevant artisan skills to enhance rural income.***

### **Activity 1: Establishment of Tarayana Craft Centres**

The Foundation has been screening possible designs and concepts for the construction of the Tarayana Craft Centre in Thimphu. However, implementation has been slowed due to new road construction and other developmental activities of the City Corporation in the area. The actual shape of the land allocated to Tarayana has also undergone several changes as a result of repeated demarcations. These changes have also meant that the utility of the land has changed and these need to be reflected in proportional adjustments in the development plan.

Fund mobilization for the construction of the craft centres have picked up momentum. The need for the construction of these centres has been more acutely felt as production of rural folk crafts have started picking up in the target areas. These centres will serve as platforms for collection and marketing of the products as well as allow the young artisans to showcase their skills. Folk craft clusters have been identified and needs assessment carried out.

The construction of the craft center in Thimphu is due to begin shortly. We have awarded the work to a local construction company who has agreed to carry out the work on a non-profit basis as a gesture of goodwill. Necessary paper processes have been initiated so that necessary clearances are obtained from the office of the Thimphu municipality soon.

### **Activity 2: Promote skills of artisans (supported by SDS)**

The training of the twelve young individuals from the three target communities of Lhops, Olegpas and Monpas has been completed. The students and their teachers also visited folk craft centres in Delhi as part of their skills expansion programme. The training ended in November 2004. In the latter four months of the training period, the trainees produced various pots and sold them at the local weekend market. The aim was to instill in them money management skills and also the value of money. The more they produced the more they sold. During the Foundation's foundation day on May 4, 2004, their products were a sellout.

The training was successful and the 12 trainees have returned to their villages where the foundation is building a work shed for them to continue on with the skills they have learned. The trainees are also expected to impart their skills, using the centers as a workshop, to their fellow villagers so that they too can earn cash income, resulting in the engagement of the villagers in economically viable craft development. The pottery group of the Monpas has already begun production in full earnest and fulfilling orders being placed by institutions and offices for flower-pots and decorative pieces.

### **Activity 3: Construction of Bamboo Craft Workshop (supported by SDS)**

As part of the Tarayana Club activities of the Yebilabtsa Middle Secondary School, the construction of a Bamboo Craft Workshop was supported by the Foundation. This was taken up as the children and the teachers there had expressed an interest in the craft and were already

familiar with the basic skills. The children were trained in cane and bamboo crafts, in both traditional and contemporary styles.

Thirty students were trained in 2004 and have started making products for sale. Their products will be sold at the Tarayana Fair 2005 in Thimphu. The products include colorful bangchungs and hats, winnows, fans and different sized containers.

As of March 2005, there were 40 (15 girls and 25 boys) members working at the Bamboo Craft Workshop. The school has hired a skilled bamboo artisan, one of the best from the Kheng region, for two months to teach the club members.

#### **Activity 4: Tarayana Druksho**

The Foundation has purchased the machinery of the Mangala paper factory in Thimphu at Nu 415,000. The equipment will be lifted and set up in the Tarayana Craft Centre Complex. Product stock of Nu 300,000 was also purchased and will be disposed of during the Tarayana Fair.

The working committee members endorsed the need for more economically viable activities to help cover some of the core activities like the beneficiaries programme. Moreover, the Craft Centres were to serve as the nodal points in product development and marketing aspects and these could be better carried out through hands on experience.

The construction of the structures to house the equipment will be taken up by Druk Chhogley Construction, a local company on actual cost basis. Handmade paper production is ongoing at the old site. One of the working committee members helps out with regular supervision of the work at site.

#### **Activity 5: Nettle weaving**

As part of the Foundation's employment generating activities through the development of skills, two class twelve dropouts have been sent to Delhi to get trained in the production of stinging nettle products.

The Foundation's long time supporter and donor, Mrs. Serena Chopra, sponsored the two-month training.

On their return to Bhutan, the two will be employed temporarily by the Foundation and sent to the community clusters where there are potential for developing stinging nettle crafts.

The Foundations has learnt that market for stinging nettle products such as mats, hats, boxes and decorative pieces exist in the country. Given appropriate marketing strategies, the products could also be exported.

#### **Goal 5: Improve socio-economic security of vulnerable communities.**

The construction of three demonstration houses in the three villages of Lotokuchu Jigme, Lotokuchu Singye and Lotokuchu Wangchuck were completed in November 2004. The project

was supported by Save the Children – USA, Bhutan. The three houses have generated interest in the local communities and many would like to construct similar homes. Some villagers have also started collecting building materials. As a follow up to the successful completion of the three demonstration houses in Lotokuchu, the Foundation has initiated consultation with the Monpa communities.

### ***Goal 6: Make Târâyâna an organisation of compassionate professionals.***

Volunteerism for good causes forms an important concept of Buddhism because it promotes compassion and places the desire to help others in the forefront. The Foundation has established Tarayana Clubs in sixteen high schools in 2004 on a pilot basis. These clubs offer social services to the communities close to their schools.

Reports from these clubs have been overwhelmingly positive. The club in the National Institute of Education (NIE) in Paro Dzongkhag, in particular, has been very active. They help the poor and the needy financially as well as through contribution of labour. In 2004, the President of the Foundation, Her Majesty Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck, awarded certificates of participation to the graduates of NIE who were members of the Tarayana club.

The clubs' main activities include conducting literacy classes for the school dropouts; education on the importance of cleanliness in body and in environment including building toilets; demonstrating and disseminating social messages through street plays like the danger of HIV/AIDS; supporting nearby primary schools by filling in during teacher shortage.

In 2005, Khinye Lower Secondary School in Trashi Yangtse also became a member of the Tarayana club. The Foundation hopes that the school would benefit the community around it.

### **Fundraising Activities**

#### **Activity 1: Tarayana Membership**

The Foundation is two years old. Given the growth seen by it and its expansion needs, the Foundation has planned to start accepting membership fees.

It will have four categories:

- i) General members with an annual fee of Nu.555
- ii) Expatriate members with an annual fee of US\$ 100 or its equivalent
- iii) Life time members who will pay Nu.25,000
- iv) Corporate members contributing Nu.100,000 annually

## **Activity 2: Sponsors' night**

On December 28, 2004, the Foundation held a sponsors' night dinner for the donors and friends of the Foundation. The President graced the occasion and personally thanked the donors for their continued support. The occasion was an opportunity for members and donors to interact and discuss, fund raising strategies, developmental issues and aspirations for the Foundation. The Sponsors' night was a huge success and will be a calendared annual event.

## **Activity 3: MOU signed between Helvetas and Tarayana**

The Foundation is pleased to put on record the unstinted support from Helvetas in committing support of Swiss Francs 100,000 annually for three years.

The fund will be used to implement the development plan of the three indigenous communities that the Foundation is currently working in, the Lhops, the Monpas and the Olegpas as detailed in the Tarayana Foundation Strategic Plan 2005 – 2007

- To document their agro-ecological knowledge,
- To document their beliefs and practices,
- To improve their living conditions through appropriate community development activities.
- To develop rural Arts and Crafts.

## **Activity 4: Fundraising Sales**

### **a) Sale of post cards:**

Mrs. Serena Chopra, who is a member of our working committee in Delhi, is the Foundation's highest individual donor. She has selected six pictures from her collection of black and white photos of rural Bhutan and produced about a thousand sets. Mrs Chopra has donated them to the Foundation and the sale proceeds from the same has been added to the core fund of the Foundation.

The sale of these postcards @ Nu 300/set was very successful. The Foundation has printed an additional 10,000 sets of the same and sent to be sold at the Expo 2005 currently being held in Japan.

### **b) Sale of Quilts:**

The Foundation organized the sale of quilted bedspreads donated by Mrs. Serena Chopra.

The sale was held three times before the stock finished.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR May 2004- April 2005**

2004	
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4 <sup>th</sup> May	Tarayana celebrates it's first foundation day
15 <sup>th</sup> –16 <sup>th</sup> May	Second round of quilt sale in BOC hall
24 <sup>th</sup> –29 <sup>th</sup> May	Tarayana organises harelip correction clinics in Paro and Punakha
20 August	Thuksoe soelra for Phongmey school victims. TF donated clothes and utensils to the affected children in Tashigang Dzongkhag
2 <sup>nd</sup> October	The Tarayana Foundation celebrated the graduation day of 12 village youths including four girls at Folk Heritage Museum for training in pottery and papermaking
16 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Her Majesty the Queen Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck and Her Royal Highness Ashi Sonam Dechen Wangchuck visit Japan on a goodwill visit
30 <sup>th</sup> October	Last round of quilt sale
26 November	Tarayana Foundation awareness presentation was given by Nima Tshering (Tarayana volunteer) at Crowne Plaza Hotel, Christchurch, New Zealand, on 26 November 2004 as part of Annual Master of Engineering Management projects presentations
3 <sup>rd</sup> December	Board meeting held. His Holiness Jamyang Khyentse Rimpoche also attends.
6 <sup>th</sup> December	Her Majesty the Queen Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck met with the members of Tarayana club at the National Institute for Education in Paro. Certificates were awarded to the graduation club members.
28 <sup>th</sup> December	Sponsors night
<b>2005</b>	
4 <sup>th</sup> January	Meeting to review and plan for 2005
18 <sup>th</sup> January	Tarayana members accompany the new Honorary Council, Japan to Dochula as a goodwill gesture
31 <sup>st</sup> March	Tarayana Strategic Plan 2005- 2007 completed.
4 <sup>th</sup> –14 <sup>th</sup> April	Her Majesty the Queen Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck made a state visit to Arunachal Pradesh. Tremendous interest was shown by the public there to work together in the future.

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### Status of Fund

Sources of Fund	Budget	Expenditure	Balance
Donation	4,507,947.47	801,611.76	4,515,952.27
Fund Raising	751,506.60		
Interest Income	58,109.96		
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,317,564.03</b>	<b>801,611.76</b>	<b>4,515,952.27</b>
<b>Project Linked Funds</b>			
SDS	2,878,051.00	2,878,051.00	Nil
SCF	2,389,829.00	787,917.00	1,601,912.00
UNV	173,263.00	149,832.00	23,431.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>10,758,707.03</b>	<b>4,617,411.76</b>	<b>6,141,295.27</b>