

**International Youth Exchange
Through Peer Learning
(IYEPL)**



IYEPL Youth Volunteers, India

23 November to 16 December 2016

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Background

Volunteerism represents an important form of youth participation across the globe.

A growing body of research points to the benefits of volunteerism that contribute to the development of both the youth and society. Volunteerism provides a platform for young people to become leaders and active citizens in their communities, while serving as an important tool for engagement in society. Volunteerism also gives young people practical experiences that strengthen hard and soft skills, in turn making them more employment-ready for the next chapters of their lives.¹

The origin and development of volunteerism in India has been shaped by the nation's indigenous traditions and value systems, which are rooted in the religious and cultural interactions with incoming cultures throughout history.

There are no laws or regulations which specifically govern volunteerism in India. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India (MoYAS) has been running schemes such as the National Service Scheme (NSS) and the Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), which conduct programmes with schools, universities and youth clubs to promote volunteerism in rural and urban areas. Together, NSS and NYKS reach out to close to 11 million young people in the country.

In collaboration with United Nations Development Program (UNDP) India and United Nations Volunteers (UNV) India, MoYAS has organised an International Youth Exchange through Peer Learning (IYEPL) with the support of UNDP/UNV Sri Lanka. This programme has been developed under a cross-country youth volunteering project "Strengthening Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and National Service Scheme", which aims to strengthen the two largest youth volunteering schemes in India. Under the exchange program, five selected youth volunteers with experience in volunteering on social issues are given the opportunity to visit Sri Lanka for a one-month immersion and exchange programme.

This report is a summary of the inaugural IYEPL programme and the experiences of all the stakeholders involved.

¹ Source: [UNDP Jobs](#)

Objective and Programme Design

Objective

- To develop international volunteering platforms and encourage learning about diversity and cultural bonds.
- To give volunteers first-hand experiences that connect them to one another and create lasting relationships, across the nation and across communities, creating an impact in an Indian context.
- To empower youth to take on new challenges and aspire to develop solidarity and promote tolerance among their generation, primarily to reinforce social cohesion.

Programme Design

The inaugural IYPEL involved three major steps (Fig. 1). The duration of the exchange programme was 24 days, commencing on 22nd November 2016 and concluding on 16th December 2016.



Figure 1

Step One - Situational Analysis of NYKS and NSS

The youth volunteers visited and conducted desk research on NYKS and NSS to understand its operations and systemic challenges in their respective districts/states. This task acquainted the volunteers with field realities and set a tone for the one month immersion programme.

Step Two - One-month immersion of youth exchange through peer learning

The five youth volunteers travelled to Sri Lanka and visited projects and programmes designated by the host agency:

- **Pre-immersion orientation of Youth Volunteers (1 week)**

Organized by UNV Sri Lanka, this orientation helped the volunteers understand the local culture, in addition to the roles and responsibilities of UNDP's various youth related initiatives such as the National Youth Service Council (NYSC) in Sri Lanka.

- **Field immersion in Youth related programmes (2 weeks)**

The volunteers visited well-established youth organisations such as NYSC, Sarvodaya Shramadana and Foundation for Goodness, besides other UN organisations.

- **Debriefing of Immersion (1 week)**

This leg involved documentation and presentation of the one-month immersion journey to summarise the learnings of the programme. The youth volunteers also presented their ideas to develop a strategy framework for scoping out future opportunities to organise awareness campaigns and events in India.

Host Country and Organisations Involved

Brief on Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is a country with a remarkable combination of stunning landscapes, pristine beaches, captivating cultural heritage and very enthusiastic Youth Volunteers. The 25-day stay in Sri Lanka with three local organisations was fruitful as it gave the IYEPL volunteers a thought-provoking learning experience. The team got to learn about community projects through the Sri Lankan officers. The spirit, commitment and dedication of the Sri Lankan youth was truly enlightening.

Organisations Involved

The IYEPL-2016 programme took the youth volunteers to three well-rooted organisations in Sri Lanka (refer to Annexure for organisation details):

1. Sarvodaya Shramadana (23rd November to 27th November, 2016)
2. National Youth Service Council (NYSC) (28th November to 4th December, 2016)
3. Foundation of Goodness (5th December to 11th December, 2016)

These three organisations have distinctly different organisational frameworks and models. They are all volunteer-led, working for the betterment of society, having significantly contributed to the social, cultural and economic upliftment of Sri Lankan youth. The activities they are involved in are different, but serve the common goal of being of service to the community. Each activity is well-planned and the results are encouraging.

Meetings with International Agencies

On 14th and 15th December 2016, the team got the opportunity to interact with the following international agencies (refer to Annexure for organisation details):

1. United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
2. Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO)
3. United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
4. World Health Organisation (WHO)
5. UN Women

Observations and Analysis from the IYEPL Journey

Observations on Sri Lanka

The homely atmosphere, kind cooperation, loving nature, friendly people and enthusiastic youth made the entire journey to Sri Lanka fun-filled, memorable and insightful. The culture of Sri Lanka mixes modern elements with traditional influences. The country has a rich artistic tradition, with distinct creative forms that encompass music, dance and the visual arts.

Observations on Youth Volunteers

The youth volunteers exude energy and approach all tasks with enthusiasm and drive. Their positive spirit is motivating and inspiring to others, leaving a lasting impression on the communities that they work with. The conversation with the active youth volunteers demonstrated that they have great sense of integrity, reliability and commitment.

It was found that the source of motivation for the volunteers to work is their love for community service and self-fulfillment. Most of them are self-motivated and ready to bring about positive changes. The volunteers are willing to work more but due to time constraints and tight academic schedules, they have to limit their activities.

Observations on Organisations Visited

The organisations like Sarvodaya, NYSC and FOG provide basic services for enhancing income generating capacity of individuals and communities often by teaching new skills or introducing new technology, which can then enable governments to divert scarce resources from other more high-profile development projects or purposes.

These organisations have been working for the past few years for the betterment of society and have a strong vision and mission to serve the community. Each organisation implements different strategies to meet their respective goals for empowering youth in Sri Lanka.

Observations from Team IYEPL of each organisation has been detailed below:

1. Sarvodaya

Orientation: The visit to Sarvodaya Headquarters was arranged on 23rd November 2016. Here, Mr. Bondula briefed the group about the volunteer activities and the programmes, while Mr. Manivannan explained the structure and operations of Sarvodaya. We were then introduced to Mr. Tomoki, a youth volunteer from Japan who had been serving in Sarvodaya for the last 3 months. Mr. Tomoki shared his personal experiences as a volunteer and his learning outcomes. He indicated that his Sarvodaya journey had been a spiritual one, and attributed his source of motivation to self-fulfillment.

Field Visit: From 24th November to 27th November 2016, the team stayed in Thanamalvila, Moneragala District and was involved in activities such as helping with the construction of a temple, tree plantation and cleaning a farm as part of community services.

At the Thanamalvila farm, the team was exposed to the farming system. The system is well maintained and this can be attributed to proper work plans, the use of scientific methods to increase productivity, and strong marketing initiatives. The farm is one of the main income sources for the village; it engages local people as labourers, in turn helping them develop sustainable livelihoods. The Thanamalvila farm is also the only place in Sri Lanka which produces baby corn.

The Volunteer team enjoyed a few hands-on activities such as cleaning and weeding out the farm, and planting lime and soursop fruit. These tasks opened their eyes to the hard work done by labourers.

Good Practices

Sarvodaya believes in the Gandhian way of thinking and focuses on grassroots level activities that directly develop villages. In Thanamalvila, the team observed the thoroughness of the villagers in handling the farm, right from the field tasks to overall farm management.

The visit to Shanti-Sena in the Sarvodaya Headquarters (HQ) clarified that importance is given to mental peace, values and spirituality rather than to money or material wealth. Every week the organisation has meditation programmes for pregnant women, advocating the concept of molding children before birth.

The premises in Thanamalvila were surrounded with natural beauty. The locals believe in respecting and preserving the environment. The volunteer team remained in awe of the flora and fauna.

Challenges

Although the villagers had a good grasp of the technical know-how involved in their work, language barriers made it difficult for them to express themselves and communicate their knowledge. Moreover, the team identified that though the villagers were regularly involved in voluntary community activities, they were unaware of the concept of volunteerism.

Areas of Improvement

With the largest network across the country, Sarvodaya should bring about more awareness about the concept of volunteerism. The people working dedicatedly for their own area or region should be more motivated and encouraged to undertake volunteering work with a more specific orientation.

2. National Youth Service Council

The second organisation to be visited by the team was the NYSC, Sri Lanka, from 27th November to 3rd December 2016. The team started with a visit to the NYSC Head Quarters and its various departments across the campus. Mr. Roshan, the Assistant Director, briefed them about the structure and operations of NYSC. The discussion included a productive brainstorming on ideas for NYSC activities in the youth development space.

The NYSC provides several vocational training programmes such as Computer Training, Electronics, Cookery classes, Beauty, Culture, Music, Dancing, Drama and Agriculture. The certificate of vocational training is equivalent to an "A-Level" qualification in Sri Lanka. The training is focused on the current demands of the market and enables the youth to meet the needs of the real world. The volunteer team got the opportunity to visit these departments to learn more about their operations as well.

During the remaining four days, the team visited six different Youth clubs established under the Paduka and Kesbewa divisions in Colombo district. They witnessed an active level of youth engagement in these clubs. Every Youth Club has its own advisory committee comprising five members. Although there is no limit for enrolling members in the Youth club, the age group is unofficially maintained at age 13 to 29 years, with the additional condition that members must reside in the same village as the club. The club members are very active and constantly innovate on new ideas such as motivation programmes, trainings, and fundraising techniques to bring about change in their villages. They are self-motivated and strive to serve society.

The club plans several activities to meet the local community's needs. This includes construction of houses, wells, roads, initiating a community library, free distribution of educational materials to the students and health and sanitation awareness among the community.

Sports is one of the key focus areas for NYSC. Their action plan includes activities such as creation of a playground in the GSD level, organizing sports events and free distribution of sports materials to the youth club.

The team also visited the Kesbewa Divisional Secretariat Office and met the Divisional Secretary, who briefed them about the functioning of the Divisional Secretariat Office of NYSC. The team observed the functioning of distribution of National Identity Cards, Passports, Birth/Marriage/Death Certificates, Income certificates, Valuation certificates done by the officers. NYSC also gave a chance to the volunteer team to visit the Apeksha Cancer Hospital where the youth club painted the walls to make the hospital environment a little more cheerful.

Good Practices

Active members in the youth clubs are self-motivated and want to serve their communities. Despite having routine schedules for school or university, they still take up important roles in the club. Members learn construction work and other skills by themselves and undertake projects at night or on weekends, a clear example of their dedication to serving the community.

The club members share their volunteer activities through social media platforms and use Facebook and WhatsApp to spread the word. After seeing the spirit and enthusiasm of these youths, some of the villagers have voluntarily donated their land for the betterment of the village.

Each year, NYSC gives **10 million Sri Lankan Rupees as a cash** prize for the Best project undertaken by the youth club, encouraging further volunteering and innovation.

The **Sri Lanka Youth Parliament**, as a youth-led, youth-run initiative, aims to mobilise and create a new common network comprising young people from across the country. This platform allows them to raise their voices about issues plaguing youth and their communities. In 2013, the concept of youth parliament was practically introduced in Sri Lanka by the NYSC. This project is managed by the Ministry of National Policy and Economic Development in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Federation of Youth clubs.

Election procedure of Youth Parliament: With voting being the principle icon of a fair democratic process, the majority of the members of the Youth Parliament are elected through an election process that constitutes casting of votes by the members of the youth clubs. Some of the criteria for being elected to the Youth Parliament include:

- The candidate must represent the youth clubs of their respective districts.
- The candidate must have had at least one year experience as a youth club member
- The age limitation is between 13 to 29 years
- For the nomination process the candidate must be certified by the *Grama Nilathikari Samitee*, equivalent to an advisory committee of the village.

The youth parliament members are elected only for one year. Elected representatives get decision-making authority and access to a special fund allocated specifically to develop community needs. Nowadays, the youth parliament is mainstreaming the role of youth in a more active and participatory way in the areas of governance and democracy.

The youth radio Channel *Lanknadharadio* is a good medium to spread the word about the work related to Youth. The team also got the opportunity to express their ideas on a live radio programme.

Challenges

Though there are many members enrolled in these Youth clubs, the number of active members is low. Personal commitments restrict the time members can dedicate to the activities that are organised. Scheduling regular meetings also remains difficult.

The competitive educational system in Sri Lanka does not allow the members to spare their time for extra activities so they have to work on holidays or at night.

Sometimes, the climatic conditions also hinder the work of youth clubs. For example, the Randiya youth club constructed a well after 45 days of hard work and due to heavy rains, they had to repeat some processes thereby sinking some of the cost of the time and energy used. Many youth clubs have several brilliant ideas but due to lack of Government aid and financial support, they have to raise funds on their own, which poses some challenges.

According to Mr. Roshan, Assistant Director, the challenges are “unending”. He points out that the youth are talented but they do not have sufficient time to showcase it. Moreover, he adds that volunteer work is not recognized much by the government, which is also another challenge.

Areas of Improvement

As mentioned by many stakeholders, if the education system is very competitive in Sri Lanka then Volunteerism should ideally be included as the part of curriculum. Volunteerism should be recognized by awarding a certificate or giving grades to promote the concept and to develop strategies to invite more members to participate in volunteering.

3. Foundation of Goodness

From 5th December to 11th December 2016, the team stayed at Foundation of Goodness (FOG), Seenigama, Galle District. FOG runs several programmes related to Health, Women empowerment, Business skills, Diving, Language teaching, Computer training, BPO, community Psycho-social unit, school development, Sports, and a Village Heartbeat Project. FOG has contributed to almost all fields related to the villagers in the area. The villagers benefit significantly from these projects, and the results are visible. The people have become independent and have learnt many skills such as selling bakery items, artistic models, curtains, slippers and embroidery cloths. Many women have even started beauty salons. The efforts of professional trainers to reduce the language barrier by providing language coaching in languages like Tamil and English are commendable.

Foreign volunteers also contribute to multiple training projects and courses. At present, three foreign volunteers are engaged in training of computer skills, language skills and sports-related activities. William from UK, Clement from France and Skanda from Australia are the three foreign volunteers currently working with FOG. The sports centre of FOG is working very systematically and in a well-organized manner. They provide many opportunities to showcase athletic talent. They provide well-maintained facilities, efficient trainers, and ample number of sports competitions.

The **Village Heartbeat project** provides a platform for villagers to exhibit their talent. For example, the volunteer team was invited to judge an arts and crafts competition wherein the kids from the village prepared beautiful models. The three best models were given prizes. The exercise proved that the villagers are motivated to participate in such activities.

The team also witnessed an Elocution Talent Show where the kids were self-motivated and creative-minded. They came up with many innovative ideas and performed beautiful songs, dramatic pieces, and dances.

The women are trained to make slippers, which are later sold by FOG. The computer centre works very systematically and trains youngsters to play an active role in the world of technology. The trainees get personal attention from the mentor and all their queries are answered. The syllabus covers the important aspects of education representative of current market needs.

The medical team at FOG visits the Elders' home every month. Medical checkups and medicines are provided free of charge. The elders are well taken care of, and are even provided with psychological counseling if required. The volunteers accompanied the FOG team to help out with the activities.

The team also helped the organisation in promoting a "Charity Dance Show" by distributing the tickets on the roadside and at the beach. The funds raised by the show would go to the FOG.

Areas of Improvement

The success of training programmes delivered so far has laid the grounds for more learning requirements to be addressed. Management courses, leadership training, craft item making from coconuts, food processing and many more could be introduced based on the demand and availability of participants.

The provision of monetary loans can be made available after the completion of the course in order to motivate successful participants to establish small scale businesses.

The trainees only prepare items/products but do not monetize them. The villagers should be enabled to sell their items to nearby districts.

The sports centre run by FOG works very well but should be made more accessible to nearby villages. FOG should consider establishing more sport centres to help talented youth from distant villages as well.

4. Meeting with International Agencies

The volunteer team also had the opportunity to meet representatives of other UN and non-UN agencies and get an understanding of the different projects that are currently underway in the country. During the discussion with the **Youth Leads** held on 14th December 2016, the team was introduced to some of their projects aimed towards the betterment of Sri Lankan Youth:

- Policy Innovation Lab
- National Foresight Innovation Eco-System
- Capacity Building Program
- Educational Modules
- Global, National and Regional Summits

Mr. Dihan Hettige, Assistant Food and Agricultural Organisation (**FAO**) Representative, also briefed the team about FAO projects oriented towards eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. These projects are designed to improve the provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors in a sustainable manner. They work to reduce rural poverty and strengthen the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

In a meeting on 15th December 2016, **Mr. Mihlar Mohamed**, Child Protection Officer at **UNICEF**, informed the team about ongoing UNICEF projects. Most of the projects are in collaboration with the Government and private/not-for profit entities such as like Sarvodaya, NYSC and SewaLanka Foundation. They focus more on adolescents and try to engage the youth in various skill development trainings. "Youth Development Diploma" in collaboration with the Open University is one such project that aims to enhance the skills of Youth Development Officers.

The team also interacted with **WHO** professionals on 16th December 2016 and learned more about their projects. **Ms. Karen Reidy**, Communications Officer, briefed the team about how their projects work to support the people of the country to attain the highest level of health by strengthening the health systems.

On the same day, an International Youth Volunteer from UN Women, **Ms. Rose**, deliberated with the team on the role of women in the country. She spoke about the several areas where women had an important role including political participation, economic empowerment and humanitarian response. This interaction enlightened the team about the projects undertaken specially for women and their empowerment. Ms. Rose also informed them about the recent amendment of the national policy that allocated 22% seats for women in local political elections to encourage their participation.

The team was also part of the celebrations commemorating “**International Volunteer Day 2016**” where youth volunteers identified and discussed the issues related to volunteerism. A consensus was that volunteers, and the concept of volunteerism, were not being recognized in an appropriate way. The speakers shared their field and community service experiences and provided many insights into the challenges faced by volunteers.

Takeaways, Opportunities and Recommendations

For Sri Lanka

A model like IYEPL “Strengthening of NYKS and NSS” could be replicated to reinforce the importance and impact of voluntary activities on communities.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports recruited 29 UN Volunteers as District Youth Coordinators in different parts of India to transmit youth volunteer activities and support the concept of “Inspiration in Action” in a true sense. Similar concepts can also be executed in Sri Lanka with the active cooperation between Government and development organisations.

The competitive education system in Sri Lanka can be attributed to limited seats at universities/colleges and an overall limited number of universities. If the number of seats per university or the number of universities is increased, then the stress level and competitiveness can be reduced.

The concept of Youth Leads is innovative and inspirational for the team but at the same time the team felt that the tenure of the Youth Lead is for 12 months only, which may affect the outcome and eventual completion of the project. A provision of extension as per the needs of the project, could improve the impact of the project.

The National Service Scheme (NSS) in India is an integral part of university education, with every student is benefiting from it. A similar concept can be the part of curriculum in Sri Lanka as well.

For India

During the visit to the different Youth Clubs, the team met many children and found that they have inculcated the spirit of volunteerism from a very early age. This reinforces the learning that a selfless attitude can be inculcated during childhood, in turn encouraging their participation in volunteerism at a later stage.

The concept of Youth Leads is inspirational and unique, and could be replicated in India.

The Sri Lanka Youth Parliament is also a concept that can be used to modify the existing structure in India.

Some of the Youth Club Presidents shared creative ideas to attract more members. Fun trips, adventure camps and motivational programmes could be tested out, and successful outcomes can be used as a basis for piloting in India.

The NVQ4 certificate given to the youth trainees is equivalent to Level A in the educational system, which can be helpful in their professional careers. India could consider adopting this idea to encourage more volunteering among youth.

The NYSC motivates the youth club members by arranging competitions like the “Best Project Award”, wherein the best Youth club project is selected by the committee and the winner is awarded 10 million Sri Lankan Rupees. Such inspirational activities can be a good practice for India as well.

Learning for IYEPL Volunteers

The IYEPL visit to Sri Lanka was a great journey for all the five volunteers, opening their eyes to different types of activities carried out by the local organisations. Some of their learnings include the below:

- Meditation is practiced universally for mental peace and physical fitness. The environment in which Shanthi Sena Unit of Sarvodaya preached and practiced meditation was unique. The team was highly motivated by the concept of meditation classes for pregnant ladies – delving deep into the universal principle of the mother as the first teacher for every child - meditation was seen as a definite way to help the child in the womb.
- Scientific planting of saplings carried out at Sarvodaya was a great experience. Although many trees were planted, some of them did not survive due to unscientific planting methods. It follows that proper planting of trees using scientifically proven methods will help in the preservation of environment.
- Community development projects undertaken by Youth Clubs that have a replicable model were commendable. these projects include building community wells for agriculture, laying proper roads without harming the crop fields to transport equipment, grains and other required items, constructing a community hall, and collection of funds to build the shelter for needy who lost their houses due to floods and other natural disasters.
- The concept of Youth Parliament, which entails the process of filing a nomination to contest election with following conditions:
 - 1) The candidate must represent the youth clubs of their respective districts.
 - 2) The candidate must have possessed at least one year experience as a youth club member and age limitation is between 13 to 29 years.
 - 3) For the nomination process the candidate must be certified by *Grama Nilathikari Samitee* which means by the advisory committee of the village.
 - 4) The process of election of members is through a proper ballot system.
 - 5) The power given to parliament and its successful functioning from last 3 years were impressive.
- Before forming a Youth Club, the youth leaders motivated the youth of their locality to join the club by organizing activities such as adventure camps, picnics and day tours to historic sites. Once the club is formed, the members, who are of age 13-29 as directed by the NYSC, follow the steps to establish the club: get registered with NYSC, set objectives, hold regular meetings, form committees and develop rules for the club.
- Village Heart Beat Centres provide services for women: self-employment training, tuition classes for school children, vocational training, library, and health checkups, in turn contributing to the overall development of the community. Such concepts were enlightening, thoughtful and worthy of being replicated in other countries including India.
- V-Force is an integrated Volunteer Youth Force of UVV Sri Lanka. Started initially by just 5 volunteers, it has now grown to almost 6000 volunteers working in different areas promoting volunteerism as a concept and providing a platform to those who wish to volunteer.

Conclusion

The volunteer team can sum up the experience of the “International Youth Exchange through Peer Learning – 2016” immersion programme as a true exchange of ideas, in addition to being a culturally enriching experience given that both India and Sri Lanka have many years of history and have rich, diverse cultures.

The most important factor for the team was the personal “give and take” of knowledge that was facilitated during the course of this visit. The team believes that the exchange programme is a key promoter of learning new concepts.

The evaluation of the first 3 cohorts of the IYEPL 2016 program clearly demonstrates the success of the programme in meeting the following objectives:

1. Increasing learning and understanding about youth development in Sri Lanka
2. Strengthening leadership skills
3. Promoting greater involvement in community and organisational activities.

The IYEPL 2016 has given significant experience to the team by acquainting them to the operations of three organisations. The team learned about the grassroots community development initiatives at Sarvodaya, the youth-involved activities at NYSC and a holistic approach towards charity at FOG. The visit and stay with each of them enhanced their understanding about volunteerism, particularly about Youth Volunteerism in Sri Lanka, the challenges faced by them as well as the solutions implemented to overcome these challenges. The team attests that this 1 month study has been enriching and will surely be helpful to implement new, unique ideas in India with the help of UNV India.

UNDP Sri Lanka was most helpful in coordinating the team’s visits and activities with these 3 organisations and made the journey very smooth and full of learning-based outcomes.

Youth Volunteers in consultation with UNV-District Youth Coordinator and UNV unit in India have developed a one year action plan on the following areas to address as Youth lead in their respective districts:

- Rainwater harvesting
- Reduction of plastic pollution
- Cancer awareness and early detection campaign
- Promoting scientific method of tree plantation
- Awareness on basic legal documents
- Increasing visibility of NYKS and NSS through print media, social media and Doordarshan and All India Radio

Annexure

Volunteer Profiles

Ms. Afshana Khathun, 25 years old, is a post-graduate in Public Administration from Osteen College Bangalore, Karnataka in South India. She has also completed her Bachelor of Arts and served as a volunteer under the National Service Scheme (NSS) programme during her graduation. She has always excelled in academics and has participated in various competitions conducted at inter-school and district levels. Ms. Khathun has been awarded the Karnataka state-level Best National Service Scheme (NSS) Volunteer. Currently she is volunteering as National Youth Volunteer at Nehru Yuva Kendra (NYK) in Mangalore, Karnataka. Ms. Khathun always cherished an interest to help and support people in the community with her limited resources and aspired to serve as a volunteer when she grew up. She has also volunteered with the GMR Foundation and Prajna Counselling Centre and aspires to work towards the betterment of society.

Ms. Smita Baishya, 27 years old, has a Master's degree in Social Work and is also an Economics graduate from Assam in the North-East part of India. Ms. Baishya had an interest in volunteering due her parents' concerns towards community development. After completing her graduation, she got associated with the Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), one of the youth schemes under Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, where youth are engaged through sports, cultural and skill development training programmes. She has also been associated in volunteering activities through Handicrafts with a focus on education for children, women empowerment and promoting livelihood for youths. She is a performer who loves singing and street plays and actively used these as mediums to motivate people. She is also associated with the All India Radio (AIR), Guwahati and is currently working as a District Family Planning Coordinator with the National Health Mission, Assam.

Mr. Jith George, 25 years old, is a Mechanical Engineer from a small village in Kerala, South India, and has a deep interest in volunteering for social causes. Mr. George is working as a Project Engineer since 2014 in Kerala. He was also an active Youth club member for three years where he supported a youth club as its Secretary and as its Treasurer. Mr. George, through the youth club, has organised several voluntary activities such as medical camps, distribution of food to orphans and the poor, cultural programmes, and sports events. He is also actively taking part in social and cultural programmes as a committee member of The Grameenodayam public library in his village. Through his social commitment, he has recently volunteered with the "100 Volunteers 100 Toilets" programme in Ernakulum district to construct toilets and conduct awareness activities to stop open defecation in a Tribal Community under the Government of India's Flagship Swacchh Bharat Abhiyan program.

Mr. Bonifast Khyndeit, 22 years old, is a Graduate in Political Science and currently pursuing his Master's Degree in Political Science from the mystic land of Meghalaya in North-East India. Mr. Khyndeit is an excellent orator and has won several debate competitions at the district level. In his university days, Mr. Khyndeit volunteered with the National Service Scheme (NSS), also serving as a National Youth Corps Volunteer with Nehru Yuva Kendra (NYK) Ri Bhoi, Meghalaya. In 2014, Mr. Khyndeit volunteered to be the "Green Ambassador for Green Living" for the Government of Meghalaya and has been engaging with youth for increasing the motivation and awareness on environment issues. He also represented India at the International Youth Exchange Program 2015 in Singapore.

Ms. Shivangi Oza, 26 years old, is a lecturer of English and currently pursuing a Ph.D in Feminism and Comparative Literature in Gujarat, in the western part of India. Ms. Oza has been engaging youth through cultural, social and academic events at her college, and is also the Coordinator of the Cultural Club in the college. She loves to motivate youngsters to showcase their talent and to hone their skills. Ms. Oza is associated with Doordarshan Kendra, Rajkot, wherein she has highlighted the contribution of youth volunteers including those related to awareness about cleanliness and hygiene.

Organisations Visited

1. Sarvodaya Shramadana

Sarvodaya is a Sri Lankan organisation developed around a set of coherent philosophical tenets drawn from Buddhism and Gandhian thought. It has been operational for almost 50 years. Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne founded Sarvodaya in 1958, when he established the concept of Shramadana (“Sharing of one’s Time, Thoughts, Labor and Energy”), gathering volunteers to come together and build a road in an impoverished rural village of Sri Lanka. Today Sarvodaya is Sri Lanka’s largest and most broadly embedded people’s organisation, with a network covering 15,000 villages, 345 divisional units, 34 district offices, 10 specialist Development Education Institutes; over 100,000 youth mobilised for peace building under Shantisena; the country’s largest micro-credit organisation with a cumulative loan portfolio of over LKR one billion (Sarvodaya Economic Enterprise Development Services, or SEEDS); a major welfare service organisation serving over 1000 orphaned and destitute children, underage mothers, and elders (Sarvodaya Suwa Setha); and 4,335 pre-schools serving over 98,000 children; among others.²

It has been described as a global role model by several international entities. Its founder and charismatic leader, Dr A.T. Ariyaratne, whose visionary contributions have been recognised in multiple countries, continues to provide ideational leadership to the organisation while its day-to-day operations are in the hands of a new generation that is receptive to modern forms of management that are compatible with the overall vision of this volunteer-based people’s organisation.

The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement seeks a no-poverty, no-affluence society in Sri Lanka through community based efforts and volunteerism. Further information about the organisation can be accessed through their website (<http://www.sarvodaya.org>).

2. National Youth Service Council

The Youth Services Council was established under the Volunteer National Youth Services Act No. 11 of the year 1967 and was revised by the Act No. 52 of 1968. Existence of a multi-talented, discipline and dynamic youth population in a country is always considered a treasure which helps development of that particular country. As such every country gives a special recognition for the country’s youth. Sri Lanka too places utmost importance on the country’s youth to achieve her ambitious development targets in social and economic spheres.³

Hence, the youth of Sri Lanka are also having an undertaking for economic and social upliftment of the country. It is important to inculcate self-reliance among youth and direct them towards achieving their goals. The National Youth Services Council in Sri Lanka has been established with the aim of guiding the Sri Lankan youth in the proper direction to enable them to empower themselves to their full potential while contributing to the nation’s prosperity. Further information about the organisation can be accessed through their website (<http://www.nysc.lk>).

3. Foundation of Goodness

The Foundation of Goodness is a not-for-profit NGO registered in both Sri Lanka and the USA. It was set up by Mr. Kushil Gunasekera in 1999, to provide essential services to his ancestral village of Seenigama, a village close to Hikkaduwa on the southern coast of Sri Lanka. Since then FOG has been working together with villagers and donors to uplift the lives of rural communities in Sri Lanka. The work carried out by the Foundation of Goodness extends across the island to provide a compassionate response to the needs of rural poor communities throughout the country.⁴ Further

² Source: [Sarvodaya](#)

³ Source: [NYSC](#)

⁴ Source: [Foundation of Goodness](#)

information about the organisation can be accessed through their website (<http://www.unconditionalcompassion.org/indexc.php>)

4. Meetings with International Agencies

On 14th and 15th December 2016, the team got the opportunity to interact with the following international agencies:

- 1) UNDP (<http://www.lk.undp.org/content/srilanka/en/home/ourwork/youth-and-innovation/youth-leads.html>)
- 2) FAO (<http://www.fao.org/srilanka/en>)
- 3) UNICEF (<https://www.unicef.org/srilanka>)
- 4) WHO (<http://www.searo.who.int/srilanka/en>)
- 5) UN Women (<http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/sri-lanka>)

1) UNDP

UNDP Sri Lanka, guided by UNDP's core principles and building on its 2014 activities, launched Sri Lanka National Human Development Report on Youth and Development, experimenting with the Youth LEAD programme to engage with and invest in youth for development.

The Youth LEAD programme is a learning and development programme created to empower Sri Lankan youth. Supporting UNDP initiatives contributing to sustainable development, the programme familiarises the youth with UNDP's work and gives them a holistic view of the organisation.

Under the guidance and supervision of the UNDP Country Director, four Youth LEADs, recruited under the UNV Youth Volunteer Modality, support UNDP Sri Lanka Country Program for a duration of 12 months in its youth-related policy, programming, advocacy, innovation and outreach work.⁵

2) FAO

Sri Lanka joined the FAO as a member nation in 1948 and a full-fledged FAO Representation was established in January 1979 to cover Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Since then, FAO has financially and technically assisted the development of agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forestry and environmental sectors of the country.

Recent development work has strengthened regional capacity for land administration, rice production, bio-technology research, market-oriented agricultural extension systems, cattle and buffalo breeding, and aquaculture development while emergency response has focused on resettlement of conflict-displaced populations in the east and north plus previous tsunami recovery work. One of the main achievements of FAO's technical assistance activities has been the capacity development of thousands of technical officers of various Government departments in agriculture, fisheries, livestock, land and land development, forestry and environment sectors, through numerous training courses, workshops and seminars both within the country and abroad. FAO works closely with the Ministries of Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Community Development, Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Environment and Natural Resources and their major institutes.⁶

⁵ Source: [UNDP in Sri Lanka - Youth LEADs](#)

⁶ Source: [FAO in Sri Lanka](#)

3) UNICEF

UNICEF is an inter-governmental agency mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights and to support governments in realizing their rights. UNICEF mobilises political will and material resources to help countries, particularly developing countries, build their capacity to form appropriate policies and deliver services for children and their families. UNICEF works with partners from both the private and public sector in more than 190 countries and territories through country programmes or national committees.⁷

4) WHO

The World Health Organisation (WHO) is the United Nations Specialized agency for health established on 7 April 1948. WHO was the first United Nations agency in Sri Lanka (1952) and over fifty years, WHO remains a steadfast intergovernmental organisation committed to supporting the people of the country to attain the highest level of health through the strengthening of the health system on the principles of equity, fairness and responsiveness with emphasis on the poor and marginalised.⁸

5) UN Women

UN Women is the global champion for gender equality, working to develop and uphold standards to create an environment in which every woman and girl can exercise her human rights and live up to her full potential. The agency and its staff are trusted partners for advocates and decision-makers from all walks of life, and a leader in the effort to achieve gender equality.⁹

⁷ Source: [UNICEF Sri Lanka](#)

⁸ Source: [WHO Sri Lanka](#)

⁹ Source: [UN Women](#)

Individual Action Plans of Volunteers

Volunteer: *Mr. Jith George*

State: Kerala

Objectives

- To promote youth volunteerism with the help of NYKS and NSS, and implement youth awareness campaigns
- To motivate youth to develop good voluntary initiatives and involve them in voluntary campaigns
- To support NYP 2014 with Priority Area no 4- Health and Health lifestyle and Priority Area No 7- Community Engagement.
- To implement UN SDG no 3- Good health and wellbeing and no 6- Clean Water and sanitation.

Background

Ernakulum is a district of Kerala, India situated in the central part of the state, known as the commercial capital of Kerala. Spanning an area of about 3,068 km², Ernakulum district is home to over 12% of Kerala's population. According to the 2011 census Ernakulum district has a population of 3,282,388.

The major social and health issues that affect people in this district is due to rapid urbanization. Pollution and related problems like rapid growth of street dogs, deforestation, lack of cultivation, filling paddy fields, scarcity of freshwater, uncontrolled development without considering environment, and unhealthy consumption of foods are some of the major issues of this district. All these issues are interconnected and can be solved only with the proper interventions by the Government and other official bodies, coupled with the volunteering activities by youth clubs under NYKS and NSS Units in various college and schools.

Three major programmes included in this action plan are based on three priority areas enlisted in NYP2014:

1. Rainwater Harvesting (Community engagement in NYP2014 and Clean Water and Sanitation in SDG)
2. Reduction of Plastic pollution (Promotion of social values, Health and healthy lifestyle in NYP2014 and Climate Action, Good Health and Well-being in SDG)
3. Cancer awareness and early detection campaign (Health and healthy lifestyle in NYP2014 and Good Health and Well-being in SDG)

Target Audience and Number of Youth Expected

Considering the district level challenges, some of the prominent local issues such as water scarcity, plastic pollution and rapid growth of cancer patients, directly affect more than 90% of people in Ernakulum district. The awareness campaign will focus on approximately 2,00,000 people in this district as the target audience.

In Ernakulum, 10-20 active youth clubs, each having 20-30 active members, operating in each block Panchayat. Through NYKS youth club, approximately 600 youth club members from Vazhakkulam block Panchayat in Ernakulam district can be mobilised, and another 1000 volunteers through NSS units in different schools and colleges.

Partnering Agencies

- District administration, Block Panchayats and Grama Panchayats
- NYK and NSS Volunteers
- Primary health centers, Agriculture offices and State forest department
- Print media such as Malayala Manorama, Mathrubhoomi
- Social Media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp

Implementation Strategy

The outline of these programmes has been discussed and designed with UNV-DYC of NYK Ernakulam, who will be a great support during implementation.

1. Rainwater harvesting

Water scarcity is a crucial challenge that people in the State of Kerala may face in the coming days. In some places water is already scarce. Rainfall is reducing year by year, leading to a frightening scenario for the future. Reducing deforestation, planting more trees and rainwater harvesting are the only solutions for tackling this scarcity. Due to rapid urbanisation and gradual decrease in cultivation, the intensity of water scarcity is high in Ernakulam district.

- **Step 1: Awareness and suggesting practical solutions**

In each block Panchayat, a block-level meeting with the support of Block Panchayat and Grama Panchayat members can be organized. This meeting will include youth club leaders, who provide awareness-related information on the importance of rainwater harvesting with the help of a resource person who has knowledge about the subject. Print media such as Malayala Manorama and Mathrubhoomi are actively conducting these types of campaigns, which the volunteers can connect with for support. The awareness programme will communicate practical solutions such as rain pit making and recharging of well with rooftop rainwater harvesting.

- **Step 2: Constitute a Monitoring team**

Constituting a monitoring team with the participation from Block panchayat, Grama panchayat, and UNV-DYC and Youth clubs within the first meeting is a crucial step towards devising a strategy to accomplish the objective of overcoming water scarcity through rainwater harvesting.

- **Additional strategies**

a) *Barren land cultivation*

Presently some of the clubs are coming forward with the idea of barren land cultivation. Studies show that this will help in increasing ground water level. Before starting cultivation, the youth clubs and NSS units can organize some games in paddy fields like mud football, tug of war etc., which will increase the eagerness of youth towards cultivation. For this, clubs can take into consideration the support of agriculture offices.

b) *Planting trees*

At the time of World Environmental Day, youth clubs can distribute trees for planting with the support of State Forest Department.

2. Reduction of Plastic Pollution

Through the implementation of certain laws of the State Governments, the production of plastic has been limited to some extent. Companies can produce plastic carry bags above 50 microns, but unfortunately these carry bags are not recycled or reused. Nobody knows how to recycle them, while they can actually be disposed of without harming environment. Even though the people in Ernakulam district are more literate and highly educated, their interest in these issues is limited and the rate of pollution continues to increase day by day. Remedies for plastic pollution include:

a) *Plastic collecting agencies*

There are some agencies that collect plastic waste and use it for road tarring purposes. Once a month they collect plastic from collection points. The plastic from houses and shops needs to be collected before mixing it with other waste and brought to the collection points.

Role of Youth Clubs and NSS units

- For collecting plastic, firstly, awareness among the people needs to be created about the provision of collecting agencies and importance of keeping plastics separate from other waste with the help of printed notices and Facebook or WhatsApp messages
- Each youth club and NSS unit can become a temporary collection point.
- While collecting plastic, youth clubs can ensure that it is dried and separated from other waste.
- After collecting and checking, the clubs can then deliver the plastic to the exact collection points.

b) *Making crafts with plastic*

Creative arts and crafts projects can be developed with plastic bottles and other plastic waste material. Projects could include flowers, flower bottles, stars and other such crafts.

Role of Youth Clubs and NSS units

- This can be effectively done by NSS volunteers by conducting training classes in NSS units with the help of experts from the field of craft making.
- While collecting plastic, they can allocate a certain type and amount for making crafts. The volunteers could also conduct exhibitions for students and the public to raise awareness of plastic craft making as a possible solution for reducing plastic pollution.

3. Cancer awareness and early detection campaign

The number of cancer patients is increasing day by day all over the country. Experts are not sure about the exact reason behind this phenomenon. However, everybody is aware of common causes, which may include smoking, consumption of drugs, regular consumption of junk foods, and overuse of pesticides in vegetables. Awareness and early detection are very effective to prevent the rapid growth of cancer.

A campaign will be initiated in collaboration with active youth clubs in each Grama Panchayat with the support of Panchayat authorities and primary health centres.

• **Step 1: Awareness campaign**

For the awareness campaign, the volunteer-led initiative will involve printing of detailed brochures that describe the reasons for getting cancer and self-detection methods to identify cancer at its initial stage. The second stage involves distributing these brochures among the people.

Conducting awareness campaigns with the support of oncology departments in different Government as well as private hospitals constitutes the final stage.

- Some youth clubs in the district have already implemented this campaign. The team can factor in their support.
- For printing brochures, the team can contact sponsors and allocate space in the brochure for advertisements.

- **Step 2: Detection camp**

Detection of cancer at its initial stage is crucial to improve chances of a cure and reduce the cost of treatment. After the awareness campaigns, with the support of some hospitals, the team can conduct detection camps for the public in each Panchayat.

- It is better to conduct detection camps with the support of government hospitals such as Regional Cancer Center, Trivandrum.
- Getting dates for the camp is difficult, so the team has to book the medical crew six months in advance.

Expected Challenges

- Each youth club and NSS unit have their own action plan for this year, so this action plan may increase their workload.
- Implementing three programmes mentioned in this action plan with each youth club and NSS unit may be a difficult task for them, so, for better output, the team has to divide these programs among youth clubs and NSS units.

Volunteer: Ms. Shivangi Oza

State: Gujarat

Background

Rajkot is one of 33 districts of the Indian State of Gujarat. Rajkot is the administrative headquarters of the district. It is the third most advanced district of the state with 14 Talukas. According to the 2011 census, the population is 3,799,770. Rajkot is among the top 10 cleanest cities in India, according to a list announced by Union Urban Minister Mr. Venkaiah Naidu, as a part of the Swachh Survekshan-2016. Rajkot is also adjudged the '*Best Performer in door-to-door collection and transportation of solid waste and sweeping*'. This was possible because of the rigorous efforts of Rajkot Municipal Corporation (RMC). Yet, it has been felt that some areas are still dirty and the public places that have already been cleaned need follow up activities to maintain the cleanliness. To support the efforts of RMC and to make this place better, the following activities have been designed.

Objectives

- To encourage Youth Volunteerism in Rajkot district
- To stimulate the participation of youth volunteers for community service
- To mobilise NYK and NSS Volunteers in volunteerism
- To make the women independent

As a Youth Lead Initiative for 2017, three programmes have been planned out for Rajkot District. NYP 2014 and UN SDGs have been used as a reference to frame these programmes.

The NYP 2014 Priority Area no 7. 'Community Engagement' mentions that the Youth represent a large segment of the population, and can be mobilised for community service and development programmes. On one hand, by participating in community service schemes, youth can contribute to grassroots development efforts and help create progress in backward regions. On the other hand, these initiatives help the youth build their own skills, such as communication, leadership, interpersonal relationships and develop a sense of moral responsibility and national ownership. Hence, **Programme 1 'Cleanliness Drive'** is designed to follow this target.

Programme 2 'Women Empowerment with the support of the related activities' is designed to support the 5th Sustainable Development Goal, i.e.; Gender Equality, with a view to provide women and girls with equal access to education, healthcare, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes to fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large.

The 3 proposed programmes are:

- Programme 1: Cleanliness Drive with NYK & NSS Volunteers
- Programme 2: Women Empowerment with the support of related activities
- Programme 3: Activities to increase visibility of NYKS and NSS via Print Media, Social Media and Doordarshan

Implementation Strategy

To implement these programs, UNV-DYC of NYK Rajkot will be a great support. The outline has been designed with his support and he will be a great source of help to carry out these programs successfully. Moreover, further guidance will be provided by the UNV Unit in Delhi.

Programme 1: Cleanliness Drive with NYK & NSS Volunteers

Objective

To spread awareness about cleanliness to the local people and to make the area the most hygienic place to live in.

Target Audience

The volunteers of NYK and NSS will be mobilised to make this project successful. Approximately **200 volunteers** in total will be part of the programme.

The first step is to select the volunteers for the programme. Motivated volunteers eager to contribute to the project will be sought. The team will do a survey and will identify the places which need to be cleaned. Following the analysis of the survey results, the team of volunteers will roll out the process of cleaning along with the awareness campaigns. For this, a volunteer rally, posters and brochures will be prepared. The funds for this activity will be provided by partnering agencies. After a predetermined period of time, the follow-up cleaning process of the area will be rolled out. The identification of resources will also be done by the team accordingly.

Partnering Agencies

The partnering agencies will be Rajkot Municipal Corporation, District Development Office, NYK and NSS.

Programme 2: Women Empowerment with the support of the related activities

According to the 2011 census, the sex ratio (per 1000) is 919 in Gujarat and 927 in Rajkot, a significantly higher ratio than other regions. An independent woman is the base of any strong society and if the women of this district are motivated to be independent then social reformation is not far behind. The programme has been designed after identifying the needs at the current time and place.

Objective

To create awareness and opportunities for women to be independent.

Target Audience

Under this programme, a group of 25 female volunteers will be selected and a total 3 such groups will be made. So, in **total, 75 Female Volunteers** will be benefitted directly, and these 75 will in turn motivate other females of the region.

The programme will run according to the planned timeline, and the groups of volunteers will be trained in self-defense, meditation, skill development (handicraft and English Language) and motivational lecture series, as per a weekly schedule to suits all 3 groups.

Partnering Agencies

The programme will be coordinated with the Social Justice Department, Youth, College students and SUTP (Skill Upgradation Training Programme) trainees.

Programme 3: Increase visibility of NYKS & NSS via Print Media, Social Media and Doordarshan

Objective

To match the latest trend of spreading information and creating awareness about particular issues.

Target Audience

These activities will be done by the volunteers according to the needs of the programmes run by NYK and NSS.

For this, the volunteers will develop the information and communication materials for a particular programme organized by NYK and NSS. The content for pamphlets and brochures of the programmes will be developed by Shivangi. For example, Dhoraji Taluka of Rajkot is going to be declared as ODF (Open Defecation Free), the content to raise awareness will be developed to support this initiative. The content includes the updates on social media. Moreover, Doordarshan Kendra Rajkot has some programmes related to youth and community service, at a certain schedule. These programmes are broadcasted in more than 15 countries. So, it will provide a good platform to promote the programmes and to motivate others to join the movement.

Partnering Agencies

District Development Office, UNISE and Doordarshan Kendra Rajkot.

Volunteer: Ms. Afshana Khathun

State: Karnataka

Background

Mangalore is a beautiful city located between the Western Ghats on the Eastern side and the Arabian Sea on the western side with a rainfall of 4000 mm annually. Mangalore is a land of different communities having youth organisations dating back to 1949. At present more than 500 hundred Youth clubs are registered with NYK Mangalore, Dakshina Kannada District, Karnataka. These Youth Clubs are carrying out a number of activities. Mangalore is transforming into a smart city with more concretisation and urbanisation. Being a coastal city, Mangalore has heavy rainfall which results in soil erosion. Mangalore is also facing a scarcity of ground water. Though Mangalore has a 97% literacy rate, people still lack awareness about official procedures such as obtaining certificates.

Objectives

- To create an awareness about and inculcate the practice of scientific tree plantation
- To promote youth involvement in governance
- To promote youth volunteerism

Target Audience

Members of 10 Youth Clubs, NSS Volunteers of 10 colleges of Mangalore Block.

Programmes

Two major programmes included in this action plan are based on 2 UN SDGs and 2 areas of NYP 2014:

- Promoting, Advocating, Awareness, Implementation of Scientific Methods of Tree Plantation (SDG No. 15 Life on land and NYP 2014 priority No-1 Education)
- Awareness on and informing about procedures to obtain basic Legal Documents like Birth and Death Certificate, Income Certificate, Caste Certificate, Marriage Certificate and Affidavits (SDG No. 14 Quality Education and NYP 2014 Priority No. 4 Participation in Politics and Governance)

Partnering Agencies

- 1) Mangalore City Corporation, Block Panchayat
- 2) Forest Department and Agricultural Department
- 3) Printed Media such as Vijaya Karnataka and Online Media www.multimedia.com.
- 4) NYKS and NSS of Mangalore
- 5) Social Media such as WhatsApp and Facebook

Implementation Strategy

Programme - 1

In 2016, 2000 saplings were planted across different places in Mangalore by the forest department. However only 50% of those saplings have survived. Urbanisation has led to deforestation resulting in soil erosion and depletion of ground water levels. Plantation of more trees is the need of the hour.

The first step involves identification of the 10 colleges and having discussions with NSS Units on the programme, followed by building rapport with the NSS officers of these Colleges.

With the support of NSS Officers, a session will be designed for building awareness about afforestation and the importance of scientific plantation, which will be demonstrated through a plantation drive with the respective NSS unit led by the respective NSS Officer. In this initiative, two volunteers will be identified as 'Green Volunteers' to look after planted trees and to follow up with other volunteers. These two volunteers will be asked to mobilise five more volunteers and the chain continues so forth.

Programme - 2

In Indian communities, mistakes in Birth and Death Certificates create major legal problems in difficult processes such as claiming Domicile and identifying Legal Heirs of Deceased.

It is observed that about 80% of underprivileged, uneducated people simply run from pillar to post just to write an application. They do not know how to write, what to write, where to apply, how to apply, what documents should be attached with the application form, in order to obtain simple certificates from the Government authorities.

The action plan for this programme entails choosing 10 active NYKS clubs after visiting 50 Youth Clubs of Mangalore Block. Based on their interests, they are to create an awareness campaign about simple and effective ways that documents can be attached or submitted in processes related to obtaining important certificates.

Under this programme, two members from each youth club will be trained to write such applications and to facilitate the process in villages while acting as a paralegal support. These two members will help the needy to write such applications and mobilise two more members while organising a day workshop in the area of the Youth club to educate the community on obtaining simple documents.

Expected Challenges

- After every semester, students get holidays for roughly 45 days and each holiday is during the summer and dry season. Therefore looking after the planted trees during these periods is a major challenge.
- Educating illiterate people about basic writing techniques will be a hurdle.

Volunteer: Ms. Smita Baishya

State: Assam

Objectives

- To introduce youth to the value and practicality of Volunteerism through community service
- To engage with NYKS and NSS volunteers to promote Volunteerism
- To generate awareness about the need and importance of Health and Hygiene
- To promote women's empowerment

Background

Nalbari is an administrative district in the state of Assam in India. The entire area of the district is situated at the plains of the Brahmaputra Valley. The Nalbari District now has an area of 1009.57 sq. km consisting of 1 Civil Sub-Division, 7 Revenue Circles, 7 Community Development Blocks, 5 Police Stations, 7 Anchalik Panchayats and 65 Gaon Panchayats, covering 471 villages and a population of 7,69,919 (as per 2011 census) with a Sex ratio of 949 females for every 1000 males. The literacy rate is 78.63 percent.

Nalbari district has several small scale industries. Besides agriculture, there are various sectors that have contributed to the economy of Nalbari district, including fisheries, animal husbandry, sericulture and handicraft industries. Hinduism and Islam are the main religions practiced. The district is also at the border of Bangladesh and Bhutan. Nalbari is well connected both by rail and road networks.

89% of the total population live in rural areas and 10% in urban areas, where maternal health, child health and the population growth are the major health issues of the District. In this regard, the **National Youth Policy 2014 (NYP, 2014) priority No. 4 Health and Healthy Lifestyle, priority No. 7 Community Engagement** and **priority No. 9 Youth Engagement** has been focused on to complement **Sustainable Development Goal (SDGS) Goal 3 - Good Health and Well Being, Goal No. 5 Gender Equality** and **SDGs Goal No.6 Clean Water and Sanitation** for year-long engagement as a Youth Lead.

Three initiatives will be taken up as a Youth Lead in the year 2017:

1. Promote awareness about Maternal and Child Health
2. Promote awareness about ODF program of Govt. of India in collaboration with the District Administration of Nalbari District
3. Promote awareness on girl education and empowerment

Partnering Agencies

- All India Radio, Assam
- Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan – Nalbari
- National Service Scheme - Assam
- National Health Mission, Nalbari
- Public Health Engineering Department, Nalbari
- Print media and social networking platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp

Implementation Strategy

For effective implementation of these initiatives, brief discussions with the UNV-DYC, Nalbari, the Deputy Commissioner and the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Nalbari, the Executive Engineer of PHE Department, the Joint Director of Health Services, Nalbari and the UNV unit Delhi will be held, and suggestions will be taken from them on the appropriate steps for the implementation of Maternal & Child Health, Population Growth and Gender Equality programmes.

Target Audience

In Nalbari District, the condition of maternal and child health is relatively poor. Some people still prefer the option of home delivery for childbirth due to superstitious reasons thus ignoring necessary medical advice for the healthy survival of the mother and child. Women and girls continue to struggle to maintain a respectable status in society. Increasing population is another issue, arising primarily from lack of deliberate family planning.

In light of these issues, "Larchar Village" of Nalbari, with a population coverage of around 1500, will be considered for the implementation of the activities.

Three active clubs from NYKS of Mukalmua block, with 20-30 active youth members and 30-40 NSS volunteers and the local health workers (ASHA, ANM, Anganwadi Worker) of the area, will be selected to implement this plan.

Promotion of ODF Programme

Target Audience

Although the PHE Department is trying to promote the ODF programme in every household, most of the area in Nalbari has yet to be reached by the promotion communication. Mukalmua Village with a population of approximately 2000 will be the focus of this programme.

To deliver a successful ODF campaign in this location, four active Youth clubs of NYKS, along with 40 Active Youth Members and the NSS volunteers from Nalbari College, will be selected.

A. Data analysis

With the help of the partnering agency, the team will first collect data about the current situation through surveys and interviews, and analyse this data in collaboration with the Youth Clubs and NSS volunteers

B. Awareness activity

Health education, demand for sanitation facilities, and more general concepts such as healthy habits and personal hygiene, will be the primary focus of awareness-raising promotions targeted to the community. The promotion will distribute IEC materials such as leaflets and banners provided by the partnering agencies on topics such as maternal health, child health and population growth.

Community-level meetings to promote awareness with the support the Youth volunteers will also be held. This will be supplemented with campaigns on communicable and non-communicable diseases, with the help of the NYKS youth clubs, NSS volunteers and the local active Youth. These campaigns will play a crucial role in raising awareness. The programme will also include performance of street plays (script and team provided by the NYKS youth club, NHM and PHE) as part of a phase-by-phase awareness campaign for various health issues.

Furthermore, the programme will see the rollout of interactive discussions with eminent speakers, and other awareness campaigns about volunteerism, with the help of All India Radio, Guwahati.

Activity of Youth Club, NSS and Partnering Agencies

Some of the youth clubs have been already working on the campaigns to raise awareness on Health and Sanitation, so the programme can use their contacts to promote the activities accordingly:

- NYKS and NSS volunteers' active participation and involvement, like gathering members and organizing community meetings, supporting the local youth participation in volunteerism, arranging of camps to promote awareness on health issues, and counselling the village people in terms of BCC
- NSS involvement to encourage parents to support youth taking up volunteerism
- NYKS Cultural & Sport Activity can be conducted for the community neighbourhood
- Resource personnel support will be provided by NHM, PHE
- Platform for the focus of youth space and volunteerism on AIR
- Strong advocacy through different media platforms

The progress of these programmes will be monitored by the UNV-DYC, Nalbari.

Expected Challenges

1. Community participation in the Sanitation Project is not sufficient
2. The community being daily wage workers, in areas such as farming, may not have sufficient time to attend the awareness meetings
3. Patriarchal society
4. Religious issues
5. Lack of education
6. The concept of Volunteerism is not familiar with the youth population

Volunteer: Mr. Bonifast Khyndeit

State: Meghalaya

Background

Ribhoi is an administrative district in the state of Meghalaya. It has a population of only 258,380 with a distribution of 109 inhabitants/sq.km. The district has a ranking of being 580th in India. The district's headquarters is at Nongpoh, roughly 53 kilometers away from the state capital Shillong. It was carved out from the erstwhile East Khasi Hills District. The district has only 3 C&RD blocks. The main language spoken is 'Karew'. It is one of the most backward districts attributed due to low literacy level and rising unemployment. The inhabitants need to be encouraged and educated about a healthy lifestyle. Although the district has good sportspersons, most of them have no access to sufficient training facilities. Despite the district having high participation in politics, it still witnesses weak youth engagement in community work.

Objectives

- To promote youth volunteering in the district.
- To encourage the youth to be concerned about environmental issues.

As a Youth Lead initiative, 3 programmes were planned to be implemented in Ribhoi District. Sources were taken from NYP 2014 and other self-innovations for conducting the programmes. Prior to NYP 2014 Area no. 7, 'community engagement', it was mentioned that the youth form the largest network for community development and therefore youth should be motivated to communicate, work together, and raise concerns about cleanliness. The following programmes help the youth to inculcate the skills of communication, leadership and team work.

Programme 1: 'Cleaning drive' is adopted to follow the target. The selection of an area will be discussed along with the partnering agencies. College NSS volunteers and NYKS youth will be engaged.

Programme 2: Raising awareness on volunteerism with college youth. The purpose is to raise awareness amongst youth about the concept of volunteerism and its role.

Programme 1: Cleaning drive with the NSS and NYKS Volunteers

Objective

To make youth practise healthy living standards.

Target audience

Approximately 100 youth is the target. Youth members from NSS and NYKS will be engaged in the programme.

Firstly, youths will be selected and motivated to participate wholeheartedly in the programme. Secondly, locations where cleaning drives will be carried out will be identified. This activity is crucial, given that most places in the district are becoming dirtier as day by day. One cannot underestimate the importance of the basic principles of cleanliness when one strives to create healthy living conditions for people.

The team will also be picking waste materials that pollute the environment, like plastics, metals, plastic and bottles. They will be involved in making posters and writing slogans to raise awareness about cleanliness and its impact on healthy living.

Partnering agencies

NYKS and NSS Ribhoi Unit

Program 2: Awareness on Volunteerism

Objective

To raise awareness amongst the youth about the concept of Volunteerism.

Target audience

This programme will engage approximately 60-70 youth. The youth clubs, NSS volunteers and NYCs will be mobilised.

A possible strategy and approach can be proposed to the NSS Ribhoi Unit and NYKS Ribhoi on a predetermined date. On the date of the programme, other youth volunteers, NYK and NSS officers and other resources will be engaged in the programme to help motivate the youth to get involved in volunteerism. This is important because the region still lacks and is relatively unaware of the concept of volunteerism.

Partnering agencies

NYKS and NSS Ribhoi unit

TIMELINE - ACTION PLAN												
Activities	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Name of the State and Volunteer: Gujarat, Shivangi Oza												
Programme 1 Cleanliness Drive	Identifying the volunteers	Motivating Sessions	Identification of Places	Collection of Resources (Objects, money)	Phase 1 + Awareness	Phase 2 + Awareness	Follow up	Distribution Of resources	Phase 3 + Awareness	Awareness	Phase 4	Follow up
Programme 2 Women Empowerment	Identifying Volunteers	Sessions For Group 1	Sessions For Group 1	Sessions For Group 1	Follow up	Sessions For Group 2	Sessions For Group 2	Sessions For Group 2	Follow up	Sessions For Group 3	Sessions For Group 3	Sessions For Group 3
Program 3 To Increase Visibility of NYKS & NSS via Print Media, Social Media & Doordarshan The activities will be done as per the requirement of the time and programme												

TIMELINE - ACTION PLAN												
Activities	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Name of the State and Name of Volunteer: Karnataka, Afshana Khathun												
Tree Plantation	Identifying the Colleges Building rapport with NSS Unit.	Awareness program	Training 2 Volunteers	Collection of plants	Plantation of tress in all selected areas	Monitoring	Check on their growth	Mobilization of More Volunteers	2nd round Plantation	Monitoring	Check on their growth.	
Awareness to obtain Certificate	Visiting 50 Youth Clubs	Identifying 10 Youth clubs	Awareness program	Training 2 Youth Member	ONE Day Workshop	Mobilization of more youth Members	Follow Up of the same.					

TIMELINE - ACTION PLAN												
Activities	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Name of State and Name of Volunteer: Meghalaya, Bonifast Khyndeit												
Cleaning Drive			Selection and identification of youth to work		Field work as per the strategy							
Awareness on Volunteerism			Approach to the NSS and NYKS Ribhoi unit. have discussion and plan the program							Organize the program.		

TIMELINE - ACTION PLAN												
Activities	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Name of the State and Name of Volunteer: Assam, Smita Baishya												
Programme 1 ODF/ Sanitation	1. Discussion and consultation with the Officials of PHE and NYKS /NSS, (youth club) Making the implementation plan 2. Show to promote volunteerism on AIR, Guwahati	Survey on ODF by the Youth club of NYKS and Awareness campaign	1. Community level meeting 2. Talk show by Active youth on AIR, Guwahati	Community level meeting with NYKS/NSS	Youth engagement program regarding sanitation	Discussion show by resource person in AIR	Awareness phase	Community level meeting with Expert person/ Gram Pradhan	Seminar in the college With the involvement of NYKS /NSS/PHE	Data analysis on the progress and taking feedback from the community	Working on the feedback	Success story of village/ active Youth or the volunteer covered by the AIR, Guwahati
Programme 2 Maternal Health, Child Health and population growth	Discussion and consultation with the Officials of NHM and NYKS/NSS,(youth club) and making the implementation plan	Survey on Health issue by the Youth club of NYKS and Awareness campaign	Arrange one camp Regarding the Non Communicable disease prevention	Community level meeting with NYKS/NSS	Discussion show by resource person in AIR	Seminar in the college With the involvement of NYKS /NSS/ NHM	Community level meeting with Expert person/ gram pradhan by focusing the Engagement of Woman in taking decision	Arrange one camp Regarding the Non Communicable disease prevention	Discussion show by resource person in AIR	Data analysis on the progress and taking feedback from the community	Working on the feedback	Success story of village/ active Youth or the volunteer covered by the AIR, Guwahati