

Nepal
'Setting Up for Success'
- Project Summary -
2009

OVERVIEW

In 2009, the Toronto Funding Network generously provided \$12,000 in support of Street Kids International's *Setting Up for Success* project directed at addressing the livelihood needs of marginalized young people in Nepal. This support has enabled Street Kids' to expand the reach and impact of the Street Banking and Street Business Toolkits, and to develop a critical new teaching tool -- The Practice Business Toolkit. With the generous support of the Toronto Funding Network, the *Setting Up for Success* Project has successfully:

- Developed and piloted the 'Practice Business' Toolkit to be incorporated into the existing Street Entrepreneurship training tools, and nationally disseminated
- Delivered business start-up and entrepreneurship support training to 15 youth workers who act as mentors/coaches to young, street-involved entrepreneurs.
- Provided business start-up financing for 61 marginalized Nepali youth.
- Enabled 61 youth to manage a "Practice Business" in a supported environment and with the support of a youth worker coach/mentor.

In addition to supporting direct project delivery throughout Nepal, the Toronto Funding Network's support has facilitated Best Practices being gathered from the *'Setting Up for Success'* project. These Best Practices will be packaged and shared with Street Kids partners and affiliated youth serving organizations around the world.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

The *'Setting Up for Success: Youth Accompaniment Project'* aims to combat issues of street child exploitation and to improve the situation of street involved youth in Nepal. Using business and finance training as a base, this project empowers youth with livelihood assets and capabilities to enable their participation across a broad range of activities and promotes youth entrepreneurship to address youth poverty and gender issues. The project directly addresses the needs of Nepali youth, with a focus on girls, who are often used for bonded labour to counter financial hardships within their families.

In 2005, Street Kids International introduced the Street Business Toolkit in Nepal in partnership with UNICEF and local coordinating partner, SathSath. SathSath's experience with the training led to the identification of follow up activities and improvements, such as the introduction of "practice businesses" using momo carts (popular Nepali dumplings sold as fast food) to deliver 'hands-on' leaning and reinforce the realities of business management; and the need for youth to have ongoing coaching/mentorship throughout their experience practicing a new business. These necessary interventions identified by SathSath form the crux of the *Setting Up for Success* project.

The project is divided into four components: Street Business Toolkit delivery and the introduction of the Street Kids International's Street Banking Toolkit **training**; training and development of **practice business** modules for both girls and boys; providing training to youth workers to strengthen **coaching** and **mentoring** capabilities; and **access to capital** as start-up for youth's self-directed businesses.

The practical combination of training, practice and coaching afforded to youth through this multi-dimensional initiative has resulted in the successful development of participating youth's self determination, strengthened life skills, deepened business and financial knowledge, and ability to start small businesses. Such self-reliance has enabled youth to meet their basic needs, increase their self esteem, reconnect with their community and strive towards a more secure future.

Street Kids' is very proud of the *Setting Up for Success* project. The project has proven to be an excellent learning opportunity and has met with very positive feedback from participants and the youth-serving community at large. Having recently shared the learning from the project with Street Kids' network of international partners, we found that the new Practice Business toolkit is of great interest to our partner organizations and are confident that it will provide significant value to programming in the countries where Street Kids is active.

PAINTING A HOPEFUL FUTURE

To help pay off her parents' debts, Sanita quit school and began working when she was only eight years old. She and her parents lived and worked in a carpet factory in Kathmandu, Nepal.

After almost three years of tying knots, injuring herself on sharp tools and inhaling wool fibres, she was removed from the carpet factory by an inspector working for RugMark - an organization working to end illegal child labour in the carpet industry.

For the past 9 years, Sanita has been committed to supporting other former child labourers by leading non-formal education classes. In addition to teaching, Sanita is studying the art of painting Thangkas – intricate Nepalese paintings that tell the story of the Buddha. This art form requires true dedication on the part of the artist as they can take anywhere from 3 months to 2 years to complete.

Recently, Sanita took part in Street Kids International's Street Banking training where she learned about the importance of saving money and planning for her future. Inspired by this new knowledge, Sanita plans to use her well developed teaching skills to share this new information with other women at the Thangka school.



SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Practice Business Toolkit Development

With years of experience implementing the Street Business toolkit in Nepal, Street Kids' local partner organization, SathSath, identified that despite having a solid understanding of how to initiate a small business, a number of youth were reluctant to start one. In response to this need, SathSath and Street Kids have developed the Practice Business Toolkit – a tool to provide youth with a supported environment where they can put their business start-up knowledge into real-world practice.

The core components of the Practice Business toolkit focus on providing an opportunity for youth to start their own businesses without having to fear the implications of making critical business mistakes and suffering financial loss. While practicing their businesses, youth are supported by a youth worker who has received training on how to guide youth through the business learning process.

The Practice Business Toolkit was piloted in February, 2009 with 15 youth workers and 33 youth. The toolkit has been adapted using feedback from youth and youth worker participants and a final revision session took place in November, 2009 where the material was shared with Street Kids International's network of Latin American partners to gather their input and help ensure that the material would be cross-culturally applicable and useful to a global network of youth serving organizations.

Youth Worker Activity

Fifteen youth workers (8 female, 7 male) participated in the Street Business and Practice Business entrepreneurship training where they gained and practiced skills on how to provide support to young entrepreneurs. As part of Street Kids International's 'live training' approach, these 15 youth workers were given the opportunity to train youth on entrepreneurship skills in a supported environment during the training. After practicing their facilitation skills in a supported environment, the 15 youth workers returned to their respective organizations and trained a total of 61 youth on how to identify their existing skills and use them to start a small business.



LEADERS IN DEVELOPMENT

Kabita Shah works to change negative stereotypes of street youth not only among the general public, but also among youth themselves. She believes that street youth are not liabilities to their communities, but assets. She works at SathSath ("together" in Nepali), a Nepal-based non-government organization that promotes children's rights.

A youth worker, educator and counselor, 26-year-old Kabita uses Street Kids International's entrepreneurship training materials to help street youth recognize how their existing money-earning skills can be applied to safer and more sustainable ventures. The training provides a way for them to pursue their dreams while moving away from life on the street.

Many youth in Nepal do not know their rights and have no access to basic human rights education. UNICEF estimates there are about 30,000 street youth in Nepal. Street youth are told from a very young age their lives have no value. Much of Kabita's work is focused on undoing that damage and helping them realize their unique potential, no matter their caste, religious or socioeconomic status.

Youth Activity

With the support of the Toronto Funding Network, 61 Nepali youth received Street Kids' entrepreneurship training and had the opportunity to practice a small business in a supported environment with the support of a youth worker coach/mentor.

No. of youth who have received training & practiced a small business

City / Location	N° of youth workers (Total per Training Location)	N° female	N° male
Bhaktapur	23	13	10
Nagarkot	15	2	13
Pokhara	11	5	6
Nepalgunj	12	8	4
TOTAL	61	28	33

Some of the small business that youth practiced included; candle making, peanut selling, momo carts, vegetable growing, tailoring, and selling jewellery, produce or sweets in local markets.

SPREADING THE LIGHT

Two years ago Kusum called the streets of Kathmandu home. She identified herself as a 'street-girl' and was married to a 'street-boy'.

Soon after getting married, Kusum gave birth to her 'street baby' – and her life took a turn. Realizing that the streets were no place to raise a child, Kusum accepted the help of SathSath and started to look for ways to get off the streets and take care of her child.

After receiving training in the Street Business Toolkit, she expressed an interest in learning how to make and market candles. Kusum is a fast learner with an artistic flare. She now makes and sells candles to shopkeepers in the market and to wholesalers. Kusum is so enthused with her work that she has started teaching the candle trade to other street-involved girls at a local NGO.

Recently, Kusum has convinced her husband to leave the streets and start a small clothing stall, and she has earned enough money to rent a room with enough space for a candle workshop with a space for a day care.

Kusum is proud to announce that she is taking responsibility for her life – she is attending evening classes and her son is enrolled in kindergarten. In her own words, "I lived in the streets and know what it's like – it's not a good life for any person, and it will not be the life for my family."



Start-Up Capital & Savings Groups

A number of the youth participants in the Street Kids' training accessed start-up capital (made available through the *Setting Up for Success* in the form of small grants) in small amounts (average range \$25-40 per youth) to start and run their small businesses. In addition to accessing start-up capital, a number of youth started savings circles with other youth from their organizations or communities.

The savings circles meet weekly and provide an opportunity for youth to begin to practice a culture of savings and financial responsibility and planning. Each youth involved in the savings group will take a turn accessing the group fund and are encouraged to use the funds to either start or improve their own small business.

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY BRIQUETTES



Rajkumar and Laxmi, two Nepali youth, participated in the Street Entrepreneurship training where they learned about the power of Savings Circles.

Encouraged by what they'd learned, the two friends launched a Savings Circle in their small community in Dhading. Within 2 weeks, the Savings Circle had grown from the two initial members to 18.

With the Savings Circle running well, Rajkumar and Laxmi decided to start a briquette making business – the business did not do well as they were selling their briquettes at a loss.

Laxmi's youth worker later attended the Street Kids' Practice Business training and shared

what she had learned with the two budding entrepreneurs. Rajkumar and Laxmi quickly developed a business plan and a strategy to try their business again.

With some money from their Savings Circle, and start-up funds from the *Setting Up for Success* project, the duo re-started their business and began to make a profit. Their youth worker is proud to report, "They really must have learned a lot. Up to now, even after schooling and household chores they are managing time for the production of briquettes. They are selling a piece of briquette at Nrs. 18 (CDN \$0.20) where before they sold them for Nrs. 5 (CDN \$0.06) and they are selling a lot. They have produced 4000 pieces – and all the work was by hand. They have sold enough to buy a briquette making machine and they have paid the credits back to their own Saving Circles."

The latest venture for this team has been to commission another youth-serving organization in the urban center of Kathmandu to market and sell their briquettes. Laxmi has hired her sister to market the briquettes and as the business grows, so do the hopes of the young entrepreneurs of Dhading.

UNEXPECTED OUTCOMES

Savings Circles

In addition to returning to their respective organizations to train youth on the Street Banking material, many youth workers have established their own 'Savings Circle' groups with colleagues and members of their communities. This speaks to the relevance of the training material, and its applicability to multiple populations including street youth and employed adults.

Family Reintegration

An exciting and unexpected outcome from the trainings held in Nepal was that two youth were reunified with their families. This was a result of youth workers travelling to attend trainings with youth who had migrated to the capital city of Kathmandu from their small home villages. As the youth and youth workers got to know each other and developed a trusting relationship, some realized that they had once lived in the same villages. This set a train of communication into motion that ultimately resulted in two youth being reunited with their families and leaving 'street life'.

REUNITING FAMILIES



Sujan had been living on the streets of Kathmandu for eight years. Eager to learn a way to earn money and keep out of trouble, he attended Street Kids' entrepreneurship training session.

At the training, Sujan got to know a youth worker who lived in his home village. This youth worker knew Sujan's family and eventually gained sujan's trust and consent to communicate to his family that Sujan was alive and living in Kathmandu.

After some family and individual counselling, Sujan agreed to go home for a visit. He quickly realized that his family had worried about him in his absence and needed his support (his father had died, and he was now the eldest sibling in the family). Sujan decided that he could benefit from leaving the streets and returning home.

In order to support himself and his family, Sujan would have to work to earn a respectable income. His family had a small plot of land and Sujan expressed interest in learning about vegetable farming. Through the *Setting Up for Success* project, Street Kids' partner organization, SathSath has been able to support him in setting up his vegetable growing and sales business.

Today he is reintegrated with his family, and is considered a responsible youth within his community. Sujan remarked that he is happy and supporting his family through his vegetable growing and selling business and has noticed that people in the community are coming to him for advice on how to improve crop production. For the first time since he can remember, he feels like he is important to his family, and that he has the respect of his community – something that he never thought he could earn after living on the streets.

INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

In November, 2009, the Executive Director of Street Kids' Nepali partner organization SathSath, travelled to Ecuador to participate in a series of meetings with Street Kids International's Latin American partners. The visit provided an opportunity to present the Practice Business Toolkit to members of Street Kids' network, and to collaborate on ways to strengthen the 'Practice Business Toolkit' and gain insight into how the material will be applicable across cultures to benefit children and youth around the world.

BISO BAJRACHARYA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SATHSATH NEPAL

This is my first opportunity to travel outside of Asia and see with my own eyes how different programs of Street Kids are used to meet the needs of youth in different countries and from very different cultures. This was a great learning opportunity.

We were able to incorporate best practices and learning into the 'Practice Business Toolkit' that we are testing in Nepal. My meetings will help to make the 'Practice Business Toolkit' an effective toolkit for any type of youth all around the world.



The thing that I really could appreciate from of this experience is Street Kids' approach and methodology. Now, I've seen that no matter what target group or what type of people all around the world you deliver Street Kids' training to, the results and impact are very effective. I am excited now to go back to Nepal and test some of the changes to the Practice Business Toolkit that we made. I will bring with me many good memories, and many photos to show the young people in Nepal that there are other kids around the world who are in similar situations and that they are also working to make their lives better.

TORONTO FUNDING NETWORK
SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS - NEPAL

Expense Report for the Period Feb 2009- Dec 2009

Revenues	
The Funding Network	11,965.65

Expenses	
Start Up Capital for Youth Businesses	2,120.00
Training of Coaches/Youth workers	2,081.80
Training of Coaches- Travel	2,722.50
Practice Business	
Development/Materials	3,915.35
Partner Agency Overhead	1,126.00
	11,965.65

Surplus (deficit)	
	0.00