

AFTER SCHOOL

A GREEN SCHOOL EDUCATING THE WAY OF
LIFE...

A CONCEPT NOTE

Garo Village, Rajabhatkhawa, West Bengal, India.

A green school project for improving the future livelihood options of underprivileged tribal children is seeking partnership firms and this is a proposal concept for all such philanthropists who want to be a part of this innovative initiative in whatsoever way they prefer.

By -Babit Gurung, (Social worker)

The Concept Background:

It can never be denied that the praiseworthy initiatives of several government bodies and social organizations in the world have in obvious terms led to form a better perspective of education system for all the under privileged youth population in the world. Their endeavour to offer free education facilities to such population have achieved better results due to which today most of the under privileged children are going to free schools to build their better academic career. To an extent the work seems to increase the statistical report of literacy rate in many developing countries, but in reality there is always the part of implementation that is missing behind this run. The implementation here means the growth in the standard of life of people, their economic condition, their participatory approach and their expectations that finally measures the conversion in everyone's life after getting better academic career. The close observation reveals that though the type of academic syllabus in all the private and free schools are the same; there is always a vast difference between the aspiration of free school students and private school students. The difference is also seen in the dropout rates among the underprivileged children from free schools which are higher than the children who can afford private schools. The greater impact is overall seen in the career of the children when they grow up. The underprivileged children seldom build good career and they lag behind in all the aspects of development in comparison to the rich children.

The main reason of this difference in career even after getting proper academic education between the children from poor family and rich family are as follows:

1. **Family Background and support:** The under privileged children's family come from a low class and they are illiterate tribes. So it becomes hard for the child to get a proper guidance at home regarding his homework and practical things that are taught in the school. This way the family even after willing to support for their child's education lag behind due to innocence.
2. **Vocational education:** Apart from academic education a child needs other types of vocational education that support his career in the future building a skill armed with academic certification. In this context due to low economic condition the poor families are unable to afford such extra curriculum education like computer education, language classes, physical education and sports, creative education like arts and crafts, writing etc.
3. **Inspiration and motivation:** Children from poor families live a hard and stressful life. They lack the motivation level in comparison to children from rich families that fuel their thoughts and ambitions to aim higher.
4. **Career counselling:** After reaching a stage, children need proper counselling to choose their passionate stream of education that will later help them to build their career. The children from poor families are not able to get proper career counselling because of illiterate family environment and ambiance.

Objectives: To not just provide help on building academic background but also a career building education to the underprivileged tribal children.

What is After School? How will it address the above mentioned problems?

“After School”, as the name suggests, is a green school project that will aim to facilitate the academic and also technical education among the underprivileged children after they come back from their respective schools. The school will be a free school for all age limit students from any school. In these schools the underprivileged children and youth will be taught on those subjects that will help them to develop their personality, livelihood skills and academic career. The tribal children who cannot get proper guidance in their educational matters from their poor family can attend the school in the evening where they will be helped on things like doing their homework, revision of the subjects they covered in the school, etc. The school will be fully under the concept of green school where the tribal children (who are close to nature) can learn from nature and know how to relate their school education practically with nature.

Apart from the regular classes that will help act as tuition for the children the school will also regularly organize innovative courses for the children of the entire age limit respectively. Such courses will help the children to gain technical education in different sectors that will later help them to choose their respective career in the future. The course time and duration will be designed appropriately targeting the appropriate group of children and youths, so that they can gain such knowledge as an addition to their academic education in schools. Some of the examples of such courses are:

1. Photography
2. English speaking
3. Arts and crafts
4. Computer education
5. Fashion designing
6. Personality development
7. Vocational courses on different trade sectors.
8. Etc.

Who are the targeted group of children and where is the school located?

North Bengal, often called chicken neck because of its territorial demarcation, is surrounded by four international borders – Bhutan, China, Bangladesh and Nepal. The region is unbelievably divided into not districts but hamlets on the basis of different indigenous tribes. In a more clear way a person can feel into a totally different world of culture and tradition after every 10 kms in North Bengal. After Schools project is located in an area named Rajabhatkhawa, which has its influence both from Bhutan and Bangladesh. The region falls under the buffer zones of the forest villages of Buxa Tiger Reserve – one of the many Reserve forests of North Bengal. The tribes that have recently made their run towards exploring the modern world leaving their villages are Rava, Sautal, Toto, Mech, Koch, Raajvanshi etc. So this school will focus on the children of all such tribes. As all the villagers are forest villagers they have the access to the most natural way of learning things that will relate to their syllabus in the school. This way this green school will

enhance their inherited skills, capabilities in conjunction with modern education and technical knowledge that will help them to turn into the best professionals in the future.

Main activities of the school: Methodology

For the Volunteers and interns:

The school will call and invite for the volunteers who can be from any field and age. The volunteers will share their expertise in different fields that will educate the children to build up their career in the future. The veterans or retired professional can also help us to design the relevant timely courses for the students and be a part of the resource team as a teacher, trainer, speaker motivator etc. The interns and volunteers can take this learning experience of teaching and also training of being a part of green school project exploring the children from different culture. The different types of volunteering options available for such volunteers and interns are as follows:

1. Community welfare activities.
2. Education
3. Environment and conservation
4. Young people motivation
5. Multi-cultural
6. Languages
7. Arts, culture and heritage
8. Rural Tourism
9. Livelihood schemes

For organizations:

The school will also call for the collaboration to different organizations, schools, internships from different countries so this green school can also be an inter-cultural school sharing culture and learning with the differences for the students from all around the world. The children will be given a platform to explore their curious nature more closely with the nature without any artificial obstacle. The organization from different countries can be a part of this project helping the tribal children to learn the ways of livelihood apart from academic education. They can provide necessary support both financially and voluntarily for organizing different training workshops, courses on different technical education streams that will be specially designed for the higher standard students of underprivileged families.

For school children and schools:

The green school will also organise inter-cultural meet ups and excursion in the concept of share and learn programs helping the tribal children to get exposure to a totally different culture that will also help them realise the value of their being so different. The students from other urban schools can be a part of this program and be more close to nature learning the ways how people in the forest villages live so closely with nature learning directly from the nature.

For Donors and sponsors:

The donations from the philanthropists will go towards designing the courses, running the faculty, organizing the school infrastructures, education for children to apply for short courses that the school may not be able to organize and will need proper certification from recognised universities like Computer education, Polytechnic education etc. The donors can also sponsor towards the education of the tribal children from the community to attend better education.

The internal activities of School:

1. Regular evening classes similar to private tuition for the underprivileged children from different schools.
2. Practical learning with nature on the basis of subjects taught in the classes.
3. Sports and music classes and activities.
4. Social Awareness classes
5. Arts and crafts classes
6. Short term vocational education courses on different skills and profession.
7. Career counselling classes.
8. Inter- cultural classes.
9. Exposure visits.
10. Health sanitation activities and awareness programs
11. Culture and heritage interpretation and conservation classes.

Proposal for support:

The project needs holistic support from volunteers and interns, collaborations with organizations, philanthropy donors to become a part of this project in whatsoever form they desire for the true implementation of the concept.

For volunteers

We require the support from gap year students, interns, professional volunteers, who want to give their hands to design the different types of courses for the students in the schools. They can take part confirming their respective roles in the curriculum activities to teach the students till their convenient time. The different types of vocation courses where the volunteer trainers or teachers can share their knowledge and expertise are as follows:

1. Arts and crafts learning course
2. Photography course
3. Fashion designing course
4. English and other language classes
5. Music and sports
6. Etc.

For organizations:

We also require support from different organization from different countries where they can regularly be a part of this project by help us to find volunteers, donors and interns. The collaboration will be acknowledged as Project implementing partners with the school.

For schools:

We would also need the support from different schools who prefer inter cultural education that only promotes peace in the world but also helps the children to expand their reach of knowledge in terms of different cultures, bio-diversity, customs and traditions and learning experiences in diverse environment. The school is open for such exposure visits from the students from all around the world where they can get involved in this concept of nature study.

For donors and sponsors:

There are many underprivileged students from such tribes who have high intelligence level, unique skills, talents but they never get recognized. With little financial support from our donors we can help these children to get professional education in the required field and build their career or get recognised among the best professionals in the society. The list of names will be identified by our volunteer teachers after they get close to them while providing tuition classes on regular basis.

Current status of the school:

With the campus area of 2 acres land the school is ready with its basic infrastructure where we also have hostel for children and tribal home stay for the volunteers. The school already has students of different tribes from all the surrounding villages.

About the village – Garo Village, Rajabhatkhawa:

Garo Village in Rajabhatkhawa is a small village with colonies different tribes. The villages is inhabited by different indigenous tribes like Rava, Toto, Koch, Mech, Bhujels and Raajvanshis. Being a forest village, most of the villagers still rely on the collection of non-timber forest products, and this is their daily activity. Apart from collection of forest products their main occupation is agriculture. The village is also a prime zone for man- animal conflict. Due to the regular attacks of wild elephants in their farms they only have limited option of crops to grow. Therefore the village also is in need of getting awareness education of tackling the problem of man-animal conflict. The drop-out rates is high among the children because of low economy in spite of having easy accessibility to the rich bio-diversity of the area.

For more details and joining the program please send us at :

yourhost@meaningfultravelindia, chauthary@gmail.com

