

... 16 years of service towards fostering an enlightened and happy society through education in Bhutan

Losar 2016



The Loden Report

The Annual Newsletter of The Loden Foundation

Celebrating the birth year of Guru Rinpoche Loden Chogsi, the 400th anniversary of Zhabdrung's arrival in Bhutan and the birth of The Gyalsey, the Royal Heir.

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Cover Photo: Loden ELC children in Changmari, Samtse

Kuzuzangpo La!



The New Year of the Fire Monkey has arrived and it is time for us to wish our friends, supporters and well-wishers a wonderful Bhutanese Losar and to update you on our activities.

The year 2015 has been a memorable one. While Bhutan witnessed successive events to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the 4th Druk Gyalpo, Loden saw the emergence of a few new initiatives and our small office team work diligently to take Loden to new heights. Yet, it is also a year when we saw some disappointments due to factors mostly beyond our control.

We have received the first Bhutanese state support of Nu.20 million from Druk Holdings and Investments, Bhutan's premier company in charge of state wealth management, as an interest free loan to be used as capital funding in our entrepreneurship programme. As part of 60th anniversary celebrations, the Loden-DHI funding initiative was successfully launched in September, albeit it with a delay of six months. Nine entrepreneurial projects have been funded through this in November 2015.

Our regular Loden Entrepreneurship Programme (LEP) also saw a better record of the repayment, improving from 64% of punctual repayment in 2014 to 84 % in 2015. Today, LEP has come to be seen as a leading and most successful educational and entrepreneurship programme for SME development in Bhutan with 2236 young adults trained in basics of entrepreneurship and 97 social startups funded with interest and collateral free capital, just three projects short of the target we set for 2015. A total of 58 projects are outside urban areas and 26 owned by women, 12 in culture sector, 19 in farming, nine in IT, seven in education, seven in food, six in environmental waste management, three in medical sector and 34 in other production and services. These projects have palpable social impacts in terms of job creation, import substitution, economic self-reliance, filling gaps, community support and minimisation of rural urban migration. To streamline the entrepreneurship programme further, we regularly fine tune our monitoring and support systems and also continue building the pool and capacity of entrepreneurial mentors.

The popularity of LEP can also be judged from the staggering 217 proposals we received for the 2015 competition for funds. From 2016, two separate sessions of selection, one in spring and one in autumn,

are being run to ease this process.

In addition, Loden has also extended its student entrepreneurship programme from seven colleges to 15 educational institutions through support from Swiss Development Cooperation and UNICEF. As we believe in planting the seed of innovative thinking and entrepreneurial enthusiasm early in the education system, we are exploring ways to enhance exposure to entrepreneurship among school and college students.

The Loden Early Learning Centres have seen a normal record of attendance in our three centres. With many semi-urban and large rural communities still in need of such facilities, we have already started to plan on setting up new ones in collaboration with UNICEF. Similarly, the Loden Scholarship Scheme receives a large number of application for funding and we have today 108 students in full time education including 20 at university level.

One of our earnest wishes in 2015 was to set up a Loden centre with educational, entrepreneurial and mental and physical fitness facilities to serve the large low income population in southern Thimphu. Unfortunately, our efforts of leasing the land from the Thimphu municipality turned out unsuccessful after a very long wait. However, we have not given up our hope and we continue to rely on the unfailing generosity and support of our supporters to realise this dream of a Loden hub of education, innovation and well being.

The Monkey year will be observed as the birth anniversary of Loden Chogsi, the saint-scholar after whom Loden is named. In Bhutan, he is popularly known as Guru Rinpoche and is the foremost divinity and spiritual figure. Year 2016 also marks the 400th anniversary of the arrival of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, the founder of Bhutan, to this land. It also saw the auspicious birth of the royal heir. During a year filled with these auspices, we would once again like to thank our benefactors, friends, beneficiaries and well wishers for your sustained interest in Loden and for joining us on this journey of promoting education and entrepreneurship in Bhutan and making a difference to many individuals and communities since 1999.

Wishing you an exciting and joyful year of the Monkey!

Kadrinche / Thank you

Karma Phuntsho
President & Founder



Global Entrepreneurship Week in Bhutan

Bhutan joined 160 countries around the world to observe the Global Entrepreneurship Week in November 2015. The event was jointly organised by the Loden Foundation, Ministry of Labour and Human Resources and Bhutan Innovation and Technology Centre. Aimed at promoting the culture of innovation and enterprise, the event brought together business experts, entrepreneurs, thinkers, policy makers and NGOs to discuss and debate issues pertaining to entrepreneurship. Some 150 participants took part in this campaign to promote entrepreneurship at all levels.

His Excellency Lyonpo Yeshey Dorji, the minister for Ministry of Agriculture and Forest graced the opening as the Chief Guest. In his inaugural address, His Excellency highlighted that there is a growing need for awareness of entrepreneurship as the nation's economic prosperity is defined by the vigour of entrepreneurial culture and business enterprises.

The State of Bhutanese Economy and its Direction

HE Lyonpo Norbu Wangchuk (Minister for Ministry of Economic Affairs), Dasho Ugyen Tshechup Dorji (President of Bhutan Chamber of Commerce) and Sonam Tobgay (President of Bhutan Kuenyam Party) took part in the most exciting discussion during GEW on the topic: The State of Bhutanese Economy and its Direction.

The panelists discussed a wide range of important issues pertaining to the state of Bhutan's economy. The panel discussion was very informative and educational for the entrepreneurs. The recording of the discussion can be watched on the Loden website.





Sowing SEED across TTIs

Aimed at promoting entrepreneurship in the Technical Training Institutes (TTI) across the country, the Loden Foundation extended its programme called SEED (Student Empowerment through Entrepreneurship Development) to Khuruthang and Samthang Technical Training Institutions on 4th May 2015 coinciding with the Zorig Day.

The event was graced by the honourable Minister for Labour and Human Resources, Lyonpo Nima Sangay Tshempo by signing the MoU between the Executive Director of the Loden Foundation and the Principals of Khuruthang and Samthang TTIs. This special programme was launched to commemorate the 60th birth anniversary of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo Jigme Singye Wangchuck.

Through this programme, the Loden Foundation has offered grants of Nu.100,000 to the participating institutions to support student-led ventures within the college campus. The programme aims to inculcate entrepreneurial skills and promote entrepreneurship amongst the TTI graduates.

By the end of 2015, the programme has extended to seven TTIs, seven university colleges under Royal University of Bhutan and a special youth group from Lingshi, one of the far flung communities of Bhutan. The programme was supported by Swiss Development Fund and UNICEF in Bhutan.





Bhutan Student Entrepreneur Award

During the closing event of the Global Entrepreneurship Week that was held on 21 November 2015, Loden launched the Bhutan Student Entrepreneurship Award. The Award was jointly organized by Entrepreneur's Organisation GSEA and the Loden Foundation, and Dorji Tshering, an enterprising student from the Gaeddu College of Business Studies won the award.

"The Printing and Photocopying business is everything for me. My educational expenses are all taken care of by this business and I have been also helping my relatives", said Dorji Tshering. He makes at least Nu. 35,000 every month as net profit

which is a very lucrative business for a student. Besides his entrepreneurial qualities, Dorji is also a passionate social worker as evidenced by a big stupa which stands majestically in front the college campus along the Thimphu-Phuntsholing road. Dorji will participate in the Global Student Entrepreneurship Award which will be held in Bangkok in May 2016.

The Award was introduced with the hope of inspiring and rewarding student entrepreneurs and of encouraging the aspiring student entrepreneurs to pursue an entrepreneurial career more seriously.



Entrepreneurship Trend in Bhutan in the Recent Years

Sources claim that informal business has existed in Bhutan since old times through a barter system across different regions of the country. The Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) was established in 1980 with its primary role to support private sector development, after which the private sector has emerged progressively. The role of entrepreneurship was first recognized in 1991 by the formation of the Entrepreneurship Promotion Centre under the Ministry of Economic Affairs. However, due to the dearth of entrepreneurial skills and budgetary constraints, it became dormant after a couple of years of operation.

In 2008, the Loden Foundation launched a social entrepreneurship programme by providing training, capital and post-loan support services. In the meantime, the Ministry of Labour & Human Resources took over the entrepreneurship programme from Ministry of Economic Affairs primarily to combat rising youth unemployment and to alleviate poverty across the country.

With the goal of a sustainable economy, the Royal Government of Bhutan integrated the roles of cottage, small and medium-sized industries into economic development policies and introduced major plans to diversify the economic base. The Department of Cottage & Small Industry (DCSMI) was formed in 2010. It worked on a number of policy documents including *CSMI Policy 2012*, *CSMI Strategy 2012-2020* and *CSMI Action Plan 2012-2014*. This was followed by the *National Entrepreneurship Strategy* by the Ministry of Labour & Human Resources. Through the enhancement of small and medium enterprises, Bhutan aspires to create a sustainable green economy.

While Bhutan appears to be well equipped at least with policy directives, more needs to be done in terms of execution on the ground. While the overall entrepreneurship ecosystem has been improving, it is still quite fragile. Young adults still see public sector jobs as lucrative and secure, and are reluctant to venture into entrepreneurship. This is because both entrepreneurs and the enterprise agencies are confronted with numerous

obstacles such as access to finance, the hiring of foreign workers, poor infrastructure, lack of skilled labourers and complex regulations. There is also an aggressive stereotyped bias particularly amongst young adults against self-employment and blue-collar jobs, which is a major problem.

However, with the influx of job seekers battling for a handful of opportunities, the situation is beginning to change. Every year, Loden has been receiving an increasing number of business proposals from college graduates and other young adults, which shows the positive trend in entrepreneurship or self employment. Among 97 projects, Loden has several dozens of projects run by university graduates.

It is also exciting to see a whole new generation who has reached a point of transition with their minds full of creativity, intelligence and adaptability to the changing society. Hence, any intervention aimed at guiding and supporting these people holds substantial potential to build a dynamic young generation.

Such beneficial interventions include providing entrepreneurial education, building capacity, developing infrastructures and creating a platform for networking and mentoring services. Likewise, diversifying funding opportunities and improving access to credit by simplifying credit requirements and lowering interest rates, particularly for the start-up are found to be desirable. To complement these initiatives, simplification of regulatory processes, removal of bureaucratic hurdles and effective co-ordination amongst the stakeholders can help create an enabling entrepreneurial ecosystem accessible to everyone.

Dorji Tashi
Executive Director

Best Loden Entrepreneur Award 2015



On the final day of GEW, Loden held its annual competition for the Best Loden Entrepreneur Award. Tshewang Dema, the manager and promoter of Tshejor's Ayzey, a home-based pickle industry won the award in 2015. Loden helped her with a seed fund of Nu. 340,000 in 2010 to kickstart her business.

popular in the local market and among the Bhutanese communities living abroad. The Award along with a cash prize of Nu.108,000 was conferred by His Excellency Dr Sonam Kinga, the Chairperson of National Council of Bhutan. Tshewang was also the recipient of the Bhutan's Women Entrepreneur Award in 2013.

She started *ayzey* making venture as her hobby with one employee and one product but has grown to seven employees and eight types of products. Tshejor's Ayzey has been getting

Tshewang is model social entrepreneur and we are confident that she will continue to inspire and motivate others to take part in entrepreneurship.





A Crash Course in Bumthang

Loden's two-day entrepreneurship crash course in Bumthang was a huge success. A total of 60 participants attended the programme with some participants coming all the way from Phuntsholing and Thimphu. A group of 16 students from the Institute of Language and Culture Studies, Taktse, also took part in the training.

The participants were introduced to the basic aspects of entrepreneurship such as spotting business opportunities, creative thinking, marketing, leadership in business, business

strategy, proposal writing, etc. by a pool of resource persons comprising both local and international experts. Through such trainings, Loden intends to educate young Bhutanese men and women in entrepreneurship and help mitigate rising youth unemployment.

Loden will continue to organize similar courses in other parts of the country to make it accessible to different communities and lessen the concentration of such trainings in Thimphu. Loden is planning to organize a crash course in Samdrup Jongkhar in April 2016.



A New Level for LEP

In 2008, when the Loden Entrepreneurship Programme (LEP) was launched, it was already clear that there was a need to encourage and fund young Bhutanese who planned to launch a new business. But we had many questions. Could these emerging entrepreneurs be identified? Would they endure the tough selection process? If selected, would they take off? How many of those businesses would create employment or even survive after a few years?

After seven years of efforts and steady growth, answers to these questions become clearer. Yes, many Bhutanese men and women aspire to live an independent life and to become entrepreneurs. In July and August 2015, Loden received a staggering 217 business plans. These were carefully read in order to select 40 entrepreneurs for interviews, which took place in Thimphu in November. A total of 20 entrepreneurs were finally selected, taking the total number of Loden entrepreneurs to 97 at the end of 2015.

The total amount of loans disbursed in 2015 saw nearly 50% rise from the previous years. This increase was made possible by the new funding received from Druk Holding & Investments (DHI), which also participated actively in the selection process and is committed to support us for three years. Loden is very grateful for the trust expressed in that way by DHI.

Looking back at our track record of supporting 77 entrepreneurs between 2008 and 2014, the

message is indeed very encouraging. With a very few exceptions, all projects selected were implemented with enthusiasm and speed. Many projects faced difficulties, had to be adjusted but very few had to close down. The number of jobs created exceeded, in our rough estimate, 300 and these jobs are for a good part outside Thimphu. Looking at the rate of reimbursement, it is very high and the worries of rising default that we had in January 2015 have now been corrected.

What about the future? From 2016, the programme becomes biannual with two selections in April and November. An entrepreneur who plans to submit a plan to Loden will not have to wait so long and will receive feedback faster. This is in line with what is required in an entrepreneurial world, which is becoming more vibrant, competitive and fast. This is true also in Bhutan, where good ideas need to be implemented without too many delays.

How many new projects will Loden and DHI be able to support? It will depend on the quality of business plans, the drive of aspiring entrepreneurs and last but not least the role model played by male and female Loden entrepreneurs. Loden and DHI are committed to support each year a growing number of entrepreneurs from 2016 onwards.

Gerard Tardy
Director, LEP



20 New Projects

At the end of 2015, Loden has funded 20 new entrepreneurial ventures taking the total to 97 projects. A sum of Nu.1.4million were paid out as loans out of which 50% comes from DHI. The programme has achieved an excellent geographic spread with projects in all districts of Bhutan except one. However, the gender ratio is a little poor with just less than 30% female entrepreneurs.

The programme excels in diversity with projects ranging from agricultural initiatives including avocado and cardamom and vegetables, dairy farming, financial services, cultural products, lodges, bookshop, food, healthcare, IT firms, machineries to water, weaving centres and waste management. All the projects are required to be socially beneficial, culturally sensitive and environmentally friendly, besides being financially viable.

DHI Joins Loden for Entrepreneurship

In order to enhance access to capital which has been identified as one of the main challenges for startups in Bhutan, Druk Holding Investment and Loden jointly launched a funding window called Loden-DHI Fund. This was launched to

commemorate the 60th birth anniversary of the 4th Druk Gyalpo.

The fund was launched with the aim of boosting Bhutan's economy through development of social enterprises. DHI has provided Nu.20 million to be administered by Loden for five years. Collateral and interest-free loans from Loden-DHI Fund are available to entrepreneurs interested in starting a new business or expanding an existing business which are feasible and will lead to the formation of large size, high growth companies in Bhutan. The programme aims to combat the rising youth employment and contribute towards economic development in the country. This is the first major public-private partnership in promoting social entrepreneurship. Both parties have hopes for the continuation and expansion of this collaboration.





Dr Lobzang Dorji
Daignostic Centre
Thimphu



Arpan Lepcha
Online Business
Thimphu



Namgay
Winnow Production
Punakha



Kinzang Duba
Mixed Vegetable Farming
Chukha



Tshering Gyeltshen
Internet Service
Thimphu



Ngawang Euden
Animation Project
Thimphu



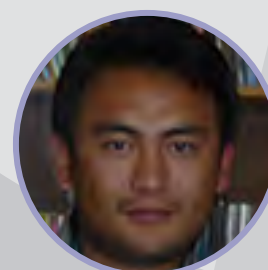
Ashok Sunwar
Avocado Production
Tsirang



Neten Dukpa
Cardamom Production
Sarpang



Tshering Penjor
Machinery Service Centre
Punakha



Rigzen Zangpo
Automobile Workshop
Tashigang

na
ess



Tashi Dorji
Furniture House
Zhemgang



Dawa Tshering
Sculpture
Mongar

Sherab Tenzin
Bakery
Thimphu



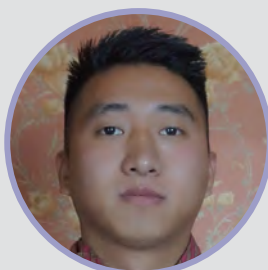
Lotey Gyeltshen
Driving Institute
Samdrup Jongkhar



reneurs 2015



Pelden Dorji
Home Maintenance
Thimphu



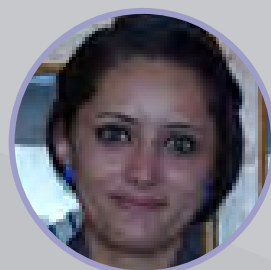
Kinley Wangchuk
Laundry Service
Gaeddu, Chukha



Yeshi Dorji
Asparagus Production
Bumthang



Sushanta Sharma
Candle Making
Phuntsholing



po
Workshop



Chencho Tshering
Potato Chips Production
Thimphu



Dorothy Gurung
Fashion House
Thimphu

Meet New Faces



Lyonpo Om Pradhan

(Trustee)

Lyonpo Om Pradhan was the first Chairman of Druk Holding and Investments Limited. He has 34 years of service with the Royal Government of Bhutan since 1969 as Minister for

Trade and Industries (1989-1998) and Deputy Minister (1985-1989). He joined the Loden board of trustees in 2015.



Tshering Gyaltshen

(Trustee)

Tshering Gyaltshen is the promoter and CEO of Bhutan Insurance Limited. Before starting the Bhutan Insurance Ltd., he worked for Royal Insurance Corporation of Bhutan Ltd.

He joined the Loden's board in 2015.



Lham Dorji

(Programme Officer)

Lham graduated with Bachelor's degree in Geography and Dzongkha from Sherubtse College, Royal University of Bhutan. He joined Loden

Foundation from April 2015 as a Programme Officer. Lham worked as an Airport Manager in Bumthang before joining Loden.



Loden Sees Wave of Interns

In our effort to give opportunities to young college students and graduates to spend the time productively during their vacations and gap periods and also to gain work experience, Loden offers intern positions throughout the year. As we believe in grooming young people, we keep them deeply engaged with close supervision and guidance. However, as more and more people come to avail this opportunity, we also conduct test to assess their genuine interests. Here is what some of our latest interns have to say:

"It gave us an insight regarding the difference of budgeting standards and the types of business ventures," said Pema Zangmo. Her friends Choying Lhamo and Chador Zangmo remarked: "Although it's stressful and takes a lot of time its benefits in the long run is proven to be very effective."

Our Nation has seen great socio-economic growth but it is more important that we have growth with equity

- His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyal Wangchuck (2012)



Loden Scholarship for Higher Education

With generous support from our individual sponsors, Loden was able to sponsor five more students for higher education in 2015. Considering the shortage of medical professionals in the country, Loden is funding four students to pursue medical studies and one scholar for environmental studies. By supporting a new batch of students in the medicine, Loden hopes to contribute to the medical profession in Bhutan, which still has shortage of doctors.

With five new beneficiaries in 2015, the number of Loden university scholarships have reached 20 including both in the country and abroad. The programme was launched formally in 2012 with a generous support from Anne and Gerard Tardy, Loden's stalwart friends although Loden had supported university students before that.

Dorji Dema, Bhadra Maya Ghalley, Kezang Choden and Tashi Lhamo, who received Loden scholarships, have successfully completed their undergraduate degrees at the end of 2015. As they begin to enter into the job market, the Loden family wishes them success in their future endeavours.

Through its scholarships, Loden helps students, particularly those from disadvantaged background but with exceptional merit to pursue higher education and training in disciplines which are needed in Bhutan. The competition is held in early spring and scholarship offered by summer when the students join their colleges. Loden also administers scholarships provide by benefactors to students of their choice, outside of the usual competition.

We must raise, with all our effort, the less fortunate so that they may, at the earliest, begin to partake in the opportunities brought by modernization and progress.

- His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyal Wangchuck (2011)



Finally a Pharmacy in Trashigang

Trashigang town, since its existence, needed a pharmacy in addition to the hospital's medicine counter. When hospitals remain closed during government holidays and weekends or run out of medicines, people had to go all the way to Mongar or even to Thimphu for medicines.

Pema Dorji, a student at Sherubtse College in neighbouring Kanglung discerned this absence of a pharmacy in Trashigang as an excellent opportunity. Unlike other college students, he didn't even try for a government job although he has good scores in Economics and Environmental Studies. Instead, he embarked on

an entrepreneurial journey, confident that he can make a better living from it.

Today, Pema is a proud owner of Pema Olo Pharmacy located in the heart of Trashigang town employing a trained pharmacist. "From the revenue I earn from my business, I have been able to support my family and relatives which otherwise wouldn't have been possible", said Pema Dorji. His customers come from as far as Tashiyangtse and Mongar.

Pema plans to establish a similar outlet in Trashiyangtse in the near future.



Opening of an Eco Lodge in Wangdue

Wangdue Eco Lodge is located 15 minutes drive from Wangdue town. It has spectacular views of the Wangdue Dzong, the Punatsangchu and beautiful farms along the valley.

Gyelmo Wangchuk started her project in 2012 with a financial assistance of Nu.600,000 from the Loden Foundation. The project has now grown to a value of many millions of ngultrums. She started the lodge after the realisation that many tourists prefer hospitality centres close to nature. With rising number of eco-tourist arrivals in Bhutan, Gyelmo ventured into this project which has been doing well since its inception.

Since the launch, she has received over 150 tourists until December 2015 from different parts of the world. Her guests get to enjoy fresh vegetables and fruits from her garden and fresh dairy products from her cows. The lodge is the only one of its kind in the country today.

Reflections of a Facilitator from Loden Early Learning Centre

As our community based Early Learning Centres await for the new academic year 2016, I would like to reflect on the last eight years of operation. Working in an early learning centre has been productive and most satisfying. Narrating stories, playing and laughing with innocent children, admiring uninterrupted smiles on their faces have been my daily experience.

Along with my colleagues in other centres, we have seen 481 children with 247 boys and 234 girls attend our three centres over a period of eight years. We look forward to enrolling about 100 students for 2016. The positive feedbacks from parents and school teachers keep us going in providing early education services.

We are given free space by the communities to run the centres and we continue to receive trainings from the Department of School Education. Most of us have now five to eight years of experience with which we wait to embrace the new cohort of children in 2016. The most exciting part that must be shared is that we have been receiving increasing community support towards making the centres self-sustainable through community contributions.

As Early Child Care Development programme continue to play a vital role in nurturing children with right values, I am pleased to know that Loden is planning to establish another centre in 2016. I hope our services contribute to the national goal of providing easy and equal access to a quality child care and education services.

Rinzin Tshomo
Facilitator



Cardamom Plantation in Dagana

Cardamom plantation has become one of the most lucrative businesses for many people. Inspired by the prevailing financial benefit, Pema Choden, 22, has embarked on a cardamom project in Dagana with a financial assistance of Nu. 800,000 from Loden.

Pema discontinued her education after eighth grade due to personal problems. “Coming from a farming background, I have a lot of experience

working on a farm. Also I feel I’m strong enough to take up cardamom plantation with which I should be able to live my life comfortably in my village”, said Pema.

Pema started the cardamom plantation in 2014 on seven acres of land. She is expecting her first harvest in 2016. Loden has supported three cardamom projects including Pema’s.



Loden Mentoring Training

With support from the Entrepreneurship and Self Employment Division under Ministry of Labour and Human Resource, the Loden Foundation conducted a three-day mentoring training from 22-24 June 2015 in Thimphu. The training was aimed at building a pool of committed mentors who are passionate about giving back to society by helping budding entrepreneurs.

The training covered a range of topics such as entrepreneurship scenario in Bhutan, concepts of mentorship and how Buddhist values and principles can be applied to do ethical businesses and for creating a vibrant entrepreneurial culture

in Bhutan. The training was conducted by local experts and John Cull, the mentoring advisor to Youth Business International, UK.

As part of the training, participants visited some of the projects supported by Loden and also paid a brief visit to Entrepreneurship Incubation Unit in Thimphu Tech Park. A total of 31 participants (12 female & 19 male) with substantial business experience attended the training. Loden also organized a one-day Entrepreneurship Mentoring Orientation Programme in December, 2015 aimed at matching entrepreneurs and mentors.





Booming Shiitake Mushroom Business

Unlike in the past, Shiitake mushrooms are now available easily albeit in limited quantities. After 15 years of work in Ministry of Agriculture, Karma Penjore started the exciting venture of mushroom cultivation in Paro. With financial assistance from Loden, Karma started his business catering to high end tourist resorts and restaurants in Paro. He grows mushrooms for all round the year without compromising the quality, which fetches good price.

His business is located in Bondey under Luni Gewog in Paro. Karma has degrees in Agriculture

and Natural Resource Management which benefits his business. His business is highly lucrative with potential to make it more profitable as not many Bhutanese do such business.

Given the scope of the business, he has been encouraging young friends in his village to take up similar projects. In spite of scaling up productions every year, he still struggles to meet the demands within Paro. Karma hopes to form a cooperative to solve this. Loden also supports a mushroom centre in eastern Bhutan.

Would You Like to Sponsor a Child's Education?

Loden Sponsorship Scheme is an excellent channel which connects sponsors with poor children in Bhutan, who may miss school as their families cannot afford costs for simple things such as a uniform. Loden sponsors over a 100 school going children in various schools across the country.

After a careful assessment in consultation with school teachers, Loden provides an annual support of Nu.6000 for primary and Nu.8000 for high school students. Loden supports few students from our general fund but most of our sponsorships are funded by individual sponsors.

If you are keen to sponsor a child in Bhutan, we will be more than happy to help you connect with most deserving beneficiaries. We already have over a dozen of applications seeking for help. Please write to ldorji@loden.org if you are interested to find out more.



Loden Monitoring and Mentoring

Loden has always prided itself in its commitment to support its entrepreneurs after they have received the funds and also in monitoring their performance. Sometimes, these processes are quite difficult to achieve because of the geographic distribution or resource constraints but Loden is committed to delivering our support and skills to the entrepreneurs.

We provide both mentoring and monitoring. The key features of these processes are:

Mentoring

- Mentors provide free professional guidance and moral support to help the entrepreneurs deal with issues or problems and develop strategies.
- Mentors are available for consultation to deal with issues, whether good or bad, as they emerge.
- Mentors work alongside the entrepreneur to create a better business without vested interest.

Monitoring

- Loden maintains the portfolio of the projects by understanding how each business is doing, both financially and against their objectives.
- Carry routine supervisory site visits, auditing of accounts and assessment through communication in order to detect problems and render support on time.
- Require timely reports about the status of the business to keep the information up-to-date to avoid potential problems.

During April 2015, a Loden team visited more than 30 entrepreneurs throughout Bhutan to evaluate the ground condition of the businesses. Our entrepreneurs welcomed the visits and all were delighted to talk about their businesses, the problems and prospects. As it can be quite lonely being an entrepreneur, in several cases, we had lengthy discussions about expansion opportunities which have now been followed up successfully. In other cases, immediate advice was given to deal with potentially serious business challenges.



Several entrepreneurs were thinking about scaling up their businesses to build on success; a very welcome development which will create more employment opportunities and also benefit entrepreneurs. Our mentors were able to advise on key areas such as marketing, accounting, production and also on how to raise additional capital from banks, private investors or other sources.

Going forward, our initiatives of monitoring and mentoring will be coordinated by Tshering Pelden who will be able to call upon local and international experts for input when needed.

William Tacon
Loden stalwart

The First Employment Agency in Bhutan



If you are tired of recruitment or failed to find the right candidate for the job, Bhutan Jobs, the first recruitment agency in Bhutan is the best solution. Bhutan jobs help both employer and employee to find most suitable persons for the position. Why waste your time and money in conducting series of interviews when Bhutan Jobs provides the most efficient service at very competitive rates?

Just over a year and Bhutan Jobs has already placed about 500 professionals in various positions in private companies and civil society organizations. The company is run by an efficient team led by Chimi Dema with her expertise in Human Resource Management.

With growing number of young adults looking for job on the one hand and employers struggling to find suitable candidates, Bhutan Job entered into the market to bridge the gap. With financial support from Loden, Chimi has opened her agency in 2014. Bhutan Jobs also provides orientations on how to face interviews, prepare applications and curriculum vitae which were found to be very useful.



Rindrel Home Works

Bhutan has seen a construction boom in the recent decades. Thimphu alone has more than ten thousand buildings which would require maintenance service. Taking the advantage of this scenario, 25 year old Palden Dorji, a civil engineer led the team of 12 people in early 2015 with a minimal capital of Nu.0.3 million to start a business in home maintenance and repair.

Rindrel Homeworks, one of the 20 projects financed by the Loden Foundation in 2015, renders professional home maintenance services from repair to renovation and from fittings to extending existing structures. Palden and his

team were thrilled to have been selected for the fund. He claims the quality of his employees to be the biggest strength of Rindrel Homeworks. He employs fourteen regular employees and has a number of loyal clients.

Rindrel Homework plans to become a leading and the most sought-after home repair and maintenance firm in the country providing professional and fair priced maintenance services. A step towards fulfilling his vision, the young entrepreneur obtained a major project from the Bhutan Post.

The Financial Report

Income and Expenditure Account 2014 certified by Royal Audit Authority

Income	Amount (in BTN)	Expenditure	Amount (in BTN)
Druk Holding and Investment (DHI)	120,000.00	Mentoring	491,350.13
Ministry of Labour and Human Resources	70,000.00	LEP Crash Course	466,787.13
Business Opportunity and Information Centre	100,000.00	Loden Entrepreneurship Programme	7,644,196.26
Individual Contributions	510,754.00	Global Entrepreneurship Week	1,138,084.20
National Commission for Women and Children	490,000.00	Student Empowerment through Entrepreneurship Development (SEED)	840,493.13
Rental/Fees	315,000.00	Loden Early Learning Centres	1,245,541.13
Bank Interest (Savings)	2,494,092.63	Loden Scholarship Programme	2,592,724.20
Gerard and Anne Tardy	1,678,860.00	Administration	447,098.13
Bhutan Foundation	698,462.71		
Swiss Development Cooperation	6,608,000.00		
Uma Paro	236,800.00		
Maitri Trust	9,475,687.45		
Youth Business International	1,311,448.71		
Total Income	24,109,105.50		14,866,274.31
Net income	9,242,831.19		

Contribute to Loden by writing a cheque or making an online transfer to:

In Bhutan

The Loden Foundation
P.O. Box 131
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Ac No. 5000045068011
Swift Code: BNBTBTBT

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You can also make donations by using [Paypal](#) through our website www.loden.org

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