

YOUTH VOLUNTEERING INDIA

Mar-May 2016 – *Volunteering for Social Inclusion*



Welcome to the second edition of Youth Volunteering India!

Youth is not a homogenous group. There exist many heterogeneities based on economic, geographic, gender, cultural parameters and also young people in need of special attention like youth in conflict with law, differently abled youth, youth using drugs, etc. Along with that, young people are already marginalized simply because they are young making social inclusion is an important aspect of youth development. Thus under the project, 'Strengthening Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and National Service Scheme (NSS)', a focus is being made to promote social inclusion through youth volunteering.

This edition of *Youth Volunteering India* will showcase some of the initiatives of the project in this direction. It also attempts to showcase the work of the 29 United Nations Volunteers – District Youth Coordinators (UNV-DYC) who have been placed in 29 different States – one district in each State – to strengthen social inclusion for varied sections of marginalized youth through youth volunteering.



Wajood – Goa Gets its First Transgender Organization

Goa: Two years ago on 15 April 2014, the Supreme Court of India officially recognized Transgender individuals as a 'third gender'. On the second anniversary of this historic judgement, Goa witnessed the launch of the first transgender organization in the State – Wajood. With assistance from NYK South Goa, Diana Budiyaal (President, Wajood) started the organization to support the transgender community in Goa. Currently, 35 people have come together under the organization to raise awareness and bring about integration of the transgender community in Goa. This is a first step towards building inclusive communities in the State and we salute the courage and hard work of the entire Wajood team!



Diana Budiyaal - President, Wajood

16 May 2016: First Expert Group Committee Meeting on Youth Development and Volunteering

The first Expert Group Committee Meeting to discuss and deliberate strategies to enhance youth development and volunteering was held in New Delhi on 16 May 2016. Chaired by Mr. Rajeev Gupta, Hon'ble Secretary Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, the meeting brought together over 50 experts from government sector, civil society, private sector and the UN. The discussions were enhanced by the presence of Mr. Lalit Gupta (Hon'ble Joint Secretary Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India and National Project Director, 'Strengthening NYKS and NSS'), Ms. Marina Walter (Deputy Country Director, UNDP), Major General Dilawar Singh (Director General, NYKS), and Mr. Girish Tuteja (Director, NSS).

The focus of the first expert group committee meeting was to discuss action plans that would support effective implementation of the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2014 by year 2019. Action plans were presented on four thematic areas: Environment Management and Disaster Risk Reduction; Social Inclusion; Social Entrepreneurship; and Gender Justice and Equality. The primary purpose of the meeting was to provide a space to learn from different experiences and look at areas of convergence between various stakeholders on these four thematic areas. Participants expressed their appreciation for the different recommendations provided under the action plans. Following in-depth presentations on the action plans, participants expressed their appreciation for the different recommendations and provided the following suggestions:

1. Need for inter-linkages between all four plans;
2. Categorizing recommendations based on what can be taken up immediately or in the short-term, those for the long-term and those that may require further policy action;
3. Youth development is not just the agenda for the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports but also of other stakeholders. Therefore the strategies should also identify the roles of different stakeholders in the implementation of the plans;
4. Since there are 29 districts where the project "Strengthening NYKS and NSS" has presence, certain recommendations may be piloted in these districts.



Glimpses from the first Expert Group Committee Meeting for 'Strengthening NYKS and NSS'

Secretary, Youth Affairs concluded the session by underlining the importance of building linkages and addressing these issues beginning at a district level through a District Advisory Committee on Youth Programmes and in coordination with the District Collector. While appreciating the suggestions and inputs, Mr. Gupta emphasized that value education and patriotism are also important aspects. For this purpose he shared that a Youth Anthem is currently under development by the Government of India. The meeting concluded with commitment to ensure continuity for this dialogue forum and for the expert group to re-convene every couple of months.

Inspiring At-Risk Youth in Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh



UNV DYC conducting an interactive event at Tikamgarh District Jail

Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh: While working with youth, the needs and aspirations of youth in conflict with the law are often at the periphery. In an effort to reach out to the most marginalized, NYK Tikamgarh organized an inspirational event at the Tikamgarh District Jail for convicted youth on 23 March 2016. To inspire and support the young jail inmates, the life and journey of Bhagat Singh was shared on his death anniversary. The programme aimed to motivate the youth to serve their community and learn from youth leaders like Bhagat Singh. In a continued effort to mainstream these young people, NYK Tikamgarh will also be organizing vocational training for them in the coming months.

Project Updates

Consultation for Developing a Training Manual for Youth Work Professionals

Under the project, 'Strengthening NYKS and NSS', a consultation was held on 21 April 2016 to discuss the draft framework for a training manual for youth work professionals. Participants included academicians, civil society representatives, youth activists, and training agencies. The manual is being developed by the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD) and the initial content of the manual is based on a [one month professional development programme](#) held in RGNIYD Regional Centre, Chandigarh for the project team in December 2015 – January 2016 as well as the expertise of RGNIYD in youth work training. This manual will cater to the needs of youth work professionals in India especially those working with youth volunteers. The long term objective is to institutionalize this training manual in the form of a course at RGNIYD.

Helping Hands – Empowering Differently Aabled Youth in Chhattisgarh



Members of one of the Helping Hands Youth Club in Sarguja, Chhattisgarh

Sarguja, Chhattisgarh: NYK Sarguja has been actively working to support and mainstream differently abled youth in the district. On the initiative of the UNV-DYC in the district, three youth clubs have been formed for the differently abled. Under the name 'Helping Hands', these newly formed youth clubs boast of over 50 members in totality. While a majority of the members are differently abled, their motivation and will power is unparalleled. They are keen to work for the betterment of their community while promoting and safeguarding their own rights. A young woman from one of the clubs is also working as an intern at NYK Sarguja. Their work is truly an inspiration!

Project Updates

Consultation for Developing an Online Portal for Volunteering

To strengthen youth volunteering in India, the project 'Strengthening NYKS and NSS' envisages the development of a web portal to connect volunteers and volunteer-seeking organizations. A consultation was held on 21 April 2016 with participants from the National e-Governance Division, RGNIYD, Youth-led and youth-focused organizations and other civil society members to discuss the development of this portal and application. Many valuable inputs and suggestions were shared by the participants. The consultation also featured a presentation by the UNV Headquarters team on a similar portal being developed for other agencies and countries.

This web portal will cater to Governments, universities, educational institutions, think tanks, researchers & NGOs, professionals & experts on volunteerism, corporates, youth, and media across India. The content features of the portal were shared which include the aggregation of information on youth volunteerism from diverse sources as well as a functional platform for interaction and organization of volunteer work in India. Based on the consultation, further research is being conducted into the development of a successful web portal.

Breaking Barriers in Gujarat

Rajkot, Gujarat: Sahina Ben is a living example that adversity can always be overcome with positivity. Diagnosed with polio as a child, she never allowed her ailment to become a barrier in her life. Sahina Ben joined Nehru Yuva Kendra Rajkot as a National Youth Corps (NYC) volunteer for two years. With a strong drive to change her community, Sahina continued to work with NYKS and even received a Youth Award. Currently, she works with Krishi Vigyan Kendra and also runs her own stitching and embroidery Centre where she has trained over 1000 young people in her community.



Sahina Ben showcasing her work at NYK Rajkot

Taxi Drivers Beat the Heat with Volunteering in Odisha

Nuapada, Odisha: One of the basic requirements of any human being is water. But, it is easy to overlook how difficult it is for the marginalized sections of society to access safe drinking water, particularly in this scorching heat. To tackle this issue in Nuapada, the Taxi Driver Association in collaboration with the NYK Nuapada has opened three drinking water kiosks in the district. These kiosks are located close to the district hospital and district headquarters in order to voluntarily provide free and safe drinking water to all.



One of the three free drinking water kiosks in Nuapada



Khadija Begum mentoring one of her employees

A Young Woman's Journey from NYC Volunteer to Entrepreneur

Kolkata, West Bengal: As a young girl, Khadija Begum would make dolls from waste cloth that was left over after her father finished stitching clothes. Little did she expect that one day she would be running her own garment manufacturing business with 20 employees! At only 26 years of age, she runs an enterprise – MS Titan – which manufactures and exports clothing to Afghanistan.

A graduate in English Honours, Khadija credits her success to her association with the Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan. After participating in an adventure camp programme, Khadija joined NYK Rajkot as a National Youth Corps (NYC) volunteer for two years. Her stint with the Kendra helped her groom herself and gain much needed self-confidence. Through the encouragement and support of the Kendra, she applied and received a loan for almost Rs. 2 Lakhs under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme. With this loan, she is now successfully running an enterprise and makes over Rs. 40,000 profit per month!

First Field Mission Undertaken to Khammam, Telangana

Khammam, Telangana: The National Project Team recently undertook their first mission under project 'Strengthening NYKS and NSS' to Khammam, Telangana. The mission allowed us the opportunity to interact with Mr. Rishipal Singh (Zonal Director NYKS for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana), Ms. D. Divya (Joint Collector, Khammam), NYC volunteers, and various NYKS youth clubs in the district. The highlight of the mission was an interaction with the Dasari Veerbhadra Youth Club. The club was founded in 1994 by a differently abled young man and over the last twenty years the club has been tirelessly working to develop their village and has even managed to raise the literacy rate to over 50%! As a part of the monitoring activities under this project, the team will be visiting all 29 districts over the next one year and highlighting more stories from the field.



National Project Team interacting with NYC Volunteers in NYK Khammam

FURTHER INFORMATION

Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports www.yas.nic.in; Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD) www.rgniyd.gov.in; National Service Scheme (NSS) www.nss.nic.in; Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) www.nyks.org; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) www.in.undp.org; United Nations Volunteers (UNV) www.in.undp.org/unv

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