

# **Brief Report on Leadership Workshop Songtsen Library, Dekyiling, Dehradun ( 21-22 April, 2015)**

## **Background/Rationale**

Since 2008, Empowering the Vision Project has been engaging with students of TCV Selakui school and Paonta Sambhota School through our school outreach programme. Under this programme, we began a life skills workshop with class 8 students in both the schools and continued with the same class until class 10. After working with two batches of class 8 students, we felt the need to do more to broaden their horizon and prepare them for the world outside the school.

Since 2012, ENVISION embarked on a building bridges project with the aim to expand comfort zones, broaden the horizon and foster better relations between Tibetan and Indian community. Towards that effort, we introduced a mentoring programme in our partnering schools. We were able to engage a dedicated team of Indians from Dehradun area with the help of Vikram Dutt, who came on board as Advisor to the mentoring programme. The core team members are as follows:

- Vikram Dutt, Co-founder of ManoVikas and Udayan Care Foundation
- Girdhari Lal Kak, a Retired Engineer and former head of Udayan Shalini Fellowship programme in Dehradun
- Manu Sabherwal, Lawyer and Alumni of St. Joseph's Academy
- Steve Phuntsog, Owner of The Orchard
- Rachit Gupta, Entrepreneur and Alumni of St. Joseph's Academy

The team started visiting the schools from October 2014.

As a part of this mentoring programme, we planned to organise a joint workshop of the two schools focused on leadership training.

69 students participated in the workshop including 40 students from Selakui. The overwhelming majority were girls-34 from Selakui and 23 from Paonta.

## **Workshop Objective/ Implementation**

The objective of the workshop was to provide a space for the students to discover themselves, boost their confidence and then challenge them to come out of their comfort zone.

Students from the two schools were invited to an interactive session on the evening before the workshop. They mingled with each other through various games and ice breakers. They even formed buddies which was meant for students from the two schools to get to know each other better.

The two days intensive workshop started at 7 am in the morning with yoga and meditation led by venerable monk *Shanta*, personal assistant to Drikung Chetsang Rinpoche.

The first day session began with self exploration led by *Youdon Aukatsang*, Director of ENVISION. The session provided students with a space to discover who they were and examine their values in life. They were also introduced to quiet time during which they took a futuristic journey to year 2040 and visualise what they had become.

*Mrs. Namgyal Lhamo Taklha*, a retired Tibetan official and the founding Director of Songtsen library gave a presentation on ethics and leadership. She shared her life experience and spoke on the importance of being an honest and ethical person to lead in life.

Theatre was used as a medium during the session on confidence building by *Sukriti Khurana*. Sukriti taught theatre at the Heritage School before becoming a free lance trainer. Students participated in various activities where they were required to enact situations individually and as teams.

On the first day, a friendly basket ball match was organised for both girls and boys. The match was not between the two schools but between new mixed teams formed.

The second day began with a presentation on Ideation and creativity led by *Vikram Dutt*. Vikram got the students thinking from the beginning by giving them simple exercises to think out of the box. Students gave very creative responses to an exercise where they were to pick ten random words and come up with an idea or a sentence.

In sharing the journey session, students heard from *Darshana Joshi*, a mentee of Vikram Dutt who hails from a small village in Almora and is now pursuing Phd in Physics from Cambridge University, UK. Students were inspired by her life experiences.





Students also got an opportunity to interact with their respective mentors. The mentors also presided over the closing session on *what can I do to make a difference* and the feedback session. Students made simple pledges to bring a difference and shared it with others.

### **Outcome/Evaluation/Feedback**

One of the biggest outcome of the workshop was that this was the first time the two Tibetan schools participated in a joint workshop.

In the interactive evening session before the workshop, students were asked to write down their expectations which was revisited during the closing session. All students expressed both orally and in written that their expectations were met by the workshop.

Many students wrote that the duration of the workshop was too short and had suggested a week as a right time frame. They wrote that the schedule was a bit tight and that there is a need for more time to become more open to each other and reflect on what was learnt.

Students found the confidence building session most useful and enjoyable as it had maximum activities and demanded consistent involvement of the students. Several students mentioned that group activities were useful as it gave them all opportunities to speak and be more active. Many students took to the quiet time and some even pledged that they will spend some time every day on reflection. They enjoyed having a buddy as it gave them the chance to know a person more deeply.

*“Attending this workshop, I have found an inspiration and a light in myself that I never thought I had. I know that I will walk my life with my head, heart and heels high”- Tenzin Wangmo, TCV Selakui*

*“I learned how to remove my stage fear and be friendly with everybody”- Tenzin Tsetan, Sambhota Paonta School*

*The workshop was all about giving chances, no force and lots of fun-Tenzin Kalsang, Sambhota Paonta School*

*I like the fact that all the people/mentors or resource person are frank and easy to talk to. so it made the workshop meaningful- Tenzin Dolkar, TCV Selakui*

*"I will try to be a volunteer in my class,from all those wonderful things I learnt from this workshop I am going to take atleast 10 min to reflect upon my self"- Tenzin Tselha, TCV Selakui*

*"I will take every opporunity that I come across to stand up in public and I am going to spend atleast 10 mins to be with myself"- Pema Yangtso TCV Selakui*

*"I promise to stand up or participate in any kind of programmes in our school without any fear and shyness"- Lungtok, Sambhota Paonta School.*

*"Through this workshop, I got to know that trying is not a bad thing. I mean whenever I get a task I will challenge it with patience and creativity"- Kelsang Choedon, Sambhota Paonta School*