

GLORIOUS CONTRIBUTION

“Until recently the issues related to villages in Chitral have been dealt by traditional institutions. These institutions were reflection of development needs and demands of communities in the same space, but in different times three decades ago. In order to be in sync with changed times, it is important to revisit procedures and goals. This is a story of Glorious Youth Association in Chitral where youth have succeeded to win two awards of YMCA to cater to the demands of youth and tackle youth related issues. It shows how the synergies and linkages with youth initiatives like EELY can provide required resources to spur Youth Organisations into action in development sector.”

Glorious Youth Association (GYA) is a seminal youth led organization based in village Ghoru of Union Council Kosht in Tehsil Mastuj of Chitral. This village has several obstacles in development due to its remoteness and complicated governance arrangements. Most of the people are associated with agriculture sector. Therefore, agriculture remains mainstay of the local economy.

For a long time the youth of this area felt the need of an organization to represent their aspiration and address socio-economic issues. Realizing the needs of local community particularly youth, a group of enterprising young men and women of the village formed GYA on August 14, 2010, with a broad objective of mobilizing the youth and human resources for the development of Ghoru. With Ilyas Hussain at the helm of its affairs, GYA has continued to expand its mandate. Now the organization is working in partnership with Hindukush Area Rural Support Organization (HARSO), a Local Support Organization of UC Kosht of district Chitral.

In Chitral there is a dearth of youth organizations that focus on social issues. GYA has tried to fulfill that gap. It strives to develop in the youth a sense of responsibility towards their community.

Since its inception GYA has faced many hurdles, but it managed to overcome

these by including diverse members of youth and establishing linkages with various donor agencies. Youth Micro Challenge Award (YMCA) of EELY is one of the programmes through



which the organisation built its social and leadership capital. One of the components of YMCA is Social and Leader Development. It is an award program that aims to recognize innovative ideas and to encourage talented youth who have created significant social impact. GYA applied for YMCA and it was awarded consequently for it fulfilled the criteria and requirements set for the award.

“Every dream of youth is reality of the future.”

Because of relevancy and innovative concept, GYA received YMCA award for two consecutive years in 2012 and 2013. The first grant facilitated GYA in conducting three career counseling sessions in Community Based School Muzhdeh Kosht, Brilliant School of Studies Sandragh Kosht, and Aga Khan School and College Morder. In the second award year GYA showed remarkable improvement and expanded its scope to raise awareness of modern technology amongst the villagers. The proposal they submitted was titled: **“Gender and Youth Sensitization Program on Modern Technology and their negative use”**. GYA was able to secure the award for the second time. Through this support GYA conducted two awareness workshops in Kosht UC - one in Brilliant School of Studies, Kosht, which benefited 105 youth, and the other in Community Based School, Muzdeh, where the total number of direct beneficiaries was 41. The main objective of these workshops was to apprise the participants of the growing tendency of suicides in the youth and to encourage discussion amongst the public about such an important but neglected issue.

Since its formation GYA has made tremendous progress. Now it is planning to expand its outreach throughout Chitral District. The reason for success of GYA is its novel approach in addressing the social concerns which manifested in its recent session with an expert on trauma, depression and tension in which the participants were trained in useful handy techniques such as Trauma Buster Technique (TBT) and Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT).



World Hepatitis Day was celebrated for the first time in Kosht in 2013 with the help of GYA. As a part of an initiative of capacity-building of the youth, GYA has also launched an English language class in partnership with Aga Khan High School Kosht. Moreover, GYA has also arranged scholarships for the needy students up to BSc level. While the success of GYA is attributed to the hard work of its team, the organization recognizes the contribution of YMCA it has received through EELY. In its nascent phase, the awards from EELY project

helped the organization to expand its work from a small village's context to other regions of Chitral.

The case of GYA is a fine example of how the potential of youth can be channeled in the right direction with a little external help and thereby bringing about social change. With the help of timely grants under YMCA, GYA was able to serve youth of Chitral.