

# RYTHN AROUND THE WORLD MAKING A MEANINGFUL DIFFERENCE

Over the years, **RYTHM Foundation** has expanded its footprint worldwide, reaching out to communities in need to bring about lasting change.

Our mission is to empower lives and transform communities. We work closely with grassroots organisations aligned with our mission and focus areas. These include achieving gender equality, providing access to education for all, and uplifting underserved communities through sustainable community development programmes.

**RYTHM AROUND THE WORLD** is a collection of pictures and impact stories highlighting the social concerns communities worldwide face even in this day and age of digitalisation and progress. This book also underlines our efforts to address these issues.

Our work has barely begun. And as eminent poet Robert Frost said, "And miles to go before I sleep..."

## **"Service to others is the** rent you pay for your room here on earth."

– Muhammad Ali



# "Charity begins at home but should not end there."

- Francis Bacon

At RYTHM Foundation, we firmly believe that philanthropy should start in our backyard and extend to anyone who needs help. Our goal is to empower lives and transform communities, regardless of geographical barriers.

As outlined by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, we strive to provide the impoverished with long-term solutions that improve their lives and build a better future for all.

Financial support is only one aspect of any effort because it needs to start somewhere. In addition. we support communities

with other resources. knowledge, and skills to uplift the needy out of poverty. We essentially help communities help themselves.

We also emphasise empowering women to discover their potential and free themselves from the shackles of gender inequality. A measure of a progressive society is when women and men enjoy equal opportunities across all levels.

Naturally, education is a top priority for RYTHM towards achieving sustainable communities and gender equality. It is the catalyst for social

transformation and key to breaking the poverty cycle within deprived communities.

At RYTHM, we recognise how widespread inequality is around the world. We are passionate about addressing it because balancing the scales is incumbent upon us and everyone who believes it to be a matter of utmost urgency.

Datin Sri Umayal Eswaran Chairperson, RYTHM Foundation



• RED: SDG 11 - SUSTAINABLE CITIES & COMMUNITIES Sustainability is essential for environmental, social and economic reasons and is at the heart of everything we do.

BLUE: SGD 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION We believe that education for all is the catalyst for social transformation. Therefore, every child must have equal access and opportunity to knowledge and learning to unlock their potential.

#### YELLOW: SDG 5 - GENDER EQUALITY

A measure of a progressive society is when women and men enjoy equal opportunities across all levels.

#### GREEN: MULTIFACETED

Sometimes, we go beyond the three primary pillars in our topmost efforts to end poverty. Effectively, we leverage any opportunity to impact communities worldwide through multifaceted approaches that result in the most benefits.

# The United Nations (UN) **Development Goals**



RYTHM has worked in different parts of India to support communities in need for many years. These have included powering remote, off-the-grid-for-centuries regions with electricity, delivering economic empowerment to rural women, creating access to education for first-generation learners in villages, and much more.

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# INDIA PROJECTS

#### 🚺 LADAKH & MEGHALAYA **O** GLOBAL HIMALAYAN EXPEDITION (GHE)

RYTHM worked with GHE to light up remote villages in the Himalayas by investing in renewable energy infrastructures.

The village of Rongdo in Ladakh was powered for the first time in centuries enabling the set-up of two government secondary schools in the area with digital facilities that provide education to 200 students annually.

In Meghalaya, RYTHM enabled energy supply for 470 villagers in rural tribal communities and set up a primary healthcare centre for 23.000 villagers amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### **2** ASSAM, O ANDHRA PRADESH. TELANGANA. OUTTARAKHAND & 🛈 TAMIL NADU O MANAVA SEVA DHARMA SAMYARDHANI TRUST

RYTHM supported socially conscious entrepreneurs from marginalised regions to grow their social enterprises into sustainable income for their communities. The initiative benefits over 25,000 people by enabling access to education, social impact measurement and vocational training while improving community job opportunities for rural folks.

One such social enterprise was the Transgender Self Help Group that collaborated with the Ministry of Social Justice to train 490 members of the local transgender community in various livelihood vocations. 166 of the participants launched social enterprises comprising honey collection, tailoring, flower vending, a textile store, pushcarts selling fresh produce and more.

#### MAHARASHTRA O CANCER PATIENTS AID ASSOCIATION (CPAA)

**RYTHM** provided financial support to CPAA to enable cancer treatment for 20 children from low-income families. An awareness programme also reached out to 3,000 people on the importance of early detection of the disease.

#### MANN DESHI FOUNDATION

RYTHM endorsed a youth development programme to train and empower 800 girls from rural Maharashtra to achieve financial independence.

#### ODISHA. **9** JHARKHAND & **D** BIHAR O PARINAAMA DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

The collaboration aims to impact 10,000 youth and women from disadvantaged communities by 2022 through various initiatives focused on improving basic literacy, numeracy, technical and business skills for women

and vouth in Bihar. Odisha and Jharkhand. The goal is to empower these communities with the knowledge and awareness to build sustainable livelihoods and run successful micro-enterprises.

These include a health education programme for 5,000 women to reduce child mortality and eradicate disease and a mushroom cultivation programme to address malnutrition. As a result, the livelihood of 200 families in these areas have improved.

#### **11** TAMIL NADU ISHA VIDYA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

RYTHM sponsored 42 children from poverty-stricken communities in Erode and Villupuram to enable them to attain guality education and realise their full potential through Isha Vidhya.

#### O USHA SCHOOL OF ATHLETICS

RYTHM sponsored the training and formal education of five young and promising female athletes from low-income families to be trained by India's legendary Queen of Track & Field, PT Usha.

- SDG 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES & COMMUNITIES SDG 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION
- SDG 5 GENDER EQUALITY





### Impact story

Most within these communities lack basic access to energy and remain dependent on burning fossil fuels and candles for their lighting needs. Heart-wrenchingly, these circumstances have led to the state recording the country's third-highest infant mortality rate.

"We implemented this model with other healthcare centres in the past with tremendous outcomes, including bringing about a drastic 80% decrease in the infant mortality rate and a decline in the number of deaths caused by lack of critical-care medical equipment.

# "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

#### - Mahatma Gandhi

While most of the world has advanced in the 21st century, women living in remote Himalayan villages still deliver babies by candlelight.

RYTHM and Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE) implemented a two-pronged approach in the Meghalaya region to bring solar power to the tribal communities and upgrade the healthcare infrastructure.

The project dubbed 'Empowering Northeast India' kicked off in September. RYTHM pledged a one-year commitment to provide energy supply to 470 villagers and power a primary healthcare centre catering to 23,000 villagers.

"We want to implement similar healthcare set-ups with RYTHM in the state as we hope to improve the communities' overall healthcare infrastructure and ultimately save more precious lives," said Jaideep Bansal, COO of GHE.



RYTHM's African roots reflect its mission to uplift rural and underserved communities with long-term sustainable community programmes.

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Efforts include educating, upskilling and empowering locals while creating job opportunities to improve their livelihoods.

AFRICA PROJECTS



#### **O GHANA** O ANOPA PROJECT

An inclusive education project to reduce truancy and delinquency amongst visually- and hearingimpaired children in Cape Coast. The effort keeps 1,300 children with disabilities in school using sports for personal and social development.

185 of 250 deaf children and 82 of 250 blind children have enrolled in local government special needs schools with higher chances of retention until graduation. 30% of the swimming beneficiaries showed potential to be coaches and eventually transitioned into the role of instructors.

ANOPA also aims to change the public perception of disability in the region and exceeded expectations by reaching out to 14 communities to conduct sensitisation seminars. 382 of 500 children's parents and guardians attended sensitisation seminars, and 90% of them shared how high levels of stigmatisation halted their will to integrate their differently abled children into society. However, 85% of participants demonstrated a desire to overcome stigmatisation and ensure their children access to quality education in special needs schools.

#### SENEGAL GLOBAL RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY GROUP (GRAG)

We endorsed an advocacy and education programme that raises awareness about the health risks of female genital mutilation amongst 132,000 teenage girls and their parents in the Kolda region.

GRAG is dedicated to conducting quality research on various issues, including reproductive health, family planning, education, and gender-related norms.

SDG 11 - SUSTAINABLE CITIES & COMMUNITIES
SDG 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION
SDG 5 - GENDER EQUALITY
MULTIFACETED

### "Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world."

- Desmond Tutu

#### S TANZANIA WATER FOR AFRICA

This partnership with Water for Africa funds a sustainable agriculture project imparting practical farming know-how, including growing, harvesting, and selling avocados and macadamia nuts.

The project involved clearing 40 acres of land to plant 250 macadamia nut trees and 250 avocado seeds. A profit of USD\$200,000 is expected from the crop sale upon harvest that will be channelled towards the building and maintenance of water wells and other water storage projects in Muwimbi Village and the Southern Highlands of Tanzania.

Twenty-six staff are employed in the plantation in through this initiative that empowers the locals with the knowledge and skills to sustain the communitydriven project and improve livelihood in the long term. Thanks to the project, three children of the staff have also been able to enrol in school.





### Impact story

The lack of access to clean water impacts some 70% of households in the country, putting the population's health in jeopardy and leading to over 4,000 child deaths yearly from diarrhoea caused by contaminated water. In addition, thousands of children are missing out on education in the East African nation.

Maggie said.

Having a job has also allowed the 27-year-old to own a plot of land, where she aspires to house women and children in need of shelter.



### "No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another." - Charles Dickens

As a young girl, Magdalena "Maggie" Mwamtende was forced to skip school, brave harsh elements and often trek long distances to collect water for her family. Maggie grew up in poverty in rural Tanzania, where rivers are the primary water source for villagers.

However, thanks to RYTHM and Water for Africa, Maggie's children won't have to suffer as she did, with the partnership overseeing the installation of water wells in villages. The effort also provides employment opportunities to the locals through a farming initiative to maintain the water sources.

"I lived a poor life where I lacked food and money for necessities, but I am now thankful for this job because it is changing my life and raising our standard of living,"

Click here to read more

FOUNDATIO

The decade-long civil war in Sri Lanka left many families displaced and struggling to find proper, sustainable means to support themselves.

As a result, community support is more crucial than ever to rebuild and improve lives in a country where RYTHM has played a significant role in lending a helping hand.

# **SRI LANKA** PROJECTS

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#### **1** JAFFNA & 2 KILINOCHCHI SARVODAYA

#### SHRAMADANA MOVEMENT

RYTHM empowered over 400 young women from underprivileged communities eager to improve their economic circumstances. The partnership provided them with a career guidance programme and vocational training focused on entrepreneurship development. The courses offered include tailoring, beauty culture, cake-baking, leather production, mobile repairs, camera production and more.

Sarvodaya also reached out to the youth through leadership, entrepreneurship, and small business management training. 50% of them have obtained their certificate of completion, while 30 of the most outstanding beneficiaries received grants to boost their business ventures. Sarvodaya continues to lend support in terms of knowledge, skills, training, and market network to ensure they meet their potential for success.

#### **6 MULLAITIVU &** O LEADS SRI LANKA

We assisted 500 low-income families in getting a fresh start and assimilating into society since returning to their homeland after the civil war.

The programme helps them secure shelter and rebuild their lives while minimising the risk of abuse among orphaned children.

#### O WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Advocating for the social inclusion of special needs persons, the Women's Development Centre (WDC). in collaboration with RYTHM. has surpassed its initial goal of providing rehabilitation services to 300 children and vouths with disabilities. The beneficiaries also received vocational and livelihood training alongside rehabilitation. Through WDC's intervention methods. nine youths found full-time employment while two others are now self-employed.

"In necessary things, unity; in doubtful things, liberty; in all things, charity."

- Richard Baxter

The parents of these voungsters have also attained knowledge and guidance to enable access to education, while 38 volunteers and staff have been trained through theoretical and practical capacity building sessions to equip them to run the rehabilitation service centres.

11 of the 19 planned rehabilitation service centres were established with five more in the works in Kelebokka, Hanguranketha, Udapalatha, Pasbagekorale and Harispaththuwa.

#### POLONNARUWA. **VEGALLE**, ONUWARA ELIYA, ONARAGALA & SARVODAYA

#### SHRAMADANA MOVEMENT

Child-related issues are a significant concern in these five districts. Over 20 months, RYTHM worked closely with 428 workshop participants from these areas to strengthen the communities and the stakeholders' role in child rights, protection and education.

The stakeholders represented various agencies, including the Provincial Council. Child Protection Authority, Department of Education, and Ministry of Women and Child Care.

SDG 11 - SUSTAINABLE CITIES & COMMUNITIES SDG 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION SDG 5 - GENDER EQUALITY MULTIFACETED





# "We make a living by what we get but we make a life by what we give." - Winston Churchill

### Impact story

RYTHM is no stranger to such situations through past ventures - when resources were stretched thin, the foundation guickly responded to the appeal from LEADS for aid.



"The impact of Covid-19 on poverty is as apparent in Sri Lanka as many other emerging nations," said Diordre Moraes of LEADS Sri Lanka.

The desperation has led many people among the needy to wonder if dying from the virus would be better than being unable to feed their families.

"I was talking to a security guard at a supermarket, and she said to me, 'Where do people like us turn to? How on earth do we manage?" Diordre related.

"People know that the country needs locking down because of Covid-19, but the biggest concern is the economy and survival. People have too many problems to worry about other than the pandemic."

With RYTHM's support, LEADS provided dry ration packs to 200 struggling families in the Mullaithivu district, one of the poorest in the country. Like the rest of the north and east, the civil war has heavily affected the country's population.

Click here to read more



RYTHM has certainly not forgotten the countries closer to home as we expand our initiatives to impact the world.

We collaborate with several reliable on-ground partners to create the most value at the grassroots level – from funding medical treatment to saving lives to building schools.

Here is a snapshot of some of our regional projects.

# SOUTHEAST ASIA PROJECTS

### MYANMAR CHILD'S DREAM FOUNDATION

The partnership funded the medical treatment of six patients with congenital disabilities from rural Kayin state and the Bago region to undergo life-saving surgeries.

#### 2 LAOS CHILD'S DREAM FOUNDATION

We set up a primary school comprising six fully-furnished classrooms and four toilets at the Phonsai Secondary School in Luang Prabang Province that will cater to 1,560 students.

#### CAMBODIA CHILD'S DREAM FOUNDATION

As part of RYTHM's mission to advocate for equal access to education, the foundation fully funded the higher education of five bright students from low-income families in Trapeang Prasat and Puok.

#### **VIETNAM** • THE ASIA FOUNDATION

RYTHM awarded three-year scholarships to 40 girls from disadvantaged communities in Dien Bien to complete their secondary education.

#### MALAYSIA DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FOR RURAL AREAS (DHRRA)

RYTHM worked with DHRRA to enrol 600 stateless children in schools around Malaysia. The partnership completed the registration, paid the levy fees, enrolled 390 children in school, and organised workshops on procedures to enrol stateless children for 230 participants comprising teachers, PTA members, civil society organisation and Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO) representatives, and community leaders.

DHRRA also produced a guidebook to raise awareness on the lack of access to education faced by stateless children. 1,000 copies have been distributed to community representatives, political parties, PTAs, district offices and schoolteachers.

#### PERSATUAN KESIHATAN DAN KEBAJIKAN UMUM MALAYSIA (PKKUM)

We supported PKKUM by providing meals and crafting capacity building programmes for more than 3,000 HIV patients from marginalised communities in Kuala Lumpur.

#### TREAT EVERY ENVIRONMENT SPECIAL (TrEES)

RYTHM empowered more than 200 students and 50 teachers from 25 Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya schools to mobilise their communities to implement environmental care campaigns.

#### • ASSOCIATION OF TOY LIBRARIES MALAYSIA

An annual collaboration with 20 non-government organisations to reach out to 4,800 children, including nearly 1,000 children across Sabah, to make toys and play accessible to young ones.

SDG 11 - SUSTAINABLE CITIES & COMMUNITIES
SDG 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION
SDG 5 - GENDER EQUALITY
MULTIFACETED

#### • DIGNITY FOR CHILDREN

This feeding programme in Kuala Lumpur provided sustenance to 79 children to break them out of the cycle of poverty.

#### • PERSATUAN PENDUDUK PETALING JAYA (MyPJ)

A series of empowering initiatives are in place by the NGO to improve the livelihoods of 300 urban slum residents in Selangor.

#### **O INDONESIA O ASA FOUNDATION**

An award-winning sports-based social intervention programme in collaboration with RYTHM to improve the quality of education for vulnerable youth in the region. It also aims to empower young people with self-confidence in a safe space that promotes cohesion and social inclusion.

36 local teachers underwent training to equip them with the necessary technical and soft skills to effectively deliver the sportsbased education development programme in junior high schools across Tangerang, Banten. They imparted knowledge on the key topics such as health, hygiene, life skills, gender equality and more.

This collaboration has so far impacted 9,710 students despite the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic as the foundation swiftly pivoted to online teaching methods and solutions. It also developed a virtual learning platform accessed by over 30,000 students that provides information about COVID-19 prevention and hygiene awareness.





# "It is every man's obligation to put back into the world at least the equivalent of what he takes out of it."

Rajeshwary hopes her sons' citizenship applications receive approval soon for a chance at a brighter future.

- Albert Einstein

### Impact story

"My kids aren't Malaysian, and they don't receive government aid for their education. They sometimes cry about it. They were born in this country but have no legal documentation and can't go anywhere safely.

"If the police stop them, they assume my sons are not Malaysian. It's very challenging," says Rajeshwary of her two stateless sons, 16-year-old Vinodharan and 14-year-old Taran Kumar. Rajeshwary is Indonesian.

Although her husband, a taxi driver, is Malaysian, the teens were not accorded citizenship at birth due to the uncertain status of their parents' marriage at the time. As a result, the family has struggled financially, especially since the boys are not eligible for educational aid.

With guidance from the NGO Development of Human Resources for Rural Areas Malaysia (DHRRA), the family has applied for citizenship for the boys. In addition, RYTHM has funded the boys' school fees and provided them with digital devices to attend online classes.





RYTHM AROUND THE WORLD . MAKING A MEANINGFUL DIFFERENCE

<sup>ce</sup> Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Philippines







# "Giving is not just about making a donation. It is about making a difference." - Kathy Kalvin.

Recycle Birge.

"Even my kids know how to sort their trash in the proper containers because they know I'm particular about this. I've also started promoting a plastic-free society and recycling to those around me."

Click here to read more

### Impact story

QNET is a business with a heart. It has long inculcated an ethos of service and sustainability in its corporate philosophy, a deeply-rooted trait also evident among its staff globally.

For example, Kazakhstan employees have participated in a yearly eco-clean-up event with RYTHM and eco-community

Despite restrictions to the group's size because of the pandemic, 26 participants comprising QNET employees, Independent Representatives, volunteers, and Recycle Birge representatives recently collected 35kg of rubbish at the popular Turgen Waterfalls.

Amir Asanov of the RCIS Communications Department talks about how his family also practices recycling at home: "We use different coloured recycled plastics to sort our garbage at home according to wet waste, plastic, paper, etc.

**RYTHM Foundation**, the QI Group's Social Impact Initiative, invests in the communities in which we operate, through strategic partnerships, employee volunteering, and community service.

For more details, visit www.rythmfoundation.org

or visit our social media channels



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### "I am because we are"

